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GREAT LAKES AIRLINES

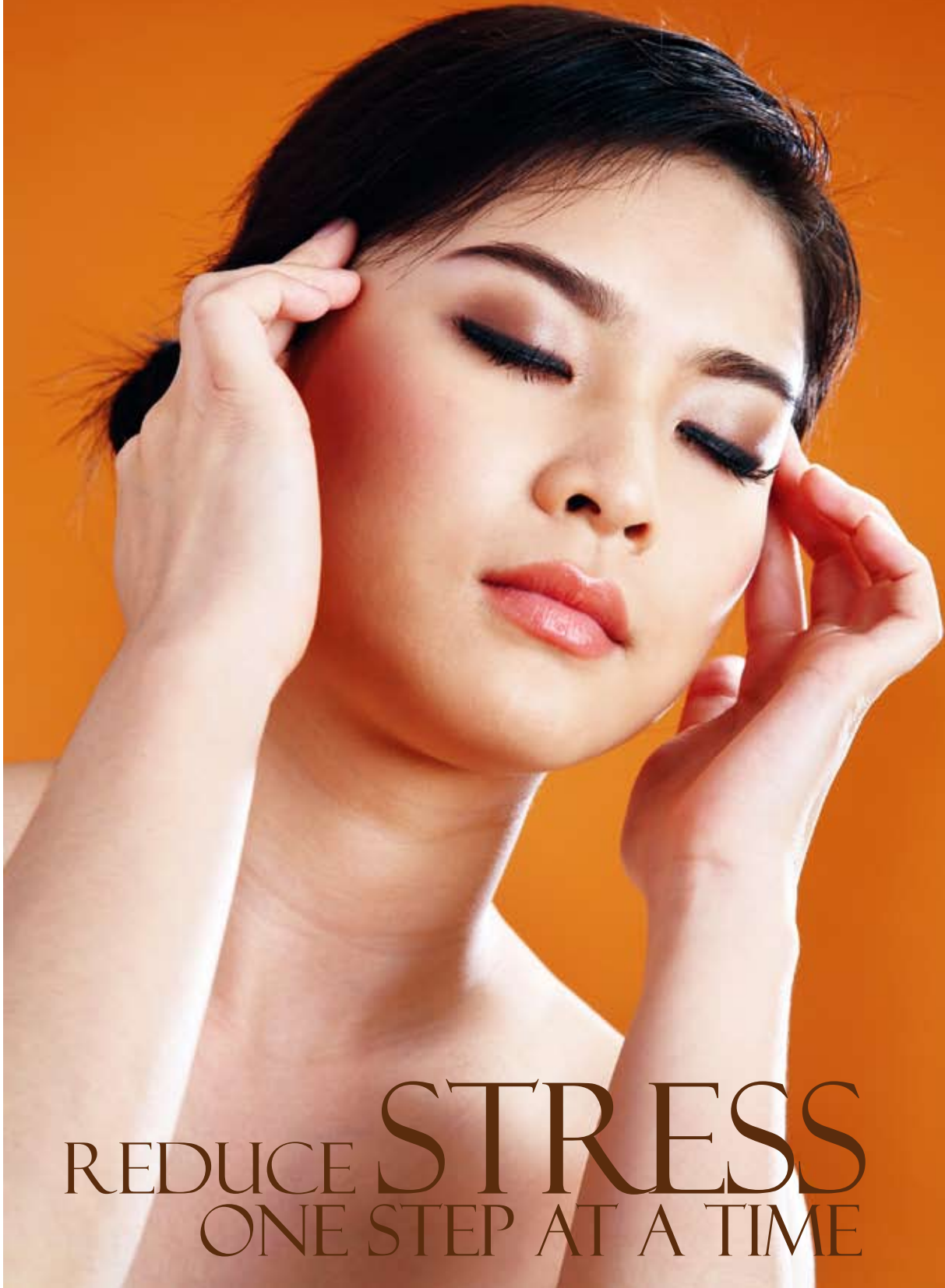
LEAKS & PLAINS

RECREATION • LIFESTYLE • BUSINESS • CULTURE



TO YOUR HEALTH

Tess Marshall



REDUCE **STRESS**
ONE STEP AT A TIME

In our super-competitive, super-stimulated 24/7 global society we are under severe stress to keep up, stay ahead and be connected by the internet, cell phones, pagers, email and instant messaging. With job uncertainty employees are constantly asked to do more with and for less. The American Institute of Stress reports nearly one million employees miss work each day due to workplace stress.

Due to job uncertainty and economic issues workers feel pressured to hurry, shove and rush through out the workday to accomplish more. Feeling anxious, frustrated and frazzled they are often less productive. Some withdraw, isolate and suppress energy and emotions. Others anger quickly, over react and spiral out of control.

When stress is high, when deadlines seem impossible employees often become unsure of them selves. They are expected to progress, break-through and achieve results. Shoulders ache, concentration diminishes yet expectations remain the same. The treadmill continues another day on fast-forward.

Left unmanaged, pent-up stress can cause high blood pressure, alcohol and drug abuse, depression and even suicide. Procrastination, inability to concentrate, hasty decision-making, and pessimism are also stress related. The failure to address stress in the workplace results in absenteeism, reduced productivity, high turnover and medical, legal and insurance costs. Companies that become proactive in creating a work atmosphere that adds to the emotional well being of employees are rewarded with peak performance, increased productivity and profitability.

COPING WITH STRESS: All permanent change is slow. Create a plan, be willing to try different solutions and begin with small but significant steps. Figure out what needs to change. All employees would benefit from learning how to relax muscles, stop negative thoughts, exercise and improve sleep habits. It's important to learn how to handle stress in a constructive manner. Become educated, commit and begin. One step at a time, you can become more productive and reduce stress by making small significant changes through out the day.


SLOW DOWN: Begin to walk at a slower place throughout the day. Become aware of how much you rush and hurry. Speak slower. Learn to pause, don't interrupt and smile between sentences. One conversation at a time listen more and speak less. Be empathic. You will connect with others on a deeper level. Connection leads to synergy. Concentrate on your breathing. Breathe deeply and slowly, inhale for five counts, hold for 5 counts and exhale for 5 counts. Become aware of your breathing and learn to control it.

QUIET DOWN: Retreat and spend time in solitude and silence. Let go of irritability, crankiness, excessive venting, whining and complaining. Be in the present moment. Sitting in silence allows you to become connected to your heart center. This opens up the possibility of deep inner peace. Breathing deeply is powerful. Sit for ten minutes, twice a day, again breathing deeply to connect to this insightful place hidden, untapped and forgotten beneath the chaos of the outer world. You will notice stamina, vitality and increased energy. Solitude and silence is golden!

GET PHYSICAL: Choose to be healthy. Ask your body what it needs. Everyday we choose how to treat our body. If you need to lose weight commit yourself to doing it. If your diet is lacking fruits, vegetables, or water slowly begin adding more one at a time. Walk, run or lift weights. Begin slowly. A little exercise is better than none

at all. Your muscles will be less tense and your blood pressure will go down. Work your body and you will notice increased energy. The results you get from an exercise program will affect everything about you both physically and mentally. Limit alcohol. Nothing excessive is good. Treat yourself to health. Begin today.

BE FORGIVING: Nobody is perfect. Everyone makes mistakes. Blaming is a self-defeating attitude. Learn how to forgive yourself. Then forgive everyone else you have a grievance against. When it's always someone else's fault you don't have to change. Holding grudges is like carrying a ball and chain around your ankle. It gets old and tiring. Resentment is self-induced poison. Lighten up your life by letting go of the times you have felt offended and slighted. Life's too short to be mad. Before falling asleep at night let go of anything that disturbed you during the day. You will then be able to rest in peace.

BE OPTIMISTIC: Learn to have faith and hope for a better world. Every positive decision you make, every positive action you take will lead you in a better direction. Create a positive view of self and others. Increase positive experiences and enrich relationships. Learn to concentrate on what is good. Plan interesting and fun ways to be. Focus on life's blessings. We control what takes up space in our mind. Seek out happy people for support. Once you know how you become one hundred percent responsible for handling stress in a constructive manner. Optimism is a life enhancing energy. Don't just hope for a better world or life make it happen! 



~Tess Marshall is a speaker, psychologist and author of the book, "Flying by the Seat of My Soul". Learn the keys to effective communication and increased productivity by emailing her at tessmarshall@tessmarshall.com.