WORK RELATED INJURIES
Certain occupations are more susceptible to injuries but they can occur in any circumstance

.....Margarita Gurevich................. 17

FITNESS

SPRING: YOUR FITNESS GUIDE
Finding it hard to get motivated to exercise? Here is your Spring guide

.....Kat Millar ......................... 21
TIPS FOR PREVENTING BACK PAIN
Suffering from back pain?
Live pain-free using exercise
and movement

.....Kusal Goonewardena .......... 24

IS PILATES OLD NEWS?
The principles of Pilates and
strength training remain important

.....Michael Dermansky .......... 27

EXERCISES FOR PREGNANCY PART 1
Learn about the benefits
of exercise during each
trimester in pregnancy

.....Vanessa Bartlett ............ 30

MINDSET

BETRAYAL: FORGIVING YOUR EX
Steps in the process of forgiving
your ex after betrayal

.....Susie Flashman Jarvis ......... 34

RELATIONSHIPS AND CONTROL PART 1
Relationships can be ruined by the
mind games that couples play

.....Leanne Allen .................. 38

RELATIONSHIPS

DREAM KILLERS PART 2
How to handle your thoughts that
can kill your dreams

.....Dr Matthew Anderson ........ 42

KIDZ MATTERS

HELPING KIDS WITH HOMEWORK PART 1
Create a happy learning space for kids

.....Deb Hopper ..................... 46

EMOTIONALLY INTELLIGENT KIDS PART 2
Enhance emotional intelligence with
positive emotions in children

.....Dr Ash Nayate .................. 50
Hello Friends

Recently, I was reflecting on what we mean by ‘value’. When determining ‘value’, we often look at the value of things that we purchase and ask if it is worth that amount of money. The same issues happen in life. We invest our time in activities that represents value to us. Since you are reading Great Health Guide™ magazine, I imagine that you value your health and so invest into a healthy future by learning and applying your knowledge. You value your friends and family and find ways to invest your time in them, in a deeper and more fulfilling way.

If you find yourself just meandering through life, then perhaps now is a good time to ask yourself, ‘what do I truly value...what is important to me?’ A quick answer is guaranteed; it will be where you spend most of your time and money. For some of us, this could represent an excellent time to re-examine our values and find what is truly important in life.

So, if you value great health, you’re in the right place to receive a smorgasbord of outstanding articles published in this month’s issue of Great Health Guide from Self-care for Busy People, Spring: Your Fitness Guide to Forgiveness After Betrayal, among many others.

I trust that you will enjoy this month’s issue of Great Health Guide™.

Kath x
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CHOLESTEROL IN THE SPOT LIGHT

Part 1

Words Dr Helena Popovic
Design Oleksandra Zuieva
Sometimes we’re so preoccupied with a door that has closed, we miss seeing a door that has opened. This is what happened when the medical community focused all its attention on high blood cholesterol as a potential cause of heart attack. We forgot that by far the most powerful ways of lowering heart disease are **exercising regularly, reducing sugar, trans-fat and alcohol consumption and not smoking**.

**IF EVERYONE** followed the five lifestyle guidelines listed below then the article, *The Cholesterol Controversy Part 2*, would not need to have been written! It will appear in the October 2017 issue of GHG™.

- stopped smoking
- was physically active for 30 minutes or more a day
- consumed less alcohol: no more than 10 (for women) and 14 (for men) standard alcoholic drinks per week, see *Fructose: The New Booze*, Nov. 2016 GHG™ magazine
- ate less than six teaspoons of sugar each day, see *Sugar: The New Fat*, Oct. 2016 GHG™ magazine
- avoided trans-fats and consumed a diet rich in fibre.

When you follow the **five lifestyle guidelines listed above**, your body will effectively self-regulate your blood cholesterol. The exception is people with a rare genetic disorder known as familial hyper-cholesterol-anaemia (hyphenated for ease of reading), so, please continue to adhere to your doctor’s advice.

The average person makes about one gram of cholesterol every day, most of it in the liver. The amount you make on a daily basis, changes in relation to your dietary intake. If you eat more cholesterol you will make less cholesterol and vice versa.

The total amount of cholesterol in your body is around 35 grams, mainly found in your cell membranes. Cholesterol is also a component of bile, which is stored in the gall bladder. When bile is released into the small intestine, it helps to digest dietary fats and absorb the fat-soluble Vitamins A, D, E and K. Bile also neutralises stomach acid before the acid enters your duodenum and it kills any pathogenic bacteria that might be lurking in your food.

**CHOLESTEROL IS ALSO EFFICIENTLY RECYCLED BY THE BODY.**

The liver excretes it via bile, into the digestive tract and about 50% of the excreted cholesterol is reabsorbed back into the blood by the small intestine.

**DIETARY CHOLESTEROL COMES FROM ANIMAL FOODS.**

These are meat, prawns, poultry, egg yolks, cheese, butter and breast milk. Contrary to what I was taught in medical school, eating these foods will NOT elevate small dense atherogenic LDL cholesterol levels. If you allow your body to guide you and if you eat a wide variety of whole foods, your body will balance how much cholesterol it makes, recycles and excretes. We need cholesterol from birth and
breast milk contains 14mg of cholesterol per 100g, much the same as in cow’s milk. If you are not lactose intolerant and if you enjoy dairy products, there is nothing unhealthy about enjoying full fat dairy products.

**PLANTS DO NOT MAKE CHOLESTEROL.**

Some plant foods such as avocados, peanuts and linseeds actually reduce our absorption of cholesterol because they contain phytosterols that compete with cholesterol and reduce its uptake in the intestine. The key, as always, is listening to your body to determine your nutritional needs at any given time. One diet does not fit all. Pause before eating or planning your meals and ask yourself what it is you need. Everyone’s balance is different. By learning to tune in to your body, you will start to recognise what is nutritionally right for you at any given time.

**THE MOST REWARDING THING WE CAN DO, IS TO START TAKING RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR OWN HEALTH.**
The reason that cholesterol gets so much attention is because there are drugs that can lower blood cholesterol. No one profits from you going for a walk except you, so walking will get less press than statins (the most frequently prescribed cholesterol-lowering medications).

The issue with statins is that although they may be helpful in some people with a high risk of heart disease (this is becoming increasingly debatable), they can have unpleasant side effects such as myalgia (muscle pain), fatigue, digestive problems, mental fuzziness, confusion, memory loss, elevated blood glucose levels and occasionally liver damage. For some people, the muscle soreness and weakness are so severe that they stop exercising and become socially withdrawn - this is far worse than having high cholesterol. Statins have also been associated with reduction in mental functioning in people with dementia.

I am not advocating that you abandon your cholesterol-lowering medication if that’s what you’ve been prescribed. I’m merely suggesting that you speak to your doctor if you have concerns about side effects that are reducing your quality of life. Ask your doctor if the risks outweigh any potential benefits.

Cholesterol is not something we need to fear. Good health is determined by more than blood test results. Good health is about making daily choices that lead to improved energy, vitality and enthusiasm for life. The most rewarding and powerful thing we can do is to start taking responsibility for our own health.

In the next issue of GHG™, the article, The Cholesterol Controversy Part 2, provides a simple overview of blood cholesterol levels and describes the changes in the medical communities’ opinion on cholesterol.

Dr Helena Popovic is a medical doctor, a leading authority on how to improve brain function, international speaker and best-selling author. Helena runs weight management retreats based on living not dieting, and is the author of the award-winning book ‘NeuroSlimming – let your brain change your body’. For more information, refer to Helena’s website.
Are you someone who works long hours and wonders where the day goes to? Do you feel you are working at, or beyond full capacity, with no space for anything else?

I will show you that it is easy to build time into each day for self-care, so that it becomes a natural practice.

It is very easy to put yourself and your own needs at the bottom of the list of priorities, but research is showing us that our health is suffering due to stress and lack of self-care. Our work environments are often challenging and with the ever-increasing rate of change, those challenges are only likely to increase over time. If you don’t prioritise your needs, you will not be here to continue serving and meeting the needs of others at home and work.

Choose your favourites self-care practices from this list of examples and feel free to add in your own:

1. **Carry out self-assessment.**

We often get so caught up in work or commitments at home, that we don’t even realise how we truly feel. A great practice is to take 2 minutes out at the start or end of the day, to self-scan and check in with your body to see if anything requires attention. Whether it is physical aches and pains, emotional discomfort or old habits and patterns which are impacting on your behaviour - a quick scan can help you focus on changes that could improve your health and well-being.

2. **Perform deep breathing.**

Set an alarm and STOP what you are doing every two hours. Turn the alarm off and take a deep breath in. Place your hands on your belly and make sure the breath is deep and even and pushes your belly out as you breathe in. Now let that breath go, blowing out the breath and imagining any tension or negativity being exhaled with the air. Consciously relax your abdominal muscles and allow your breath to move easily and freely. Repeat these actions, three to five times, holding a feeling of appreciation at heart level, ensuring the length of the breath in and breath out, are the same. The combination of these activities will facilitate a lowering of high heart rate, which is healthy for your whole system.

3. **Try mindful breathing.**

Alternately you can try mindful breathing – again stop what you are doing, put all your

**Self-care can become a natural practice.**

Your self-care is not a value-added commodity; it is an essential component of a sustainable future. So, we need to find time in our busy schedules to build it in. Just as 5-7 pieces of fruit and veg a day is good for your health, 5-7 practices of quick and easy self-care activities a day, or at least once a week, will help you to create holistic health and well-being.

**GHG Disclaimer – please read**
attention and focus on your breath and just notice what you notice. There is no aim to change anything, or to judge any feeling you become aware of – just notice. This will bring you into the present moment. Research shows that this can have a significant reduction on stress levels, along with an increase in immune function, learning and memory, to name a few of the evidence based benefits.

4. **Do random acts of kindness.**

There is a vast array of research to show that demonstrating kindness to others, makes you feel good. What better way to practice this than at work, which has the double benefit, where both you and your colleagues gain from those actions. Think of ways to show kindness, whether it is washing up someone’s mug, leaving a positive note on their work station, doing a task you know they don’t enjoy, or bringing in healthy food to share. Whatever you think of, ideally something that is tailor made for the individual, enjoy the pleasure it gives you as you find creative ways of doing these acts of kindness. Over time the people with whom you spend your work days, will benefit as well.

5. **Practice gratitude.**

One of the most effective ways to increase mood is to practice gratitude. Buy yourself a diary and each day write three things you are grateful for. It can be small and simple things that you notice, but what you will probably find, is that in a very short space of time, the number of things that you record grows. You can set a certain time of day to fill in your gratitude diary so it becomes a habitual and normal part of your every-day practice.

While there is no one ‘right’ list of activities and everyone will have their own preferences, you can adjust and refine these simple ideas to fit your work environments. Whether you use these examples, or create your own practices, the key to success is making a firm commitment to pay attention to all areas of your life at home and work.

Your defining principle must be the belief that this investment of time and energy in yourself is worthwhile.

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Injuries are not reserved for high-level athletes and those participating in physical activity. Injuries can occur in any circumstance and certain occupations correlate with particular types of injuries.

**THE STATS.**

From the Australian Bureau of Statistics, between July 2013 and June 2014, over 531,000 people experienced work-related injuries. Statistically, males experience more injuries than females.
making up 61% of the total. People who were classified as machine operators, trades workers and labourers experienced the highest injury rates. The most common types of injuries were sprain/strain (33%) and chronic joint or muscle conditions (21%).

A hefty 34% of injuries occurred through lifting, pushing, pulling and bending, while 9% occurred from repetitive movements.

What these particular injury types and mechanisms have in common, is that they can all be modified and manipulated by appropriate physiotherapy intervention.

**LIFTING, PUSHING, PULLING AND BENDING.**

The implications of poor lifting and carrying techniques have been well documented. Most workplaces that require such tasks, will usually educate employees on safe ways to perform them. If you feel like you are developing problems due to these physical jobs, it is important to speak to your employer and see if any modifications can be made.

Physiotherapists can offer assistance for these problems in several ways. A thorough assessment can determine whether the best techniques are being used and potentially come up with new techniques to avoid further injury. Additionally, physiotherapists can provide you with specific exercises to counter the effects of bending and lifting, while also strengthening the core muscles and other important muscles of the body to reduce the likelihood of injury occurring.

**REPETITIVE MOVEMENTS.**

These are tasks that are not necessarily strenuous in nature, but when performed continuously for a long period of time, can take a toll on the body. Once again, workplaces will normally have systems in place to reduce the chance of such injuries occurring. Taking regular breaks from the task being performed, or switching to a different task, are two ways in which these risks can be minimised.

Once again, a physiotherapist can assist through assessment of technique and posture. Alternative methods can be devised and exercises can be helpful to stretch and strengthen affected areas.

**THE SILENT KILLER.**

It is very common knowledge that prolonged sitting has become a contributing factor towards poor health amongst Australians. While this does not specifically lead to traditional ‘workplace injuries’ it can have heavy health implications.

Firstly, sitting all day does not do any favours to our muscles and joints. Stiffness and reduced joint mobility can occur, as well as development of poor posture and pathology of the spine, anywhere from the lower back to the neck. Small changes, such as setting reminders to get up and walk or stretch can be helpful. Your physiotherapist can provide ergonomic advice, as well as giving you tips and specific exercises to combat the effects of sitting.

**In a few words, a good work setup involves the following points:**

- making sure that the chair being used has a good lumbar support; alternatively, a lumbar roll can be used
• pushing the chair right in and making sure that only the elbows are hanging off the desk
• always using a portable mouse if working on a laptop
• making sure that there is a 90-degree bend at the hips, knees and ankles.

PROLONGED SITTING CONTRIBUTES TOWARDS POOR HEALTH AMONGST AUSTRALIANS.

Additionally, being sedentary for long periods has negative consequences for our general health, doing no favours for our cardiovascular and respiratory systems. Adding some forms of physical activity to your day, such as riding or walking to work, taking the stairs instead of the lift, using your lunch break for some physical activity or implementing a standing desk, can all be useful.

SUMMARY.

Ultimately, all tasks carry some level of risk, but with the right structures in place, we can minimise the likelihood of injuries occurring. Physiotherapists are an excellent starting point if you require any advice, treatment or preventative strategies. It is often possible to arrange with a physiotherapist to visit your workplace to conduct a workplace assessment, give ergonomic advice, conduct educational seminars on manual handling and other tasks as relevant to each workplace.

Our jobs are important for our livelihood and therefore we should make sure we can perform them in the safest and most comfortable ways possible.

Margarita Gurevich is Senior Physiotherapist and uses Clinical Pilates, SCENAR Therapy & other evidence-based techniques, including Real Time Ultrasound and McKenzie Treatment. Margarita specialises in sports injuries, women’s health (including incontinence) and gastrointestinal issues. Margarita may be contacted via her website.

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SPRING—
YOUR FITNESS GUIDE

Words Kat Millar  Design Oleksandra Zuieva
Clear blue skies, the sun on your back; the smell of a new season is just around the corner!

It’s nearly time to lunge into spring: to replace your long-sleeved clothes with shorts and singlets. What a great feeling! Some people find it easy to exercise all year round, regardless of the weather. Other people find it harder to get motivated to exercise because of the cold. If you are one of the latter, then this article is for you.

Today is a new day - a new opportunity to make the right choices that will take us to the body, the health, the fitness and the life that we want. A new season is a great new chance to reassess where we’re at and decide what we want to do in the future.

**HERE ARE THREE THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN PREPARING FOR SPRING:**

1. **New gear.**

When was the last time you invested in a new training singlet? A pair of great-fitting shorts? When you treat yourself to new outdoor workout gear, to train in style and comfort, you’ll be more motivated to get moving.

How about a new pair of training shoes? One tip on buying new shoes: buy them in the afternoon after you’ve spent some time walking throughout the day. Your feet ‘spread’ during the day and if you buy shoes in the morning, you’ll probably find they’ll be too tight for you.

2. **New Music.**

When did you last get a new music playlist? It’s so motivating when you have new music to look forward to. We humans have a deep need for variety in our lives and if we don’t satisfy it, we can lose motivation.

New music is one way to inject some more energy and enthusiasm into your mindset when it comes to wanting to exercise. I remember designing a new playlist for a 10km charity run I did and it helped me so much - not just with motivation but total enjoyment!

3. **New Action Goals.**

A new season is a great time to reflect on what you want next. Have you set any new goals recently? Or do you just have old stale ones. Goal setting still a hugely over-looked factor in increasing motivation and purpose in your training and life. Many people keep their goals too general and unmeasurable, such as ‘Get stronger’ or ‘Get fitter’. Take this a step further by deciding on some specific goals - things you will do - to obtain this outcome.

Action goals are things that you need to DO (perform, act upon) to GET the outcome that you ultimately want. Having action goals in different areas of our training, helps us stay motivated and see continued progress. Action goals have a time-frame. An easy way to make the idea of exercise more exciting and motivating, is to create a new plan for the entire next season.
HERE’S A 12-WEEK GUIDELINE:

Week 1:
• Assessment week. Record weights lifted, reps performed or distance travelled for 3-5 different exercises.
• Set a goal to increase weights, sets, reps or distance by a set number for the 3 different exercises.
• Choose a reward for completing your 4-week goals.
• Design a new training plan or ideally, have an exercise professional design one for you. Ensure that it is well-balanced.
• Train hard for 4 weeks, focusing on small increments every workout.

Week 5 to 11: Repeat above.

Week 12: Celebrate. Reward yourself! Then reassess for the next 12 weeks.

EXAMPLES OF WEEKLY DESIGN:

Week 1:
• Push ups – 12
• Run - 3.6km in 30 minutes
• Squat - 25kg bar for 10 reps

Goal by week 4:
• Push ups - 18
• Run - 4km in 30 minutes
• Squat - 32.5kg bar for 10 reps

Setting action goals for exercise in some ways is experimentation and trial and error, because we all improve at different rates.

Some people will achieve their goals sooner, some later, but remember your timeline is just a ‘benchmark’. It’s more important to have consistency and constant improvement. If you can do more intensity, reps, sets, time or distance with good technique, do more. If you are pushing your limits and not quite getting the numbers that you want, adjust your goal and carry on.

HOW TO PUT IT ALL TOGETHER.

• Write down the 3-5 parts of your body that you would like to improve and pick an exercise that are appropriate for each. Or you may wish to write down 3 exercises you want to improve on instead.
• Write down dates, numbers and goals. I suggest using a spreadsheet with the exercises down the left column and dates across the rows at the top.
• Keep a training log and record your improvements. You will find it hugely motivating to see the increases!

Kat Millar owns Get Results Training, dedicated to helping people transform their health, mind & body. Since 2003, Kat has helped thousands of people achieve their goals. She’s a coach, speaker, award-winning figure competitor, fitness lecturer & NLP practitioner. Her passion helps people achieve life-changing results & fulfillment, with a range of programs for holistic health & body transformation. Contact via Kat’s website or Facebook.
PREVENTING BACK PAIN Hinges on Two Main Things:

1. Consistency.

Back pain often arises from habitual problems, such as poor posture (particularly seated posture) and lack of mobility. Successfully preventing back pain means finding solutions and staying consistent.

2. My mantra on back pain - keep moving.

We are made to move and when we don’t problems emerge. Research confirms that less movement, such as bed rest, is the worst possible thing for back pain. We know that moving a little as often as possible, is key to treating the pain. Once pain subsides, it’s important to keep moving and increase
your range of movement, which becomes a preventative measure.

**SOME OTHER KEY POINTS FOR PREVENTING BACK PAIN THAT ALL CENTRE AROUND CONSISTENCY AND MOBILITY INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:**

1. **Maintain an exercise program.**

   Exercise brings the most powerful benefits when combining low, medium and high intensity exercise. Low intensity exercise like walking should be done most days of the week. When considering the intensity involved, I consider walking to be two or three out of 10. Moderate intensity exercises such as jogging, swimming, cycling or going to the gym, when you’re pushing yourself, is regarded as about five or six out of 10, ideally two or three times a week.

   High intensity program is regarded as eight out of 10 for a short period and research shows that results are possible just twice a week. Exercise keeps your joints lubricated, including your spine and prevents your muscles from stiffening. It improves your range of movement, your biomechanics, strengthens your core and helps keep weight down – all critical for back pain prevention.

   Please note, that I recommend being checked by a medical professional before engaging in any exercises programs particularly high intensity exercise, if you have a heart condition or any health problems.

2. **Flow movement through your day.**

   Many of us are desk-bound at work. People who ensure they get up from their desk every 45 minutes, even just for a minute or two, do their back a big favour. But move whenever you can - take the stairs, walk up the escalator, walk instead of driving wherever possible.

3. **Watch your posture.**

   Particularly seated posture; ensure your seat is the correct height, that your feet are on the floor, your computer screen is the right height and that you are the correct distance from the desk.

4. **Watch out for stress.**

   This can be hard to avoid but understanding that stress plays a key role in back pain is a start and will hopefully enable you to avoid big stress factors.

5. **Lift with your knees.**

   A bad lift can undo all your best efforts even if the object isn’t overly heavy. Always lift with your knees using the strong muscles in your thighs and not your back.

6. **Ensure your bed is providing rest.**

   The wrong mattress or pillow can play havoc on your back pain.

7. **Understand your trigger points.**

   Hopefully after going through diagnosis and recovery, you understand the trigger points that set off your back pain. It may be a combination of issues, such as poor posture and stress.

8. **Use stretches as preventative exercises.**

   You may have used stretches and exercises to treat previous back pain; they can then become powerful prevention exercises.
9. **Avoid reaching for drugs when pain does flare up.**

Reaching for drugs such as anti-inflammatories has a limited effect, as revealed by a recent study by the George Institute for Global Health, which found drugs for back pain provide little benefit but cause side effects. Drugs may become a substitute for other preventative solutions such as movement, to your detriment. Avoiding the vicious cycle of pain and relief via drugs, is an important preventative measure.

**KEY POINTS:**
- back pain prevention requires consistency
- movement is key, including regular exercises
- understand your key triggers
- drugs are no substitute for preventative measures, such as movement.

*Kusal Goonewardena* is an experienced physiotherapist who consults via his clinic, *Elite Akademy Sports Medicine*. He believes passionately that physiotherapy patients should see positive results in three sessions or less. Kusal has authored books including: *Low Back Pain - 30 Days to Pain Free* and *3 Minute Workouts*, currently available via Wilkinson Publishing. When not consulting, Kusal is a lecturer, author, consultant and mentor to thousands of physiotherapy students around the world. [www.eliteakademy.com](http://www.eliteakademy.com)
IS PILATES OLD NEWS?
It seemed that everyone was doing Pilates five years ago, but now the big thing in classical strength training is programs such as CrossFit and F45. What are these new programs? Has training turned 180 degrees and are the principles of core stability not relevant anymore?

Core stability in general is still important. Core stability means being able to activate and control the stabilising muscles around the back and pelvis, such as the deep abdominal muscles (transversus abdominus) and the deep muscles in the lower back (multifidus). These muscles control the ability of one segment of the spine to move without putting excessive pressure on other structures such as the discs of the lumbar spine. This is very important, but is only the beginning of getting the most from your body.

The classic strength training exercises provide muscles strength and power. These exercises, such as deadlifts, weighted squats and chin-ups adds the next dimension to your training program. They begin to overload and strengthen the strength bearing muscles that sit on top of the stabilising muscles. When you do an activity, such as lifting a weight from the ground or lifting a bag of shopping or going rock climbing, you need the stabilisers to control the segments of the spine. However, you also need the strength bearing muscles to provide the strength and power to perform the task, without overloading the stabilising muscles and asking them to do more than they are designed to do.
These more modern programs are a hybrid of both Pilates (core training) and classical strength training (strength muscle training).

So, the answer is, to really get the most from what your body can achieve, check out CrossFit and F45.

Michael Dermansky is a Senior Physiotherapist and Managing Director of MD Health Pilates. Michael has over seventeen years’ experience of treating clients from all walks of life, from six-year-old children up to the age of 92. Michael can be contacted through his [website](#).

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Being a personal trainer and Pilates instructor, I always thought I had control of when and how I would exercise.

Pregnancy is exciting, challenging, confronting and transitional in so many ways. You learn to appreciate the small things your body can do, like tying up shoelaces! Being pregnant with my first child, I’ve certainly experienced some challenges both physically and mentally. I have learned that there are days when you can do nothing more than rest on the couch. The key here is to listen to your body and rest when needed, but also maintain a balanced exercise plan during your pregnancy.

ALWAYS CHECK WITH YOUR DOCTOR OR GYNAECOLOGIST THAT IT IS SAFE FOR YOU TO EXERCISE THROUGHOUT PREGNANCY.

Having to moderate my regular exercise regime and make modifications has been essential, even in the first trimester where normally you can maintain your regular regime, minus anything hard core. On days where you are up to moving about, exercise is a great way to lift your energy, mood and build your strength while your body is undergoing so many changes.

THE BENEFITS OF EXERCISE DURING PREGNANCY ARE:

- better weight management
- increased mood
- prevention of prenatal and postnatal depression
- decreased incidence of back pain
- lowering your chance of developing pre-eclampsia (high blood pressure) and gestational diabetes
- better strength and posture during and after pregnancy.

WITHIN EACH TRIMESTER THERE ARE A FEW THINGS TO CONSIDER:

First trimester.

With fatigue, nausea and low blood sugar often being experienced, it’s important you start to slow down your regular exercise pace. Drink plenty of water and exercise at your best time of the day, not when you are feeling ill. You may continue to do a variety of exercise including cardio work and strength work for the muscles and the abdominals.

However, it is best to stop extreme sports or activities that would be higher impact on your body. Check with your doctor if you are unsure. In this trimester, I continued regular cardio like walking, light aerobic work and regular Pilates. Towards the end of the first trimester I eased off on the tummy work and minimised strain into the abdominals.
Second trimester.

You may be experiencing pain in both the upper and lower back areas as well as sacroiliac and pelvic pain. Drinking plenty of water is a must and again listen to your body as you start to increase in size around your tummy. From the 16th week avoid lying on your back (supine) as this can block vena cava’s blood flow back to the heart and avoid overhead ‘shoulder press’ type movements.

It is best to use a bolster of some sort to keep you on a slight angle rather than laying down for stretches. Stop all abdominal crunch and sit up style work and focus more on core work stability and pelvic floor strengthening like ‘Kegels’. This is where you draw your pelvic floor up and hold for ten seconds or so, then release. Repeat ten times each day.

Third trimester.

You may be experiencing shortness of breath, fluid retention, varicose veins, stooped posture and low energy again. Your body will be feeling more ‘lax’ due to the hormone relaxin, so take care not to over stretch. Towards the end of pregnancy, relaxin helps to relax the ligaments in and around the pelvis so that your body can better adapt to the growing baby.

Pay attention to your pace of exercise and slow down, focusing on control of each movement, as your centre of gravity will also be off balance. Light walking and some gentle Pilates or Yoga style exercises are excellent especially during this third trimester where you want to relax and de-stress, as well as gently strengthen your body.

Please note: if you are not used to regular exercise, please consult your doctor before commencing any exercise program.

In the next issue of Great Health Guide™, I will outline a group of exercises that may be suitable for you throughout your pregnancy.

Vanessa Bartlett has 14 years’ experience in the fitness industry and has appeared as a presenter for TVSN, The Morning Show and co-hosted a community TV Lifestyle show. In 2013, she was part of a group award for ‘Innovation in Healthcare’ and is on a mission to empower people to become educated in holistic health practices, powered by Pilates. See Vanessa’s website for further information.
The consequence of betrayal can be divorce or separation. However, it’s not always true, as the title of this piece implies that some relationships do survive, but it takes immense determination.

So, what is the process of forgiveness?

There are so many emotions to pass through. Using the cycle of grief and loss as our reference point is very useful. The cycle includes denial, anger, depression, bargaining and finally acceptance. Betrayal, although different to death, has many of the same components.

Many people that I have worked with have first sought refuge in the emotion, anger. Most likely that is because it feels the most powerful of the emotions. The truth is however, that anger can be crippling. Still, anger does need to be processed as it is a justifiable emotion and part of the journey. Plus, as it is assuaged, then there is room for something more... hope.

Men and women can hold a sense of internalised failure. The sense of not being good enough. Not young enough, beautiful enough, rich enough, just not enough. Forgiveness only comes through forgiveness of themselves.

Finding a confidential place and person to talk with will start the healing dialogue. Three steps to help are:

1. Talking through events.

Look in detail at everything that has happened and say it out loud.

Talking about the minute details with a non-judgemental person can bring clarity and freedom. Looking again at pain but in a safe therapeutic space, can bring a new perspective, not a decision that what happened was to be expected but a release from a crippling sense of shame.

Shame, is the fear of disconnection. We are hardwired for connection from birth and when that is broken, we find it almost impossible to manage, to find a way through. Thus, the need to speak to share, to start to re-build ourselves again.

2. Moving through the cycle of grief.

When we have loved and lost, it is necessary to grieve.

If we did not grieve then we could say the lost love is not important. Grief has so many
FINDING a confidential PLACE & person to TALK with WILL START the healing DIALOGUE.
components to it and there is no short cut. So, talking to another also has many levels. Depression is a powerful and often ignored part of grief; other people may find it very difficult to understand your depression. There is an impatience in many cultures in our world to get things sorted out rapidly. But it takes as long as it takes. Everyone is different. Will the process take longer for someone who had been married for 25 years, as opposed to someone in a much shorter relationship? Maybe, but then maybe that person now feels free after being caught up for so long. We are all so different and our processing will be as different too.

The cycle of grief has another component, that of bargaining and you may have done that, as you struggled to stay in the relationship, despite the betrayal. Maybe you are an older person and have denied the pain rather than face the shame that it brings. Whatever our sense of betrayal, we will all have to walk the path of shame. To face it and find freedom on the other side.

3. **Pushing through the shame barrier.**
Reveal who you really are and love yourself again.

It is said that showing vulnerability is necessary to discover the authentic you. This means that it is only when you are real, about hopes, dreams, losses and more, that you are released. Shame is revealed as we experience vulnerability and we are restored; the shame is released as we enable the true us to be seen.

So, how do you forgive your ex? Reveal who you really are, stare your shame in the face and learn to love yourself again.

It is in this process as we discover the strength to love ourselves again, that we can forgive another.

**Susie Flashman Jarvis** is an accredited counsellor, speaker and ambassador for the charity **Restored** working towards bringing an end to violence against women. Check out Susie’s latest radio interview here. Susie’s novel, At Therapy’s End, tackles the issue of domestic abuse. Susie is also an executive coach based in the UK and is available for skype sessions. Susie may be contacted via her [website](#).

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**SHOULD I STAY OR SHOULD I GO**

by Ramani Durvasula

Surviving a Relationship with a Narcissist:

- Salvation for anyone stuck in a relationship
- LOVE does NOT conquer all
- What mean people do to us & how they do it
- What we can do to survive

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**GHG Disclaimer – please read**
Relationships are tricky business. They can make us feel like the most wonderful person in the world, or they can bring us down to the depths of despair.

Have you ever noticed, that there are many games played between couples? We often do not notice these games in our own relationship, unless we have a great friend or been to a good therapist! The reason that we do not see it in our own relationship, is because we are IN the game.

**Here are some of the games people play:**

1. The silent treatment, ignoring any chance to talk.
situation. Because even if you think you have won, you have still lost. Leaving your partner feeling angry, hurt and resentful, may feel like a win in the short term, but it is a sure-fire way of losing the game and the relationship, in the long term. Because no one can, or should put up with this behaviour for very long.

WHY DO WE PLAY THESE GAMES?

The child inside all of us that has been wounded in some way comes back. This inner child causes all sort of havoc in adulthood. This is not necessarily caused by any kind of trauma. It can be from simply being told ‘no’ more often than the child wanted, or never being told ‘no’, or because they were bullied, shy, too popular and the more serious consequences of neglect or abuse.

HERE ARE SEVERAL WAYS TO HELP YOUR INNER CHILD:

1. Recognise when you have allowed your child to take over, by asking yourself ‘how old do I feel right now’, be honest. If you say anything that resembles a child you know you have lost control.
2. Be kind to your inner child, just acknowledge you are feeling the old wounds, even if you don’t know what they are.
3. Do not judge or criticise. You probably have had enough of that already.
4. Do not go into a whirlwind of shame, or ‘why’, or anything else, just acknowledge, smile that you have noticed and move on.

HAVE YOU NOTICED THAT THESE ARE NOT FUN GAMES?

In fact, these are downright relationship killer games. The reason they are called games is because there are unconscious rules in the relationship that allows this to continue. These rules were formed in childhood and brought into adulthood unconsciously. This means that you didn’t purposely set out to play these relationship killer games, but they are irresistible, uncontrollable even, perhaps even fun in a sadistic kind of way!

WHO IS IN CHARGE OF THESE GAMES?

It is your inner child. The unconscious part of you that feels wounded, hard done by, is a victim or perhaps a bully. We know that when our inner child is in control, we start to behave like a spoilt brat, cry, get angry or lose control. Unfortunately, these are games that no one can win. It is a lose-lose situation. Because even if you think you have won, you have still lost. Leaving your partner feeling angry, hurt and resentful, may feel like a win in the short term, but it is a sure-fire way of losing the game and the relationship, in the long term. Because no one can, or should put up with this behaviour for very long.

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3. Do not judge or criticise. You probably have had enough of that already.
4. Do not go into a whirlwind of shame, or ‘why’, or anything else, just acknowledge, smile that you have noticed and move on.
5. Seek professional help if your emotions have taken over and you feel out of control.

6. If you are conscious enough to know you are behaving like a bully take a breath and acknowledge it to yourself and your partner.

7. If you are conscious enough to know you are being a victim (anything that resembles ‘poor me’), be extra loving/kind to yourself. Have a bath, meditate, cuddle a dog/cat/teddy bear.

8. Seek professional help if you notice these behaviours only occur with your partner and you have not been able to shift them.

However, if the inner child remains in control of the relationship, then the fighting will likely get worse and worse. Resentment will build and the couple will find it harder and harder to forgive and to move on. Therefore, it is so important to go to relationship therapy sooner rather than later.

Just like in football, the coach can see the problems that the players cannot see. The coach watches the intricacies of the game and teaches the players a new and better game plan. And that is exactly the job of the therapist, to show the couple how their current game plan is not working for them and to help them find a new and improved one.

In the next issue of Great Health Guide™, we will see how we can resolve these problem behaviours. When both people in a relationship behave like adults, the partnership will grow successfully.

Leanne Allen (BA Psych), is the principle psychologist at Reconnect Psychology and Coaching Services with two offices, one in Riverstone and Windsor area. She has trained in Sandplay Therapy, NLP and CBT. Leanne has also just completed training as a life coach. Her approach is to look forward while releasing the trauma of the past. If there is something that you would like to know about please feel free to leave a comment on her Facebook page.
What is a dream?

A dream is, your highest hope, biggest challenge, best possible outcome for your work, relationship and/or life.

There are two kinds of dream-killers. The internal killers and the external killers. Both of them are dangerous to your aliveness and your consciousness. This article focuses on internal dream killers, who they are and how to handle them.

We all have internal dream killers and they are versions of their external siblings. They show up whenever we begin to entertain new possibilities or dream bigger dreams and they share characteristics similar to the External Dream Killers. Take a look at the list below:
1. **Beliefs, attitudes and perceptions** that support and even create fears that block your path to self-expression and dream building. These thoughts validate fear and persuade you to accept and honor your fears.

2. **A too-small self-image.** About 95% of us (you included) grossly underestimate our potential. Then we use this limited and fixed idea of ourselves to define who, what and how we can be or become. Sadly, most of us seldom question this life defining idea and we construct our work, relationships and dreams within the small box it places us in.

3. **The trivialization of ourselves and our dreams.** These are thoughts and beliefs that convince us that we are not important. Who we are, what we want and what we could become, is essentially trivial and inconsequential.

4. **The lack of an internal cheerleader.** We listen so closely to the other internal dream killers. We ignore or even kill, our inner cheerleader. This has tragic results because it deprives us of the energy that we need to follow through with ideas and beginning plans, for our hopes and dreams.

I invite you to take a look inside and see if you can identify any or all of the toxic voices that are described in the list above. Everyone has at least some. Assume that you have your share. Remember, awareness is the first step in significant change.

B**ELOW ARE SOME KEY WAYS TO OVERCOME INTERNAL DREAM KILLERS.**

1. **Identify them in detail.**

Write them down. Make notes about the dream killing thoughts and beliefs and attitudes that plague your days and nights. Putting them down in black and white will give you some power over them. Then you can go on to the next step.

2. **Confront them.**

You can learn to confront your internal dream killers in the same way you deal with the external killers. Imagine that your thoughts are separate entities that can be spoken to and tell them to SHUT UP!

3. **Learn to think of your internal dream killers as abusive.**

You will be better able to resist them. The fact is – they are abusive. Left alone, without confrontation, they will damage or completely block your ability to explore and/or manifest your dreams. If you see them as abusive and destructive, then you will be more motivated to fight back when they begin to spread their poison in your mind.

**IF YOU PERSONALLY FIND THAT YOU HAVE INTERNAL DREAM KILLERS IN YOUR LIFE THEN THE ACTION STEPS BELOW WILL HELP YOU GET FREE.**

1. **Make a list of all the Internal Dream Killer thoughts that plague and poison your mind.**

Describe them in detail. Include after each one its effects on you and your motivation.
2. Begin a program of complete intolerance.

When your internal dream killers appear, attack them, tell them to SHUT UP and replace them with positive and encouraging thoughts and actions.

3. Find a cheerleader.

You may already have someone in your life who does this for you. If so, spend more time sharing your dreams and plans with them. Be sure to include concrete plans of action.

Spend today honoring and respecting your dreams. The world needs you and what you have to share.

Dr Matthew Anderson, Doctor of Ministry specializes in counselling. He has extensive training and experience in Gestalt and Jungian Psychology and has helped many people successfully navigate relationship issues. Dr Anderson has a best-selling book, ‘The Resurrection of Romance’ and he may be contacted via his website.
Helping children of all ages settle down and focus on homework after school or on weekends can seem like an impossible task. On week days, children have been concentrating, taking in information for most of the school day and settling back into school work is often the last thing they are wanting to do. Weekends are just for fun.

HELP TO CREATE A LEARNING SPACE.

Many teachers these days are providing creative projects such as making up maths games, making recycled craft or asking children to draw a map of their local area, which can be much more fun than traditional homework. However, whether homework is reading, spelling, maths and traditional bookwork or more creative projects, often the homework battle can feel like a black cloud looming.

HERE ARE A FEW IDEAS THAT MAY ASSIST YOUR CHILD WHEN DOING HOMEWORK.

1. Children can experience stress when thinking about starting homework.

Just as adults, if the perceived challenges outweigh the child’s capacity or energy, they can experience stress and become overwhelmed. A fun way to get started is to create a grid of say nine spaces, where the homework for the week (or day for older children) is divided into nine different smaller tasks, which are written onto the grid. The simple act of seeing what homework needs to be completed, can help to reduce some of the stress and not be overwhelmed. It helps the child to pick out one or two activities to start with e.g. writing down spelling words. Once this is completed, it is crossed out on the grid, so they can see progress, like playing tic-tac-toe. Often after they finish a couple of easy tasks, the challenge of the game kicks in and they want to keep going.
2. Support the sensory needs of your child.
It is also important to support the sensory needs of a child, in preparation for doing homework. After sitting in class for most of the day, it is really important to encourage them to move and ‘fill up’ their nervous system before starting homework. This will help reduce any feelings of being overwhelmed, help them feel grounded, refreshed and help them to be able to focus and complete their homework quicker.

3. When does your child have high energy?
In addition, consider the times of the day when your child has high energy. Are they a night owl or a morning person? If you child is extremely tired in the afternoon/evening, maybe doing reading practice in bed, first thing in the morning, or setting the alarm for an older child for 5.30am, may help them complete assignments in their strength zones.

4. When is the best time for ‘brain work’?
Just as adults are aware of times that are best for ‘brain work’, we can observe our children, suggest and gently guide them to trial different strategies. We have built our own learning strategies over many years. Rather than forcing the issue of homework with our children, let’s support them in looking for their peak performance times and suggest activities and routines that support their learning and homework practice time.

In the next issue of GHG™, I will discuss the top six ways to help a child settle into doing their homework with less tears.

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Editor’s Choice

**Reducing Meltdowns & Improving Concentration: The Just Right Kids Technique**

by Deb Hopper

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**Deb Hopper** is an occupational therapist, author and workshop presenter. She is passionate about empowering parents and educators to understand the underlying reasons of why children struggle with behaviour, self-esteem and sensory processing difficulties. Deb is the co-author of the **CD Sensory Songs for Tots**, and author of **Reducing Meltdowns and Improving Concentration: The Just Right Kids Technique Model**. Deb can be contacted via her [website](#).
‘The real difficulty is to overcome how you think about yourself’

– Maya Angelou
In the last issue of Great Health Guide™, the importance of teaching children to be emotionally intelligent was discussed. This is integral to their success in every area of life, from education and productivity, to relationships and self-esteem.

Here are two more ideas to assist in teaching the children in your world to:

1. Let them witness our mistakes.

When it comes to mistakes, there are many great lessons we can teach our kids. To be...
able to recognise a mistake. To be willing to apologise. And, to be humble and dignified when receiving an apology from another.

If I had to choose a single greatest lesson, it would be this: mistakes don’t make us bad people. A failed attempt at something doesn’t mean that WE are a failure. Unfortunately, from an early age, many of learn that mistakes are ‘bad’ and that we should avoid them at all costs. It’s reinforced at every turn - we’re encouraged to make as few ‘mistakes’ as possible on tests. We’re encouraged to ‘be right’ and to avoid ‘being wrong’. Sometimes, we even get shamed or ridiculed for making mistakes.

The truth is that mistakes are the only way we learn. We don’t really know something until we’ve put it into practice and with practice, inevitably comes mistakes. Unfortunately, the desire to avoid mistakes and to always ‘be right’, can lead to our kids being fearful to try new things, or take on new challenges.

As caregivers, we can encourage our kids to see the inherent learning opportunity that mistakes provide - and the best way, is for them to see us make mistakes and handle them gracefully. For example, ‘I was supposed to take this to Grandma’s house and I forgot. I’m going to message her now and apologise. I’m going to write a reminder on this Post-It and stick it on my keys, so I’ll definitely remember to take it tomorrow’.

Not only do we teach kids how to problem-solve mistakes, we also show them that it’s human to make them and does not reflect on the quality of our character in any way.

2. Cultivate positive habits.

Emotional intelligence isn’t just about managing the uncomfortable emotions, it’s also knowing how to cultivate the positive ones, too. Gratitude is a real buzz-word in popular culture and it has its share of critics who view it as ‘too spiritual’ or ‘pseudoscientific’ to be of use. Interestingly, the empirical evidence is showing that focussing even a few minutes each day on the things we appreciate, can tremendously improve our mental wellbeing.

It’s easy to teach kids to be grateful, because they’re naturally more present in the day to day joyful moments of life. The practice of gratitude can manifest in different ways. For example, talking over the breakfast or dinner table, about the things we appreciate. For younger children who might not fully understand the concept of ‘appreciation’ and ‘gratitude’, we can get the ball rolling with questions such as ‘what’s the best thing that happened today’, ‘what’s something funny that happened today’ or ‘what was your favourite thing about today’.

ONE OF THE GREATEST LESSON IS THAT MISTAKES DON’T MAKE US BAD PEOPLE.
EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IS KNOWING HOW TO CULTIVATE POSITIVE EMOTIONS.

Not only will these questions encourage our kids to adopt a positive and appreciative mindset, but the answers they give can also provide powerful insight into our kids’ minds and opens doors for other ways to connect and enhance our meaningful relationships with them.

Dr Ash Nayate is a clinical neuropsychologist specializing in brain function and resulting behaviour. Ash has almost 15 years’ experience working with children and families, supporting them to feel happier, more confident and resilient. To contact Ash please visit her website.

EDITOR’S CHOICE

RAISING AN EMOTIONALLY INTELLIGENT CHILD
by John Gottman & Joan DeClaire

Teaching children to understand & regulate their emotional world.

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• Listen empathetically & validate a child’s feelings
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– Kurt Vonnegut
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