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**Congratulations to the Class of 2014**  
**Best Wishes for a Bright Future!**

*Speed Trap*

Psychologist Stephanie Brown is the author of **Speed: Facing Our Addiction to Fast and Faster—and Overcoming Our Fear of Slowing Down.** She discusses life in the fast lane, the havoc it wreaks, and how to fight back.

**Why do you say that many of us are addicted to fast-paced living?** These days we are all tethered to our phones, our tablets, and our computers. Thanks to these devices, we have more information at our fingertips, and we have it faster than ever before. The constant notifications and incessant pinging conditions us to look forward to the next email, the next text, fueling an agitated inner state. Physiologically, it's very similar to an alcoholic

looking for the next drink or drug addict seeking the next fix. But technology isn't the only contributor; the link between speed and success is continually reinforced by American culture.

**How can you tell if you're addicted?** You add activities without taking any away. You work longer hours but don't finish tasks. You act first and think later. The first and last thing you do every day is reach for your phone. Most people will laugh when they read this and say, *Doesn't everyone?* For many of us the answer is yes.

**What do we sacrifice when we prioritize constant connection?** Our relationships suffer the most. Fast-paced living gives us the illusion of con-

nection, but it's all button-pushing. A relationship is not information input; it takes time, attention, and reciprocal interaction.

**What are some strategies for slowing down?** Start small. Refrain from looking at your phone on your commute to and from work. Declare a block of time every day technology-free. If you can implement these simple changes on a consistent basis and surround yourself with people who will hold you accountable, you'll eventually learn to pause and reflect naturally, thus regaining control over your life.

Source: Spirit, February 2014

*Moral in the Morning*

Most of us strive to do the right thing when faced difficult decisions. A new study suggests that our moral compass is more reliable when we face those decisions in the morning rather than later in the day. In a series of studies at Harvard

University and the University of Utah, 327 men and women participated in tasks designed to measure cheating or lying behavior either in the morning or in the afternoon. For instance, in one study the subjects attempted to solve math

problems, some of which were impossible, knowing they would be paid five cents for every solved problem, they reported their own scores, giving them an opportunity to lie and thus receive more money.

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## Moral in the Morning (continued from cover)



The people who participated in the afternoon sessions in all the experiments were more likely to cheat than those who took part in the morning sessions. Ethical decisions often require self-control, which past research has found to be dependent on the body's energy stores, much like a

muscle: if it is heavily taxed, it eventually becomes exhausted. This study suggests that even the regular activities of daily life can deplete these resources. It also hints that sleep is crucial for rebuilding moral muscle; indeed, previous research shows that sleep deprivation hampers ethical decision

making so if you are faced with an ethical dilemma, you may want to save your pondering for the morning after a good night's sleep.

Source: Scientific American Mind, March/April 2014

## 4 Simple Ways to Boost Your Energy

Do you sometimes feel like the Energizer Bunny when his battery runs low? You might start the day strong, but by mid afternoon, you can't quite keep going and going. Fatigue afflicts everyone at one time or another. Assuming your doctor has ruled out serious medical causes, there are a few basic steps you can take to "recharge your batteries."

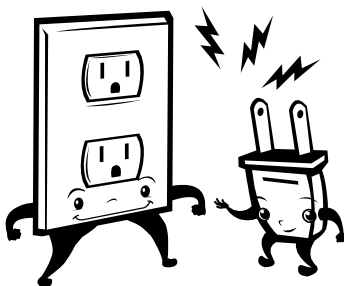
**Pace yourself.** If you're a go-getter, you probably like to keep going—but don't risk overtaxing yourself. You can pace yourself and still get things done. For example, instead of burning through all your "battery life" in two hours, spread it out among morning tasks, afternoon tasks, and evening activities—with rest and meals in between. **Take a walk or a nap.** There's nothing more satisfying than a short power nap when you're pooped out. However, if you have trouble sleeping at night, know that napping can make insomnia worse. If that's the case for

you, get moving instead. Get up and walk around the block, or just get up and move around. If you are not an insomniac, though, enjoy that 20 to 30-minute power nap. **Skip most supplements.** You may have heard about energy boosting or "anti-aging" supplements. There is no evidence they work. **DHEA.** Dehydroepiandrosterone—a hormone that comes from the adrenal gland.) There is no evidence that DHEA offers any real benefits, and the side effects remain a question mark. You especially shouldn't be buying it from ads in the back of a magazine, because you don't know what's in it. **Iron.** Iron only improves energy if you are clearly deficient, which a doctor can check with a blood test. Unless you are low in iron, you don't need to take it—and getting too much iron can be harmful. **B vitamins.** It is true that B vitamins (B1, B2, B6, B12) help the body convert food into

the form of energy that cells can burn, but taking more B vitamins doesn't supercharge your cells. That's a myth. **Fuel up wisely.** A sugary roll from the bakery delivers plenty of calories, but your body tends to metabolize them faster, and then you can end up with sinking blood sugar and fatigue. You'll maintain a steadier energy level by eating lean protein and unrefined carbohydrates. Try low-fat yogurt with a sprinkling of nuts, raisins, and honey. Your body will take in the carb-fiber-protein mix more gradually. Don't skip meals, either. Your body needs a certain number of calories to get through the day's work. It's better to space your meals out so your body gets the nourishment it needs all through the day.

Source: Harvard Medical School, **Boosting Your Energy**, HEALTHbeat, March 8, 2014.

...if you have trouble sleeping at night, know that napping can make insomnia worse.



## Don't Let Rocky Past Relationships with Parents Spoil Your Romance

University of Alberta relationship researcher Matt Johnson has some advice for anybody who's had rocky relationships with their parents while growing up: don't let it spill over into your current romantic partnerships. The love between parents and teens—however stormy or peaceful—may influence whether those children are successful in romance, even up to 15 years later, according to a new U of A study co-authored by Johnson whose work explores the complexities of the romantic ties that bind. Being aware of that connection may save a lot of heartache down the road, according to Johnson, who reviewed existing data that was gathered in the United States over a span of 15 years. The findings, which appeared in the February issue of *Journal of Marriage and Family*, uncovered a

“small but important link between parent-adolescent relationship quality and intimate relationships 15 years later,” Johnson said. “The effects can be long-lasting.” While their analysis showed, perhaps not surprisingly, that good parent-teen relationships resulted in slightly higher quality of romantic relationships for those grown children years later, it poses a lesson in self-awareness when nurturing an intimate bond with a partner, Johnson said. “People tend to compartmentalize their relationships; they tend not to see the connection between one kind, such as family relations, and another, like couple unions. But understanding your contribution to the relationship with your parents would be important to recognizing any tendency to replicate behavior—positive or negative—in an intimate

relationship. That doesn't mean parents should be blamed for what might be wrong in a grown child's relationship, Johnson added. “It is important to recognize everyone has a role to play in creating a healthy relationship, and each person needs to take responsibility for their contribution to that dynamic.” The results were gleaned from survey-based information from 2,970 people who were interviewed at three stages of life from adolescence to young adulthood, spanning ages 12 to 32.

Source: University of Alberta.

Journal Reference: Matthew D. Johnson and Nancy L. Galambos. **Paths to Intimate Relationships Quality From Parent-Adolescent Relations and Mental Health.** *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 13 JAN 2014 DOI: 10.1111/

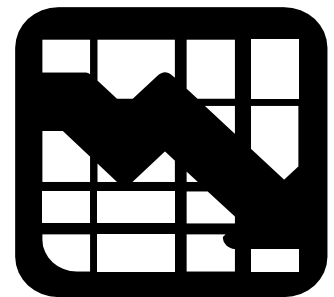
...understanding your contribution to the relationship with your parents would be important to recognizing any tendency to replicate behavior—positive or negative.

## Depression Drops After Menopause

January 1, 2014, Philadelphia, PA—Women who experience onset of depression as they approach menopause seem to revert to baseline following their final menstrual period according to a new study. American researchers said that while increased risk of depressive symptoms has been recognized in the tran-

sition to menopause (known as perimenopause), what happens in the early post-menopausal years was less clear. They found women with no previous history of depressive symptoms two years after their final period. They also found that while women with a previous history of depression were 13

times more likely than other women to experience depressive symptoms during perimenopause, they also saw a drop in symptoms after menopause. The study, titled “Longitudinal pattern of depressive symptoms around natural menopause,” appeared in *JAMA Psychiatry*, a journal of the American Medical Association.





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## *Mindful Eating Tastes Better*

Eating while distracted is well known to cause overindulgence, as confirmed by a recent review of 24 studies published in April 2013 in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. The exact mechanism behind such mindless bingeing, however, has been unclear. A recent study in *Psychological Science* suggests that mentally taxing tasks dampen our perception of taste, causing us to eat more.

In four experiments, participants attempted to memorize either a seven-digit number (a heavy load on the brain) or one digit (a light cognitive load) while tasting salty, sweet and sour substances and rating each food's taste intensity. In all experiments, participants under the heavy cognitive load rated each type of taste as less intense, and they also ate more the sweet and salty substances.

The researchers believe cognitive load may compete with sensory input for our attention. Other studies have found that simply paying mindful attention to one's food—fully focusing on its taste, aroma and texture, for example—leads to less intake. This study adds yet another reason not to multitask at mealtime: your food will taste better.

## *What's So Funny?*

The things that are universally funny tend to be universally threatening or wrong. No matter your culture or belief system, bad things happening to people in a physical way are universal violations. What makes them OK to laugh at can also be seen this way: Someone slips on a banana peel but doesn't get hurt, or the person

being hurt is an enemy or deserves it in some way. Super Bowl commercials mainly use physical humor. Other things seem funny everywhere, too: The Youtube channel Just For Laughs is popular worldwide because things like the "caught cheating" prank don't rely on a setup or a punchline. You don't need to speak the language to know

what's going on. The videos violate correct behavior and take advantage of things like jealousy and role-following. Stealing a police car is wrong every where in the world.

Source: Peter McGraw, Founder of the University of Colorado's Humor Research Lab (HuRL):