



## RESILIENT!

LEADERSHIP & THE INTEGRAL LIFE

April 2007

Edited by Dr Sven Hansen

Welcome to RESILIENT! - Our client newsletter which aims to bring you topical and practical ideas to improve leadership, build resilient organisations and create a meaningful life.

### Managing Energy

Life and work are steadily increasing in intensity and the pace is unlikely to let up. Technology has made the management of time far more efficient but few have made the same gains in energy management. As a consequence many are worn out, tired, jet lagged and consequently irritable, unfocused and passive. Sleep debt, poor nutrition, lack of exercise or simple failure to regularly refresh are leading culprits. To match our time mastery we now need to master our energy. We all want to have more energy – in steady supply. So, how do we get it?

Here are three simple tips to maximise your energy levels that won't turn your lifestyle upside down.

#### 1. Manage your glucose levels

The central driver of our energy levels is the concentration of glucose (simple sugar) in our blood. The brain is totally dependent on glucose as a fuel. Normal (fasting) levels range from 3.5mmol/l to 5.9mmol/l. The brain makes up about 2% of our body weight but consumes more than 20% of the glucose that we ingest.

Blood glucose concentration depends on what we eat and what can be stored in the liver. The energy released from each meal typically lasts around 3 hours. You have no doubt experienced that mid-afternoon dip in your energy levels? We have two major dips at 11am and 3pm. When our glucose levels are low we feel tired, unfocused, and suffer low productivity. High glucose levels can make us erratic, impulsive and error prone. Obviously we are aiming for stable and steady glucose levels. Two things will help you to achieve this:

- Eat breakfast to recharge your liver stores
- Eat something every 4 hours
- Consume low Glycaemic Index (GI) foods

A classic trait of some busy people is that they don't make time to eat. When we skip meals our glucose levels begin to fall, therefore it is

crucial to have regular meals during the day to stabilise our energy. Research tells us that eating approximately every 4 hours is an effective way to stabilise your glucose levels. This means that if you have breakfast at 7am, the next time you eat is 11am, then again at 3pm and finally at 7pm. What you notice is that this encourages you to have two lunches. Yes, two lunches! The return on this investment will be huge, and you will get back the time you spend eating in productivity. Some schools are now starting to get on this band wagon and bringing lunch forward to 11am. The ability of students to focus and learn is far greater. This is being reflected in improved test scores.

The next thing to look at is what you consume at meal times in the middle of the day. Often when we hit the 3pm slump we think "I need a sugar hit". So we head for the vending machine and end up going for the coke and chocolate. When all this sugar hits your blood stream, your glucose levels sky rocket and your energy levels go through the roof. A sugar-induced 'high' is short lived. The sugar surge provokes a burst of insulin that stores the glucose to fat and muscle. Your glucose levels crash leaving you feeling far worse than before you reached for the 'sugar hit'.

To avoid the peaks and troughs caused by eating sugary, nutrient deficient foods, your meals during the day should be low Glycaemic Index (GI). Glycaemic Index is the rate at which food that you ingest becomes glucose



in your blood. Bread, cookies, soft drinks and potatoes are high GI. Low GI foods include:

- Fruit smoothies.
- Nuts
- Chicken salad sandwich.
- Muesli and yoghurt.
- Beef salad.

## 2. Switch off regularly during the day.

When we are tired, worry and succumb to the pressures that we face on a daily basis, we get stressed and our body releases stress hormones – including adrenaline and cortisol. Prolonged exposure to these chemicals has a negative effect on our energy levels. They wear us out and leave us feeling tired and lethargic. Stress is a sure way to destroy your energy levels as well as impairing cognitive functions.

So how can we control negative stress? Most of us wait too long before taking a break. Many work long, unbroken periods thinking its ok; "I have a holiday in 4 weeks I will relax then". What happens when they go on the holiday? They spend the first 5 days of the holiday sick in bed. Equally, we may try to push through a whole afternoon imagining that we can relax when we get home. Wrong! There is huge benefit from short bursts of relaxation.

During the day make time for short bursts of relaxation. Even 5 to 10 seconds can be highly effective. One of the easiest ways for us to do this is to slow down our breathing. By slowing our breathing – particularly the exhalation – we shift our physiology to a more relaxed state. Take opportunities in your day to sit still for a couple minutes where you focus on slowing your breathing and calming your mind. One of the simplest ways to do this is by counting your breath going in for a count of 3 (1 – 2 – 3) and out for a count of 5 (5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1). This simple technique is a powerful secret to rejuvenation and sustainable high performance without the damaging effects of stress.

## 3. Negative emotion

Negative emotions like fear, frustration,

resentment, worry and sadness sabotage your energy levels. If you want proof just think of the last time you went through a relationship break up or some other similarly traumatic event. How much energy did you have around that time? One of the most important things you can do for your energy levels is to reduce the amount of your day that you spend in negative emotion.

First, maintain a sense of perspective about what is important. Often little things get us off course and we slip into negative emotion. Someone cuts us off in traffic and we feel compelled to get angry, yell and scream and spend the next 30 minutes thinking; "how could they do this to me?." The physical, chemical and cognitive impairment is measurable. Impulse control is the skill of resisting these triggers and staying calm.

Second, when you notice negative emotional states think about something that inspires the opposite emotion – joy in the face of sadness or care in the face of anger. We call this emotion regulation. Interestingly, both emotion regulation and impulse control are the two leading competencies in building resilience.

With a little work on these three practices you can be confident in your energy support.

### About Us

Based in Australia, New Zealand and Canada, The Resilience Institute works with senior executives and the entire employee base to build organisational and personal resilience. The Resilience Institute uses an evidence-based approach to introduce the personal disciplines of sustainable high performance within a meaningful life. The Resilience Institute achieves sustainable and measurable improvements using assessment instruments, consulting reviews, workshop interventions and personal coaching.

For further information...

Website [www.resilienceinstitute.com.au](http://www.resilienceinstitute.com.au)

Phone Australia +61 3 9822 6176

New Zealand +64 21 730 995

Canada +41 6 358 4417

Email [info@resilienceinstitute.com.au](mailto:info@resilienceinstitute.com.au)



## Resilience Programs

### Practical Resilience Program – Public Program - Melbourne

There is more to life than living in negative stress, fatigue and illness that is often associated with the “dash for cash” and “dash for career”. Resilience is a key competence to help you to live and work with **higher engagement, health and happiness** and ultimately reach out to your full potential.

In two half-day workshops, learn how to train your brain and build your happiness and resilience...

- ✓ Health & Resilience assessment
- ✓ Introduction to Resilience
- ✓ Mastering Relaxation and Fatigue
- ✓ The Practice of Flow
- ✓ Health and Physical Vitality
- ✓ Emotional Intelligence
- ✓ Brain Training & attention control
- ✓ Spirit in Action

#### Previous attendee said...

- ✓ *The Resilience session presented by Stuart was sensational. My Wife and I are going to go over the material again as we can see real benefits to our family life.*
- ✓ *What a great inspirational speaker!*
- ✓ *The program has made me take an honest look in the mirror.*
- ✓ *I have noticed a change in my personal attitude to handling stress. I'm a much happier person and life is great again!!*
- ✓ *I feel a renewed enthusiasm for getting the balance in my life right for me, my work and my family*
- ✓ *The resilience program provided tools to address both physical and psychological wellbeing*
- ✓ *I liked the way Stuart delivered the program with honesty, authenticity and sharing his own personal stories.*
- ✓ *The resilience program was great. I found it very relevant. Now I have some techniques to help me move in more positive/optimistic directions.*

#### For More Information...

- Visit our website [www.resilienceinstitute.com.au](http://www.resilienceinstitute.com.au) and download a registration form
- Contact Stuart Taylor in Melbourne on +613 9822 6176
- Email [info@resilienceinstitute.com.au](mailto:info@resilienceinstitute.com.au)



## Resilient Products

### Freeze-Framer: Own a Resilience Building Biofeedback Device

FREEZE-FRAMER, from the Institute of HeartMath, is the most practical way to assess & build resilience under different situations.

#### ➤ Why we use FREEZE-FRAMER for Resilience Training:

The HeartMath Institute has a long scientific background with hundreds of clinical studies showing measurable benefit & positive outcomes. FREEZE-FRAMER quickly helps our clients build proficiency in a number of our Resilience Disciplines, these include:

- Mastery of effective diaphragmatic breathing (Stress Mastery)
- Quick relaxation & stabilisation (Physical Vitality)
- Cardiovascular biofeedback for lowering pulse and blood pressure (Physical Vitality)
- Building emotional resonance for stronger empathy and resilience (Emotional Competence)
- Preparation for critical meetings, presentations and negotiations (Emotional Competence)
- Management of attention disorders in kids and adults (Cognitive Discipline)
- Feedback on negative and helpless thinking (Cognitive Discipline)
- Create physiological state for optimal mindfulness, prayer or meditation (Spirit in Action)

**\$450.00\***

\*plus GST & Postage



## Practical Resilience Books

Dr Sven Hansen has written five practical books on the five disciplines of Resilience. They are practical & user friendly introductions to the concepts of Resilience & help you build your own practice strength.

1. Stress Mastery: Being Calm, Alert and Engaged
2. Physical Vitality: Enhance and Extend your Life
3. Emotional Competence: The Feeling of Being Alive
4. Cognitive Discipline: Creativity, Decisions & Execution
5. Spirit in Action: Moral Resilience, Leadership and Enlightenment

**Full Series \$60\***

\*plus GST & Postage

**Each Book \$15\***

\*plus GST & Postage



## Facial Expressions Training CD by Paul Ekman

### Build empathy: develop accurate, fast facial expression recognition.

We display around 250,000 facial expressions per day. In a busy complex workplace this is one of the leading sources on knowledge and emotional intelligence. With this CD you can train yourself to recognise micro-expressions (flashed in 0.5 seconds) and subtle expressions (part expressions).

Including tests, practice, tutorials and progressive difficulty this CD is the key to developing your capacity to read other and apply your leadership with skill and understanding.

*"Probably the best hour's investment you can make!" Dr Sven Hansen*



**\$70.00\***

\*plus GST & Postage

For more information on products, visit our website [www.resilienceinstitute.com.au](http://www.resilienceinstitute.com.au)