

# BE WELL NEWS

A publication of **THRIVE**eap

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## **Consultants for Workplace and Family Health is now...**



Why the change? 20 years ago *Consultants for Workplace and Family Health* was started by Melissa Italia who developed a unique approach to providing EAP support. She owned and operated the service until April 2014 when **Jennifer Jacobs** took over the practice. For the past year Jennifer has been building on this foundation. The new name and image reflect Jennifer's own philosophy about living well and her approach to what an **EAP** can be. The new website and additional features for the service provide an even more robust system of support to organizations and individuals.

Jennifer looks forward to working with employees, and the organizations they work for, to help them **THRIVE**. This is not merely a catch-phrase. Jennifer believes that to live a thriving life means being resilient; and resiliency is all about how we manage difficulties. Sometimes we get stuck in a problem, but if we build on our strengths and resources we can move forward. Life can be hard. It's how we handle the hardships that determine if we survive or if we **THRIVE**.

### **Zzzzz... Better Sleep = Better Work**

To state the obvious...sleep is vital to our well-being. Too little, or poor quality, sleep has a direct impact on our physiological and emotional health as well as our ability to cope with adversity, to focus, and to make good decisions. In other words, getting enough good sleep directly affects how well we can do our job.

Often the last thing you do before going to sleep determines how well and how much you sleep. What are some useful tips and that can improve sleeping habits? This rundown of sleeping tips has been pulled from sleep experts and organizational psychologists:

- ⇒ Read (preferably not on an electronic device)
- ⇒ Make a to-do list
- ⇒ Spend time with family
- ⇒ Reflect on the day
- ⇒ Meditate
- ⇒ Go to bed at a consistent time
- ⇒ Unplug from electronics (and work)
- ⇒ Let go of negative thoughts
- ⇒ Visualize tomorrow going well



"Do not be pushed by your problems.

Be lead by your dreams."

~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

**THRIVE**eap  
Jennifer Jacobs, M.A.

## Stress, Food, and Health

Chronic stress has become an epidemic in our society. Our efforts to move faster and pack more obligations into already over-crowded schedules cause unfortunate consequences to our physical, mental and emotional health. Luckily, we can make mindful, small steps to change some of our eating habits that will improve the quality of our lives.

Stress changes your body chemistry. When you're stressed hormones are released that flood your system, raise your heart rate, increase blood pressure, and make your blood more likely to clot, damaging your brain's memory center. Chronic stress also causes an increase in insulin production. This throws off proper metabolism and can eventually lead to weight gain, insulin resistance and ultimately diseases like diabetes. Experts have long known a relationship exists between stress, blood sugar and belly fat. All these internal hormonal changes compromise your immune system and generally wreak havoc on your body.

This hormonal havoc can create a negative chain reaction. For example, you stop by your favorite coffee shop on your way to work. Frazzled by a million demands and rush-hour traffic, you realize you haven't had breakfast and order a muffin along with your gigantic coffee. Looking at that seemingly innocent breakfast scenario, the caffeine in coffee increases your stress hormones. This, coupled with the sugar in the muffin, increases insulin. Then insulin increases inflammation and this makes you feel lousy. Sugar can literally jack up your stress hormones, even if you are not stressed!

### **Managing Stress Starts With Your Diet**

Paying attention to what you eat can do wonders to reduce the negative impacts of stress on your life. When you choose to eat moderate amounts of nutritious foods throughout the day, your body can maintain the appropriate levels of insulin, cortisol, and other hormones. If you reduce your intake of caffeine, alcohol, and refined sugars you can have an even-keeled mindset throughout the day - even when things get hectic. You can replace those foods with lean protein, healthy fats, leafy and cruciferous vegetables, berries, and non-gluten grains.

Food is information that controls your gene expression, hormones, and metabolism. These directly impact your clarity of mind, energy, and mood. When you eat the right foods, properly fueling your body, you will aid it in balancing levels of blood sugar and hormones. While stress is a reality we all must deal with at times, being aware of what we consume can help our body to manage and alleviate the potential damage that it can cause.



### **7 Principles of Building Personal Resilience**

1. Connect to your purpose and meaning in life
  2. Use your unique strengths
  3. Maintain perspective
  4. Generate positive feelings
  5. Be realistically optimistic
  6. Persevere by being open minded and flexible
  7. Reach out to others
- (Want to know more? [Contact THRIVEeap.](#))