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Welcome to the Active Mind & Body Newsletter

“Feeling Your Way Into Health and Happiness”

As most of you already know I take an integrated approach to holistic health care, working with the head, heart and body. However one of the major things I specialize in is supporting people who feel their emotions are getting in the way of them reaching their goals and living life. This has become a fundamental specialty of mine and I believe it is a major factor in all health conditions not just the emotional ones life anxiety, depression, and stress.

So it made sense that when I was discussing the idea of a newsletter for my clients that it be devoted to the topic of emotions and their impact on health, hence “Feeling your way into health and happiness” was born.

The newsletter will be monthly and I will be making it as practical, useful and informative as possible. My goal is to keep you focusing on your health and wellbeing, and how your emotional development is an integral part of this, this does not mean I will be ignoring other areas of health, topics will include useful information for the head, heart and body.

As it is the new year and many of you will have set yourself some goals for 2007 and even some new years resolutions I thought the best topic to get us started would be “emotions and goal setting”.

Enjoy

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Emotions and Goal Setting:

When reading anything about goal setting you will find that most people focus on how to set effective long and short term goals. Even though this is important (and will make up some of my discussion) not many people talk about how to manage the emotions that will stop you from reaching your goals and even rarer still, how to use certain emotions to increase your chances of success. So I have decided to focus on these three topics and they will make up my first three newsletters. In the February newsletter I will cover SMART goal setting, in the March newsletter I will look at how to manage emotions that stop you from reaching your goals and the final installment will be in April and will look at emotions that actually increase your chances of success.

Best Wishes for 2007

Dean

Effective Goal Setting

First of all you have to know what you are shooting for, your goal. It is very difficult to set goals if you do not even know what you want or cannot even imagine what you need.

So start using your imagination and imagine the many possibilities that would have a positive impact on your health and wellbeing. Once you have something, then you can start setting goals, it might be “I want a feel less anxiety”, “I want to get fit”, “I want to feel better about myself” or “I want to loose weight”. I will use the last example “loosing weight” for the rest of the newsletter as it is will act as a good example.

So imagine you want to loose weight (or what ever goal you want to use), this is the long term goal, however in this state it is not a very useful long term goal. To make this an effective long term goal you need to use the SMART principle. All long term goals must be;

- S = specific
- M = measurable
- A = adjustable
- R = realistic
- T = time specific



Here is a question for you, which of the long term goals below do you think meets the smart principle?

1. I want to loose weight by the end of February
2. I want to loose 10kg in 4 weeks
3. I want to loose 10kg in the next 12 weeks
4. My current weight is 75kg and I want to loose 10kg in 12 weeks, starting from the first of February.

The best long term goal here is number four, number four is Specific because it focus on weight loss and nothing else. It is also Measurable as it uses kg and documents a starting weight and an amount you want to loose. Adjustable, the goal is flexible enough to change if need be. It is also very Realistic, 1kg a week is a safe pace to loose weight (evidence suggest the slower you loose weight the better) and it is Time specific; 12 weeks starting from the first of February. What also makes it a SMART long term goal is that I have written it down, don't neglect this point and don't forget to display it somewhere where you won't forget about it.

One common mistake I make is having too many goals so my energies are not focused on one thing. This often means I run around like a made man and get lots of things done but it takes me a long time to finish something (or sometimes it never gets finished)! Don't forget long term goals don't have to be massive.

Why don't you now have a go, you may have already set some goals for 2007 or have been wanting to. Write down your goals now and utilize the SMART principle?

The next thing to do would be to set your self some short term goals that also meet the SMART principle.

1. the first short term goal is to take a good look at what you are already doing, this can be done by keeping an exercise and eating diary for a week. You can then sit down and look at what you are doing well (keep doing this and more of it) and what you are doing not so well (identify strategies for these things that become other short term goals (this is a vital first step and often neglected)
2. your second short term goal may centre around exercise, and increase the intensity and time you exercise slowly every few days
3. you will need to set some SMART short term goals around your diet also
4. finally it would help to set yourself some SMART short term goals around any issue you identified in your exercise and eating diary (for example goals around alcohol consumptions or ways to manage situations or emotions in which you know you binge eat)



Continue from here, until you have a SMART long term goal and some SMART short term goals, then ACT, get started as soon as you can.

Please feel free to forward this newsletter onto anyone who may be interested, email or call me with any questions you may have or better yet send me stories about how you have used these ideas to make positive changes to your life.

Dean

Coming Soon

In the next issue we will look at why most people feel their emotions get in the way of them reaching their goals and how to manage these emotions. This will be followed by exploring how to build emotions that promote success

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