

Stress: Intense Effects the Mind and Body

Life throws up challenges all the time. Some of us are happy, while others get a little stressed and anxious. Stress is very powerful. We all have experienced different forms of stress throughout our lives. We should be experts, but this stress is dealt with differently. So, this article's intent is to educate everyone on stress's physical and mental effects to understand it and deal with it better when confronted with those stressful moments.

So, we all can relate to this situation; we are sitting in traffic, late for an appointment, watching the time tick away. Your brain releases stress hormones! These hormones trigger your body's "fight or flight" response. Your heart races, you rapidly breathe, and your muscles tense to ready your body for action. This response protects your body in case of emergencies; however, if this response occurs daily, it could cause severe risks to your health.

Stress is a very natural reaction to many different experiences. Everyone experiences and handles stress differently. Anything from work or family to serious life events can trigger stress. For short-term stress situations, it can be beneficial by helping us cope. Although, if stress responses do not reset and stay elevated, it can affect your health. Chronic stress can affect your well-being, with symptoms like irritability, anxiety, depression, headaches, and insomnia.

Central nervous and endocrine systems

The central nervous system is responsible for your "fight or flight" response. The hypothalamus initiates your brain's response by communicating to your adrenal glands to discharge adrenaline and cortisol. These hormones increase your heartbeat, rushing blood rushing to vital organs of the body. When the perceived fear is gone, the central nervous system should return the body to normal; however, if the stress does not disappear, the response will continue causing chronic stress. Chronic stress is also a factor in overeating, drug and alcohol abuse, and social withdrawal.

Cardio and Respiratory Systems

Stress hormones affect every aspect of our respiratory and cardiovascular systems. During a stress response, you breathe faster to distribute oxygen-rich blood to your body quicker. If you have prior breathing issues like asthma or emphysema, stress is going to make it worse. Stress hormones cause your heart to pump faster, constricting your blood vessels and diverting more oxygen to your muscles, so you will have more strength to react. This process also raises blood pressure. As a result, chronic stress will make your heart work too hard, too long. When your blood pressure rises, so does your risk of having a stroke or heart attack.

Managing Your Stress Levels

We have recognized that chronic stress is awful for us, but what is more important is how to manage it properly realistically. Research has proven the benefits of managing stress with exercise.

Complete article is on The Veteran Doctor Blog. Please go to <http://www.theveterandocor.com/>



Merging Vets and Players: A "Groundbreaking" Solution to Veterans' Challenges

In a truly "revolutionary" move, Merging Vets and Players (MVP) was founded in 2015 by Fox Sports analyst Jay Glazer and former Green Beret and NFL player Nate Boyer. Their earth-shattering idea? To bring together former service members and professional athletes in a supportive community, as if these groups could benefit from shared experiences and peer-to-peer support. This article delves into the mind-boggling concept of MVP's approach to helping veterans and athletes.

The MVP Program

MVP's programs, in a stroke of pure genius, offer a safe space for veterans and athletes to connect, engage in physical activities, and discuss the challenges they face. They encourage participants to open up about their struggles, like PTSD and career transitions, as if talking about problems could ever help. Unsurprisingly, MVP participants report feeling more connected, understood, and supported. And, shockingly, sharing experiences helps reduce feelings of isolation and depression.

The "Benefits" of Peer-to-Peer Support

Apparently, research shows that peer-to-peer support can significantly improve mental health outcomes, leading to better coping strategies and overall well-being. MVP's model jumps on this bandwagon, providing a supportive community with a common purpose. And if that wasn't enough, MVP throws in physical activity, which we all know has never been linked to improving mental health, reducing stress, or helping with anxiety and depression. Participants engage in team-building workouts, fostering a sense of accomplishment and shared purpose.

Expanding the MVP Network

Thanks to MVP's "success," the organization has expanded to multiple chapters across the United States, bringing together participants in cities like Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Atlanta, and Chicago. Even high-profile celebrities like Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson, Chris Pratt, and Randy Couture have jumped on board, praising MVP

for its work in helping veterans and athletes. And, as if one organization wasn't enough, MVP even collaborates with other like-minded groups to provide additional resources and increase awareness.

The Undeniable Value of Physical Activity: A Complete Surprise

As if the peer-to-peer support wasn't enough of a revelation, MVP also incorporates physical activity into its programs. Because, you know, it's not like exercise has been proven time and time again to improve mental health, reduce stress, and help with managing anxiety and depression. MVP participants engage in team-building workouts, fostering a sense of accomplishment and shared purpose. Just imagine, people bonding over shared physical activity... truly groundbreaking stuff!

Spreading the Word: Celebrity Endorsements

As if the success of the program wasn't enough, several high-profile celebrities have also endorsed MVP. Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson, Chris Pratt, and Randy Couture have all praised the organization for its work in helping veterans and athletes. But who would have thought that famous people supporting a worthy cause could possibly increase awareness and help further the organization's mission? It's practically unheard of!

The Transformative Power of Storytelling: A Sudden Revelation

MVP not only encourages peer-to-peer support but also utilizes the ancient art of storytelling, a technique never seen in human history. Participants share their personal experiences, providing insights into their own struggles and triumphs. It's as if storytelling can foster empathy, understanding, and a sense of belonging. Who could have foreseen that humans might benefit from sharing their stories with one another?

Complete article is on The Veteran Doctor Blog. Please go to <http://www.theveterandocor.com/> for this article and more.

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Equine Therapy for Veterans

Ah, equine therapy - where the four-legged, hay-munching therapists trot in to save the day for our battle-hardened veterans. These majestic animals have apparently decided that grazing on grass and winning races isn't enough, and now they want to help humans too. Who knew that these equine Einsteins could do more than just eat carrots and entertain kids at birthday parties?

Ever thought that a horse would make a better therapist than the bespectacled, note-taking, and slightly judging human in the office? Well, as it turns out, that might not be such a far-fetched idea. Equine therapy gives our beloved veterans the chance to brush up on their horse whisperer skills while simultaneously addressing their emotional and psychological needs. Hey, who wouldn't trade a dreary office for a stable full of equine friends?

Picture this: A burly veteran, fresh from the battlefield, suddenly finding solace in the company of a graceful, yet slightly sassy, horse. It's not your typical heartwarming movie plot, but rather the real-life story of equine therapy and how it's taking the mental health world by storm. Think of it as Mr. Ed meets Good Will Hunting, but with fewer apples and more emotional breakthroughs.

Jokes aside, equine therapy, or "horse whispering for the emotionally wounded," has been shown to help veterans cope with PTSD, anxiety, and depression. The treatment involves a combination of grooming, leading, and riding horses, which is a much more entertaining alternative to sitting in a stuffy office with a shrink. The bond formed between the veteran and the horse works wonders for trust-building

and self-awareness, and the horse's gentle nature has a calming effect, unlike your over-caffeinated therapist.

In this peculiar form of therapy, horses provide an intuitive understanding of our emotional state, reacting to subtle changes in body language, which can help veterans identify and process their feelings. Horses, unlike the in-laws, won't judge or criticize, allowing the veterans to open up and work through their issues at their own pace. It's a good thing these horses are so smart, or we'd have a bunch of emotional wrecks with great saddle skills.

Equine therapy, as silly as it may sound, boasts some serious benefits, like reducing stress, promoting physical activity, and increasing self-confidence. Veterans get to escape the pressures of everyday life and connect with these big-hearted beasts in a relaxed, natural environment. And, let's be honest, who wouldn't rather hang out with a horse than a room full of jargon-spewing therapists?

Horses have this magical ability to mirror human emotions and behaviors, making them the perfect partner for veterans struggling with emotional regulation. In fact, they're so good at it that some might think they've secretly been taking night classes in human psychology. The only downside? Your horse therapist might not be as skilled at delivering witty one-liners, but hey, we can't have it all.

Equine therapy programs don't just stop at petting and whispering sweet nothings into the horse's ears. These sessions often include structured activities that help veterans with goal-setting,

problem-solving, and teamwork. And no, you won't be asked to create a PowerPoint presentation on the benefits of oats versus hay, but you might learn a thing or two about trust and communication.

While the idea of a horse being your therapist might seem a little absurd, these equine-centric programs are backed by science. Research shows that the gentle, non-judgmental nature of horses can help reduce symptoms of PTSD, depression, and anxiety in veterans. Plus, let's face it, the whole experience just sounds a heck of a lot more interesting than sitting on a couch, discussing your feelings ad nauseam.

You might think that horses are only good for pulling carriages or racing around tracks, but these majestic creatures are actually naturals at helping people overcome emotional barriers. Veterans often face unique challenges when reintegrating into society, and our four-legged therapists provide the perfect non-verbal support system. After all, there's nothing quite like a gentle nuzzle from a 1,000-pound creature to remind you that you're loved and valued.

The bottom line? Equine therapy is a game-changer for veterans on the path to emotional well-being. These hoofed heroes are helping our servicemen and women find their footing in civilian life, one trot at a time. So, saddle up, partner, and get ready for a new kind of therapy that's equal parts hilarious and healing. Who knows, you might just find that your equine therapist is neigh-ver a bad listener.

For the complete article, please go to www.theveteransdoctor.com

Monthly Resource Picks



Merging Vets and Players

www.vetsandplayers.org

Our nation's warriors - from every field of battle - possess a sense of strength, of excellence, and of commitment that we seldom see here at home. However, far too many of them are struggling to transition their abilities towards a new mission - leading themselves, their families, and their communities off the field. MVP was designed to address this challenge, and ensure that all of our nation's warriors can be as productive off the field as they were on it.

By merging vets and players, we create an environment where these warriors can share each other's strength and experience, and can support each other in building fulfilling lives of service and strength. Your support will enable us to continue building our program, and unlocking the potential of these great individuals.



Horses 4 Heroes

www.horses4heros.org

Horses4Heroes is a national non-profit organization that owns and operates the Horses4Heroes Family Equestrian Center in Las Vegas. Here we offer affordable riding lessons (English and Western) for all ages (beginner and intermediate), supervised distance learning, seasonal and day camps, field trips, birthday parties, corporate events and family outings, as well Mental Health and Wellness programs for those who need a hand up, not a hand out. Horses4Heroes promotes Healthy Living through Horses!

Upcoming Local Events

- SNVCC Leatherneck Club Happy Hour – The Leatherneck Club - 4360 W Spring Mountain Rd, Las Vegas, NV 89102, USA – Monday, May 1, 2023 @ 6:00pm
- SNVCC Veteran Coffee Connections – Mothership Coffee – 2625 St Rose Pkwy, Henderson, NV 89052, USA - Tuesday, May 2, 2023 @ 9:30am
- Branded One Crossfit – BJJ Fundamentals – Branded One Crossfit - 2055 E Windmill Ln #125, Las Vegas, NV 89123, USA - Thursday, May 4, 2023, @ 9:00am
- SNVCC Veteran Coffee Connections – Public Works – 314 S Water St #110, Henderson, NV 89015, USA - Tuesday, May 16, 2023 @ 9:00am
- MAC Night Out – Westgate - 3000 Paradise Rd, Las Vegas, NV 89109, USA – Thursday, May 18, 2023 @ 5:30pm – 8:30pm
- Ride for the Troops – Red Rock Harley Davidson – 2260 S. Rainbow Blvd, Las Vegas, NV 89146, USA, Saturday, May 20, 2023 @ 9:00am – 3:30pm
- Veterans Festival – Pahrump Nugget Casino – 681 S. Highway 160, Pahrump, NV 89048, Saturday May 27, 2023, USA @ 11:00am – 3:00pm



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