ISMA-USA's meeting was held in cooperation with the annual meeting of the Association of Applied Psychophysiology and Biofeedback April 11, 1999.

The main feature was a workshop of one and a half days taught by Dr. Wes Sime at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln on teaching and running a practice in stress management.

After invited speaker, Jack Rachman's presentation titled "Fear", approximately 15 members met to discuss a number of topics pertaining to this branch.

Of concern was the support for the International Journal of Stress Management. Attendees expressed enthusiastic support for the journal's unique contribution to the field.

There was discussion concerning the future of stress management certification.

Dr. Wes Sime was involved in setting up the BCIA (Biofeedback Certification Institute of America) certificate in stress management. He suggested that this program may have suffered from trying to be too comprehensive in the demands that it made on registrants, and the consequent costs of obtaining and maintaining registration were not acceptable to candidates. As a result, BCIA is dropping the program.

Consequently, Dr. Sime will coordinate a committee, comprising of many of those attending this meeting, to consider how to take over and revise the stress management certification process within ISMA-USA.

While the number present was not large, the general feeling was that stress management was an increasingly important area of professional activity which needed collaboration, organization and support. Those present clearly appreciated the opportunity to meet others in the profession and see their level of commitment to the profession. The meeting encouraged AAPB to provide more time for stress management in their program next year when the meeting will be in Denver, CO.
From the Chair …

John G. Carlson, Ph.D.

We are all really pleased that we have this second issue of the Newsletter for you. As you know, this year marks the first for ISMA-USA to have a Newsletter and, while we have not reached the millennium yet, this is certainly an auspicious beginning for our fledgling organization.

This seems a good time to reflect on other accomplishments of the past year as well. This was the first year that we operated as an organization with elected officers--the Board consisting of myself and Betty McGuigan plus Dr. Richard Rahe (Chairperson-elect). Through more than several emails among us, occasional phone calls, and a couple of trips between Honolulu and San Diego, we managed to make it through not only intact but perhaps with a better vision of ISMA-USA than we had at the start of the year. This was also the year of our first attempt to have a meeting of our membership (in Vancouver). It was a small but clearly dedicated group of attendees and proposals and votes really counted! A start is a start! The next important meeting of ISMA will be in England, as many of you are by now aware. Please mark your calendars for July 4-7, 2001. We will converge on the University of Warwick in what promises to be a major event--the UK branch of ISMA numbers over 500 members. More information to come!

With some effort, we could reach those numbers in the United States by 2001 as well. Our ISMA-USA web site (www.stress-management-isma.org) is beginning to attract new members. Betty McGuigan has also taken on the responsibility for maintaining the web site and has done a fantastic job at updating interesting and helpful material. Please let Betty know of any ideas you might have to enhance and expand the web site. Her email is ISMAusaBJM@aol.com and is also on the web site.

Two other issues that were brought up in the business meeting in Vancouver were those of establishing nonprofit status for ISMA-USA and stress management certification. As for the nonprofit organization endeavor, the actual forms are complete and now it will be up to the IRS to review them. (Meanwhile, rest assured that your dues and contributions to ISMA-USA are tax-deductible because we are operating under an umbrella nonprofit foundation in Hawaii, at no cost to us.) Once we are our own nonprofit entity, we can establish accounts in our own name and greatly enable the job of Secretary-Treasurer. We will keep you up to date on this lengthy process.

As for the issue of stress management certification, as some of you know Wesley Sime (University of Nebraska) has been interested for some time in our assuming the fundamentals of a program in this area that was formerly operated by the Biofeedback Certification Institute of America (BCIA). This was a certification program strictly for educators in the stress management area (not practitioners, per se), which simplified the program a bit. But several aspects of the operation made it no longer feasible for BCIA and the program was discontinued. Current holders of BCIA certification in stress management--which may include some of you--maintain valid certificates for a couple more years. But at that point there will be no ongoing certification program in the United States. The attendees at the Vancouver meeting voted unanimously to pursue the possibility of ISMA-USA taking over such a function and Dr. Sime has been active in this arena since that time. We would like any thoughts from you on the subject. It would be really helpful to put together a working committee of interested members of ISMA to see if we can make this happen. So if you would like to participate at that level, let us know that too.

The official journal of ISMA, the International Journal of Stress Management, appears to be reaching more and more subscribers. But we are alway looking for more contributors. Please take a look at the Journal--the content is pretty impressive (and be sure to let us know if you are having any problems with your automatic subscription through ISMA-USA membership). If you think you have empirical or editorial contributions to make, let me hear directly from you. I am also open to receiving reviews of books in our field.

So those are a few of the accomplishments of your Board in 1999--the Newsletter, the ISMA-USA meeting, establishing the web site, developing nonprofit status, beginning efforts towards stress management certification, and building our Journal. And, to paraphrase a well-known character, That’s Not All Folks! Year 2000, here we come.
ISMA INTERNATIONAL NEWS

ISMA President Receives Awards

ISMA's President Charles D. Spielberger, Ph.D. was twice honored at APA's 1999 Annual Convention in Boston this past August. He received the Psi Chi Distinguished Member award presented by Psi Chi. Division 52 (International) presented him the Career Award for Outstanding Contributions to International Psychology.

Congratulations, Dr. Spielberger.

ISMA-INDIA

A new ISMA international branch, the association's twelfth, was started in May 1999. Dr. B. Udaya Kumar Reddy was instrumental in starting this branch in India. He now serves as its Director-Secretary and can be reached through his email address [stress@hd2.dot.in]. Dr. Reddy informs us that they are taking action to propagate a theme and enroll members. Early in November their web site [www.stressindia.org] was activated.

ISMA Web Site Has New Features

The ISMA web site has added two new features in the past few months. The web site, first launched in December 1998, has over 50 pages of content and is continuing to expand.

If you have not visited the site lately, here are a couple of the new highlights:

ISMA Library---Under this link you will find titles of books and journal articles authored by ISMA members. Also there are links to useful web sites, stress inventories and special feature articles. All of these resources are the works of ISMA members. New additions are added as the editor is notified of our members' works. All ISMA members are encouraged to post their publications offering information on stress management.

ISMA World Wide News --- Here you can access the latest posted news from each of ISMA's international branches. Links are provided to those branches that have their own web sites as in the case of our newest branch, ISMA-India, and ISMA-UK.

The 1999 spring issue of this Newsletter can be found in the ISMA-USA section. It is our intention to post our Newsletter about six months after publication.

Our web site is a constantly expanding resource. We appreciate the suggestions several of you have already offered and encourage even more ideas from you. We want ideas for features that will offer information or valuable resources to our wide range of visitors.

@

Calling all ISMA authors

- Have you published a book recently?
- Have you published a journal article recently?
- Do you have your own web site that offers stress management information?
- Would you like to write an article on stress management for the web site?

Please email or send your information to Betty McGuigan, the web site editor.
FOCUS ON STRESS MANAGEMENT

BEATING THE COLLEGE BLUES ...
Stress Reduction Tips and Strategies for College Students
By Betty C. Carlson, Ed.D.
Associate Professor, Chaminade University

Beginning college is an exciting experience for most young people, coupled with some anxiety about leaving home for the first time and being on one’s own. In the college dorm, there is no one around to tell you to do your homework, get to bed at a decent hour, get off the telephone, or eat a healthy breakfast before leaving for class. The thrill of being independent also carries with it the reality of being independent - you are responsible for yourself in ways you may have never imagined. Considerations implicit in being responsible for yourself include such things as managing your time effectively, organizing your schedule to meet your school and personal obligations, identifying and using personal and academic resources appropriately, and learning to understand and meet your own needs in the context of living and interacting with people who - up to now - were probably strangers. Most young people have learned to achieve some of these skills before college, but few have been wholly responsible for themselves prior to leaving the home environment.

Stress is a natural and inevitable occurrence in college life, particularly in the first semester away from home. Exposure to new experiences, demands on one’s time, and a variety of new choices to make all combine to create stress for the college student, even one who is excited and ready to jump into college life with both feet. After the novelty and excitement of the first few weeks of school wear off, many students find themselves overwhelmed, overscheduled, and overloaded with class work, studying, and maintaining a personal life. Often a crash occurs around midterm evaluations, when the realization of “too much to do in too short a time” hits home. Stress, fatigue and anxiety can combine to make college a miserable experience.

The tips and strategies to manage stress for college students are arranged in three distinct parts: Part 1 deals with taking care of yourself physically. Part 2 presents information about managing academic and school-related demands. Part 3 gives ideas for taking care of your psychological and emotional needs, particularly when you’re feeling overwhelmed.

Part 1: Taking Care of Yourself
A key part of managing or reducing stress is taking good care of yourself physically. This includes engaging in regular exercise, strenuous enough to work up a sweat and to discharge tension that builds up as you go through the day. Pick something you enjoy doing that you will stick with over time. Sports, jogging, and resistance training all can help you stay fit as well as reduce tension in your body. A second part of taking care of yourself physically is to eat healthy, nutritious foods, avoiding junk food as much as possible. Many college students, away from home for the first time, make unwise choices and deprive their bodies of needed nutrients. Poor nutrition results in lowered stress resistance, which saps energy reserves and can result in fatigue and illness. The third part of taking care of yourself is getting enough rest and sleep. Many students try to get by on little sleep, cramming for exams and trying to catch up on school by pulling an “all-nighter”. This may work in the short run, but sleep deprivation can lead to impaired thinking, poor decision making, illness, and a generalized inability to accomplish everyday tasks. Getting enough sleep is a key way to replenish your energy reserves, so that stress doesn’t take its toll on you.

Part 2: Managing Academic Demands
Managing the academic demands of college requires a commitment to organizing one’s time, schedule, and priorities. Many students, overwhelmed at the opportunities available for social interaction and new friendships, over schedule themselves for activities and commitments. Often, the academic side of college life suffers, as the structure of academics in college puts the responsibility for success on the student. Typically, attendance is the student’s job; most professors do not seek students out to find out why they didn’t attend a lecture. Cutting a class may be easy; no detention is assigned if you fail to come to class on time. Students need to make it a priority to attend every class every time, and to be on time. Get to know your professors. Seek appropriate advising to plan your course load and schedule; ask for help if you need it. Take advantage of learning centers, tutorial help, and other supports such as learning labs or taped lectures (sometimes available in the library). Find out the hours for the computer center, library, learning center and other resources on campus before you need to use them. Most importantly, don’t procrastinate on projects or papers that will require significant effort. It is generally a helpful idea to use a monthly planner to schedule the parts of large projects across the semester, so you build in time to do each part thoroughly and well. Putting assignments off until the last minute is a guaranteed stress producer and usually results in poor quality work. Many professors won’t accept work that is late, or if they do, significant penalties may be incurred. Thinking through what you want to accomplish each semester and identifying your academic goals early will help you manage the demands the academic side of college presents.

Continue on page 5
Part 3: Managing Psychological and Emotional Needs

After the first excitement of new living arrangements, new friends, and a new sense of independence wears off, many college students experience feelings of loneliness, anxiety, and inadequacy. College life presents demands that tax the emotional and psychological reserves of students as they try to figure out who they are, how to “fit in” in the new environment, and how to be successful in their academic endeavors. Some students feel homesick for familiar people and places; the effort required to adjust and adapt to college can be overwhelming. It is important to identify early the available resources for when you need someone to talk to, confide in, or ask questions. Most colleges have services available through the counseling center, the student affairs office, or the student health service. Dormitories may have a Resident Advisor, who may be able to assist you or direct you to the appropriate source for help. Find out what services are available and how to access them early; it’s easier to get help quickly if you know where to go and how to seek it out. For many students, it is helpful to be reassured that their feelings of loneliness or anxiety are normal and expected as part of the college experience. Don’t be afraid to seek counseling assistance if you are experiencing these feelings; they are part of the adjustment process and are normal. Getting help for dealing with feelings is a productive way to manage emotional or psychological stress and can assist you to feel more in control.

Starting college can be an exciting experience, filled with new people, opportunities, and challenges. Learning to manage stress well can help you enjoy yourself while gaining the benefits an advanced education can offer.

Ten Stress Busting Tips for Happier Holidays

By Betty Carlson, Ed.D.

This first appeared in the University of Hawaii Manoa Wellness Newsletter
It can also be found in the ISMA Library on ISMA's web site.

- Schedule some quiet time for yourself--take a walk, watch the sunset, sit at the beach and watch the ebb and flow of the tide [or take a quiet walk in the snow]. Think about the upcoming holiday season and identify priorities for your time and energy expenditures. Eliminate activities that are not satisfying to you personally or professionally.
- Decide on a budget for holiday spending--write it down and stick to it! Pre-planning your budget now will eliminate impulse spending and reduce financial stress.
- Use a large wall calendar for December to mark down activities, social events, and need-to-do items. Color code for each family member. Remember to schedule time to do family things together.
- If using a catalog or shopping services, call early and keep a written record of your order. Use 1-800 numbers to reduce phone shopping costs.
- Organize your gift wrapping supplies early. Stock up on extra tape, ribbon, gift tags, paper, and other items. Designate one place for gift-wrapping and keep all items together. Put scissors, colored pens, stickers, etc., back in the same place each time you use them.
- If you send holiday cards, organize all supplies in one large box--cards, envelopes, your address list, stamps, return address stamp/labels, etc. Work on a few cards each day until you are finished. Set a deadline for mailing and work backward until completion.
- Avoid lines at the post office. Mail packages early--stock up on stamps and other mailing supplies before the holiday rush. Contact your local post office to find out special hours for holiday schedules.
- Examine your holiday activities and routines-eliminate those that are no longer rewarding for you. Ask for help from others, or delegate to family members who may have more time than you. Purchase or rent services that you need and don't have time to do.
- Adjust your expectations of yourself this season--now is NOT the time for the "Martha Stewart" syndrome--doing everything perfectly, with grace, elegance, and style. Remember to have fun and enjoy the season.
- Determine to do at least one POSITIVE and FUN thing for yourself this season. Often we are so caught up in holiday busyness that we neglect ourselves. Taking good care of YOU will enable you to enjoy the holidays more and be more relaxed and responsive for others.
The ISMA-USA Board wants to take this opportunity to thank each of you for your membership and contributions to our branch and for all that you do to make this a happier and healthier world.

Happy Holidays and Happy New Year 2000