

**ACHIEVING PEAK PERFORMANCE IN A CHALLENGING COVID WORLD**

*Finding Balance in an Unbalanced World*

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ChronicleBusinessPlanning.org

A KEY ESTATE PLANNING GUIDE **Law Easy**

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Jane Ransom, Executive Director  
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[AmericanBrainFoundation.org](http://AmericanBrainFoundation.org)

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OVERVIEW

- Current climate of COVID and stress
- Mindfulness:
  - Definition
  - Myths
  - Stress
- Attention training:
  - Overview
  - Exercises
- State training:
  - Overview
  - Exercises
- Sleep
  - Overview
  - Recommendations
- Conclusion
- Experiential exercise
- Q&A

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### MINDFULNESS MYTHS

- Mindfulness or meditation means to be without thoughts or "clear the mind"
- Needs to be done in a certain position
- Is a religious or spiritual practice



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### STRESS STATS

- According to the World Health Organization, stress costs American businesses as much as \$300 billion a year and is considered a "hazard of the workplace".
  - ¼ of Americans experience physical or psychological symptoms related to stress in a given month
  - 1/3 of Americans feel they are living with extreme stress
  - ½ of Americans report lying awake at night because of stress
- According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services "70% of all illness, both physical and mental, is linked to stress".
- Forty-three percent of all adults suffer adverse health effects from stress.

<http://www.who.int/news/info/reports/2007-stress.doc>  
[http://www.bullfigpost.com/articles/bullfigpost/corporate-wellness\\_b\\_2003227.htm](http://www.bullfigpost.com/articles/bullfigpost/corporate-wellness_b_2003227.htm)  
<http://www.webmd.com/behavioral/obesity/management/effects-of-stress-on-your-body/>

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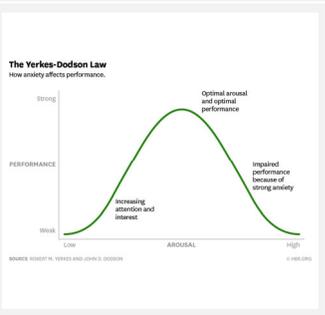
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### STRESS IMPACT

- Poor executive functioning
- Poor sleep
- Behavioral changes
- Anxiety & depression
- High blood pressure
- Weakened immune system
- Obesity
- Heart disease



**The Yerkes-Dodson Law**  
How anxiety affects performance.

PERFORMANCE

WAKE

LOW AROUSAL HIGH

increasing attention and interest

Optimal arousal and optimal performance

Impaired performance because of strong anxiety

SOURCE: ROBERT H. YERKES AND JOHN D. DODSON

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**MOU1** Microsoft Office User, 4/17/2020

**MOU2** Microsoft Office User, 4/17/2020

**MINDFULNESS & STRESS**

- Research has demonstrated that mindfulness activates and can even grow areas of the brain associated with:
  - focus and concentration
  - personal and contextual awareness
  - cognitive performance
  - emotional intelligence
  - insight and creativity
  - happiness and contentment
  - the ability to break old habits and form new ones
  - Decrease in stress and anxiety

*"Building mind-fitness with mindfulness training may help anyone who must maintain peak performance in the face of extremely stressful circumstances, from first responders, relief workers and trauma surgeons, to professional and Olympic athletes."*

Associate Professor Amishi Jha,  
University of Miami

[http://www.wkapxpsychology.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Khoury\\_2013\\_mindfulness-metastudy.pdf](http://www.wkapxpsychology.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Khoury_2013_mindfulness-metastudy.pdf)

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**ATTENTION TRAINING**

**Do you walk the dog, or does the dog walk you?**

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**FOCUSED ATTENTION**

- Attention training involves learning how to optimally focus and direct attention at any moment, so that one is using their mind as effectively as possible.

1. Identify where attention is focused
2. Make a choice, keep focusing attention or redirect attention based on what's beneficial in the moment

**Presence. Mindfulness. Choice.**

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5, 4, 3, 2, 1 Senses Exercise

Breath Sensing

Hands Sensing

Temperature Sensing

**FOCUSED ATTENTION EXERCISES**

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**STATE TRAINING**

Getting in the optimal "zone" for the current environment

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**STAYING IN THE "HEALTHY STRESS" ZONE**

State Training involves learning the mechanisms of action to put the body (nervous system) and mind into the optimal state for any situation.

**The Yerkes-Dodson Law**  
How anxiety affects performance.

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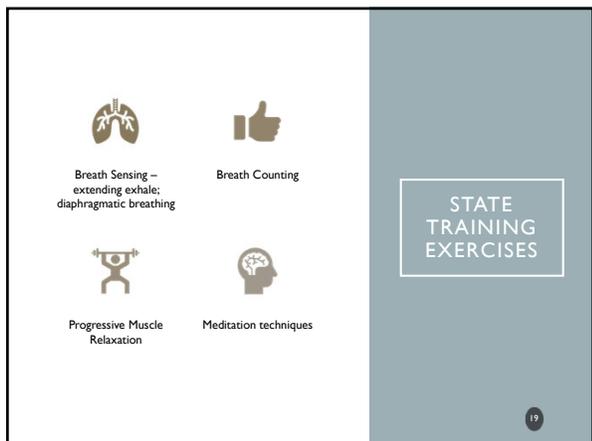
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STATE TRAINING EXERCISES

Breath Sensing – extending exhale; diaphragmatic breathing

Breath Counting

Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Meditation techniques

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SLEEP

Sleep, mindfulness & performance

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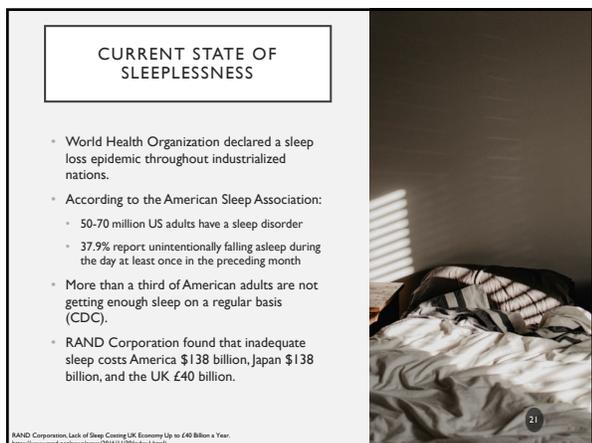
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CURRENT STATE OF SLEEPLESSNESS

- World Health Organization declared a sleep loss epidemic throughout industrialized nations.
- According to the American Sleep Association:
  - 50-70 million US adults have a sleep disorder
  - 37.9% report unintentionally falling asleep during the day at least once in the preceding month
- More than a third of American adults are not getting enough sleep on a regular basis (CDC).
- RAND Corporation found that inadequate sleep costs America \$138 billion, Japan \$138 billion, and the UK £40 billion.

RAND Corporation, Lack of Sleep Costing UK Economy Up to £40 Billion a Year. [https://www.rand.org/pubs/press\\_releases/2014/03/20140301a.html](https://www.rand.org/pubs/press_releases/2014/03/20140301a.html)

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**INSUFFICIENT SLEEP**

- Effects every system of the body and brain
- Effects capacity for:
  - Creativity
  - Intelligence
  - Motivation
  - Effort
  - Efficiency
  - Emotional stability
  - Honesty
- Therefore sleep quality is directly related to quality of attention and performance during the day.



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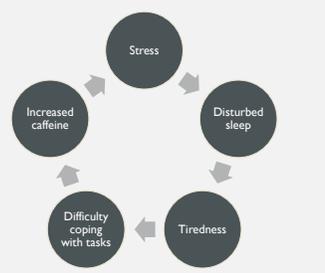
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**STRESS & SLEEP**



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graph TD
    Stress((Stress)) --> DisturbedSleep((Disturbed sleep))
    DisturbedSleep --> Tiredness((Tiredness))
    Tiredness --> DifficultyCoping((Difficulty coping with tasks))
    DifficultyCoping --> IncreasedCaffeine((Increased caffeine))
    IncreasedCaffeine --> Stress
          
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**SLEEP RECOMMENDATIONS**

**ENVIRONMENT**

- Temperature cool
- Limit light exposure
- Limit noise

**HABITS**

- Regular sleep-wake schedule
- Nap smart<sup>®</sup>
- Morning sun, limit screens at night
- Avoid caffeine after 12pm
- Exercise
- Address stress

**MINDSET**

- Shift from 'trying to sleep' to 'resting'
- Wind down time
- Limit time in bed awake
- Creative visualization
- Guided meditations for sleep

**EXTRA HELP**

- Flux software
- Blue-light blocking glasses

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## CONCLUSION

- We are living in times with an elevated sense of stress, anxiety and uncertainty.
- Mindfulness, including attention training and state training, can help improve focus, productivity, mood and performance at home and at work.
- Identifying and optimizing where one is on the stress curve, is key to performance and wellbeing.
- Stress is implicated in poor sleep, and poor sleep increases stress
- Mindfulness can help lower stress and improve sleep, thereby increasing the quality of attention and focus during the day.

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## EXPERIENTIAL PRACTICE

Practice calming down and shifting into a calm and relaxed state.

- Focused attention
- Breath sensing
- Body sensing



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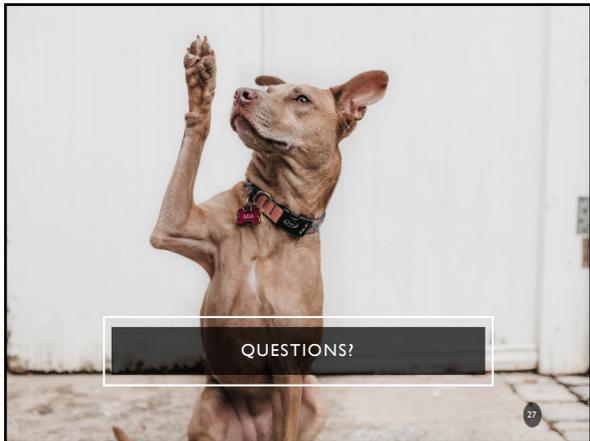
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## QUESTIONS?

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MINDFULNESS & MEDITATION RESOURCES

- [www.goinmeditations.com](http://www.goinmeditations.com)
- [Spotify](#)
- [YouTube](#)

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RECOMMENDED READING

- Why We Sleep – Dr. Matthew Walker
- The Sleep Revolution – Ariana Huffington

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Contact Cassandra Carlopio via email at [cassandra@mgmteessentials.com](mailto:cassandra@mgmteessentials.com)

[www.managementessentials.com](http://www.managementessentials.com) | [www.cassandracarlopio.com](http://www.cassandracarlopio.com)

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