

Proper Stress & Health Management

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Surviving college life, on the surface, may look relatively simple. Nationally, however, only 1/3 of incoming freshmen will graduate four years later. Countless others survive, but fail drastically in fulfilling their true potential. A key to finishing college successfully is achieving a balance that provides for proper stress and health management. My IMPACT program is not only designed to enable students to survive, but to thrive and to be all that they can be.

IMPACT is an acronym meaning the Integrated Management of Passion, Action, Chemistry, and Thought. I developed the IMPACT program to prepare and motivate individuals for life transitions. Extracted below are brief descriptions of coping mechanisms and strategies that I ensure will ease transitional anxieties. If we wish to maximize our effectiveness, it becomes necessary to understand that mental, emotional and physical health issues affect each other. Each areas require continuous and unending improvement.

Get organized

Discipline yourself into thinking of college as your job. Your goal is to do serious academic work about 45 hours per week, roughly the minimum amount of time spent on a non-academic job (40 hours of work plus an hour commute). This usually means 15 hours in class (five courses worth three credits each) and 30 hours of study outside of class (two hours per credit). Always study based on a predetermined schedule-not when you feel like. Also, try to minimize your worries about grades. If you honestly do 45 hours a week of academic work, you will have fulfilled your obligation to yourself and others. Your grades will reflect the hard work you have put into them. If you still have problems achieving successful grades, discuss options with your advisor and professors.

They will help you come up with strategies designed to help you improve more. By reducing stress and anxiety, students will see improved grades, health and quality of life.

Get some sleep

Do not underestimate the power of sleep. This is when the brain and body do the most healing and the most regeneration of damaged cells. To perform at your personal best, research suggests that eight hours is the optimum. Too much is as bad as too little. Quality is as important as quantity. In order to acquire and sustain sleep, avoid overeating and caffeine – especially near bedtime.

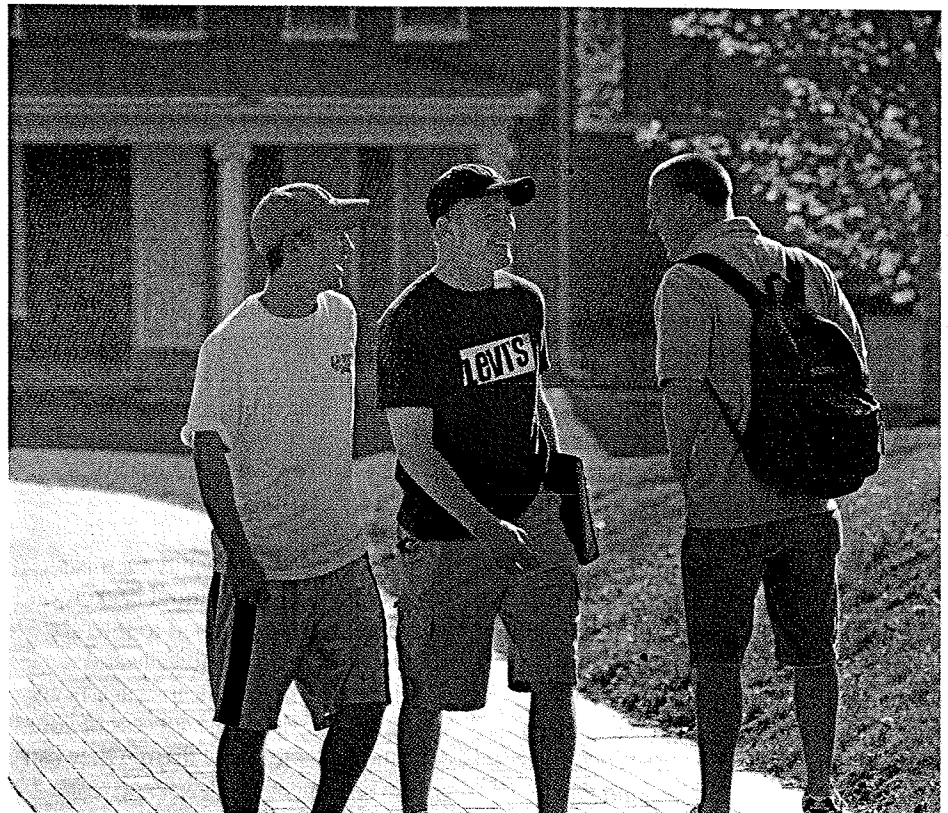
Eat well and moderately

Your brain and body cannot perform without high-grade fuel. You would not put low octane fuel in a high performance racecar, nor would you feed a million dollar racehorse soda and chips. Your brain and body need nutritionally dense calories for peak performance. The 70 to

80 trillion cells we possess are constantly being replaced. We need balanced, essential nutrients at strategic intervals if those cells are to be replaced with healthy cells.

Get moving!

College can be a rather sedentary existence without some planned effort for physical activity. Intercollegiate and intramural sports are certainly a great way to get exercise, have fun, and make friends. However, these activities tend to be seasonal and sporadic. The discipline of a regular exercise routine is an extremely beneficial habit for life-long health, happiness, and performance enhancement. The habits you form now will be a real treasure after graduation when life becomes even more sedentary. Your fitness priorities should include some combination of strength training and cardiovascular training. I recommend three days per week for each. Do 30 to 60 minutes per day, depending on your schedule. Of course, your first priority is to make it part of your schedule-no questions asked.



With some planning and a little discipline, you will find it very easy to incorporate a modest program into your daily routine. If you acquire this habit, the lifetime benefits to performance, health, and happiness will be incalculable.

Go out and make some friends

The strongest need of humans after food, water, and shelter is the need for love and belonging - also known as friendship.

There is no richer environment to find, make, and keep friends than on a college campus. It is a great opportunity to continue the development of social skills and a network of friends that will be valuable throughout life. Go out and get involved in campus activities and, do not be afraid to reach out to other people. The rewards are endless.

Remember, college is supposed to be a great experience. By taking care of yourself and properly managing the natural stresses that come from attending college, you can make sure that your time on campus will be positive and successful.

An absolute must is a daily planner. Follow these simple steps to help insure maximum efficiency and minimum stress:

- Schedule all of your classes and attend them.
- Schedule 30 hours of study time per week, broken into several small blocks (about one hour each dispersed throughout the day).
- Schedule eight hours of sleep, retiring and rising at about the same time every day (within one hour).
- Schedule in your three main nutritional meals and some nutritional snacks.
- Schedule in other obligations, such as practice, rehearsal, meetings, and work.
- Schedule time for physical activity.
- Schedule fun.
- If you must skip a study period, reschedule it back into your day or week as soon as possible. Remember the first rule - 45 hours per week of academic activity.

Do not forget to eat right. Many students neglect nutritional needs or eat poorly because of a sudden lack of routine, leading to the "Freshman 15." By following these rules, you can be sure you will be able to function well:

- Eat five to six small meals each day.
- Never skip breakfast.
- Your total calories should consist of 55% carbohydrates, 25% protein, 20% fat.
- Consume high quality protein (contains eight essential amino acids) several times a day.
- Total daily protein consumption should be between 1/2 to one gram per pound of body weight along with some carbohydrates.
- Consume protein to enhance alertness - it releases tyrosine in the brain; a hormone that increases alertness and mental activity.
- Consume carbohydrates to enhance relaxation-it releases tryptophan in the brain-the same chemical found in turkey that causes sleepy sensations over the holidays.
- For weight maintenance, consume 16 (females), 17 (males) calories per pound of body weight in above mentioned proportions and sequences.
- For weight loss, consume about 12 calories per pound of body weight in the above mentioned proportions and sequences.
- Eat in these proportions: 2-3 dairy (non-fat), 2-3 meat (lean), 2-4 fruit (fresh), 3-5 veggies (fresh), 6-11 grains (whole).
- For weight loss, eat 3-5 grains and 6-11 veggies.