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**Eternal Health Centre**

** A Word from Kate:**

Welcome to my first newsletter! My newsletters will be sent out quarterly and will contain useful information to help you lead a happier, healthier lifestyle. I will include useful facts, my thoughts and some exercises to help you along this pathway.

You can unsubscribe at any time from these newsletters by clicking the link below. If you know someone who might be interested in receiving these newsletters, please ask them to complete the link in my **Newsletter** page of my website.

** The Art of Positive Thinking – How to Re-Train your Brain:**

As human beings, we are programmed to think negatively and to look at the worst-case scenario. It is our survival mechanism, and what helps us to survive. Whilst this may be helpful in a life and death situation, it is not always useful in our everyday lives. Our busy day to day lives, financial pressures, work and families will always ensure that we have a degree of stress in our lives. Negative self-talk and a pessimistic attitude only add unnecessary stress and anxiety.

Having a positive attitude to life has more effects than just making you less miserable. Studies have shown that people with a positive attitude remain healthier, happier and more successful than their miserable counterparts.

Great, but how do we put this into practice and reduce our anxiety at the same time? Well read on good people, read on…

First off, let me explain the difference between stress and anxiety. Stress is our built-in survival mechanism. It is our response to a real, here and now threat, either physical or emotional. Anxiety, on the other hand, triggers the same physiological responses to a **perceived** threat – that is, something that may, or may not, happen. It is what I commonly call the *what ifs*. Let me give you an example. Friday night your boss tells you that he wants a meeting with you first thing Monday morning. All weekend you are running through possible scenarios in your head – none of which are positive. *What if I get fired?* *What have I done wrong?*. Sound familiar? Okay … but *what if* your boss wants to congratulate you on a job well done, or give you a promotion? That scenario never enters your head over the weekend. Following the meeting on Monday morning, when your boss just wants to get a run down on your current work status, you think to yourself *Is that it? Why was I worrying all weekend?.*Why indeed. The symptoms of stress are usually short lived. They will disappear once the threat passes. The symptoms of anxiety are long term and can have a devastating effect on your body.

To avoid anxiety, and at the same time re-train our brains to think more positively, try this exercise. Next time you get that nagging, negative, *what if* thought – ask yourself what the best possible outcome, or the opposite scenario could be. You don’t even have to believe that positive thought, just think it. Using the example above – we automatically think that our boss is going to fire us, or yell at us on Monday morning. But, *what if* our boss gives us a promotion, or a pay rise? By simply thinking this thought, you will reduce the impact of your first, more negative thought. The truth is normally somewhere in the middle – your boss wants an update on your current work status. Next, ask yourself, if the worst case scenario does eventuate, can I live with it? Will it impact me, or will I even remember this, in one month, one year, ten years? Will it change my life? If the answer is yes, it will change my life, then can I do something to reduce the impact of this situation? Every time you think of a positive thought, to counter the negative thought, you are training your brain to look at all possible scenarios. With practice, you will automatically think of the positive thoughts – and maybe even start believing them!

More often than not, our busy lives are run by schedules. We schedule in appointments, work, children’s activities – so schedule in some fun. Having fun, and a good laugh, on a regular basis, balances out the more stressful areas of our life. Research has shown that people who laugh regularly have a more positive attitude to life than those who stick to the grind of daily life.

Next, be grateful. If you can think of one thing, every day, that you are grateful for it will help your brain to think in a more positive fashion. No matter how tough life gets, there will always be something you can be grateful for, no matter how small – a good friend, sunshine, a loyal pet.

Finally, be kind. When we do kind gestures for other people, it makes us feel appreciated and worthwhile, thus increasing our self-esteem. A healthy self-esteem will always help us to feel, and think, more positively.

** A Final Thought:**

I often hear people say *I’m too old to change*. I disagree. I see life as a work in progress. No-one wants to change the essence of who you are as a person, but it doesn’t mean you can’t strive to be the best version of yourself.

Be kind to each other lovely people!

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