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Dealing with Stress in **HEALTHY** Ways

4D LESSON - Appraising our Priorities in Healthy Ways

ACTIVITIES

To prioritize well requires identifying and scheduling multiple projects, objectives, and deadlines. This lesson's Activities provide meaningful considerations, including important questions, tips, tricks, and other analytical tools to make prioritizing more accurate and palatable. By design, these activities clearly create a thoughtful, well-structured roadmap for dealing with what really matters.

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JOURNALING QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE EACH DAY

As you apply increased effort for appropriately measuring your priorities and choosing the most meaningful priorities, these questions should provide overall insight. As with previous journaling instructions, it's important to review the questions below periodically throughout the day, and at day's end, replay your memories in an effort to clarify and note your answers to the following questions.

1. What was the highest priority task that I worked on today?

Keeping track of the highest priorities you accomplish each day will provide evidence of your efforts toward improving self-management at week's end. Such records can also encourage you to continue working on priorities intelligently.

2. What did I learn about prioritizing and organizing today that is helping me to improve self-management and reduce stress?

Noting self-management skills you are learning assures that you are attaining important life lessons and developing healthier habits.

FINANCIAL LOG/EXPENSE RECORD

A number of software programs exist that can easily assist us in managing expenses. Whether using such tools or creating a hand written log, please keep track of the following expenses for at least a month, as well as other expenses worth distinguishing. At the end of the month, total each category, to obtain the amount spent on each one. You may recognize that are spending more/less than you thought

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| • Household (new) | • Vitamins/Medications | • Auto (gasoline) | • Life Insurance |
| • Household (repair) | • Health/Beauty (treatment/supplies) | • Auto (repair) | • Donations/Contributions |
| • Household (supplies) | • Clothes (new) | • Auto (oil/maintenance) | • Travel |
| • Household (mtg/utilities/taxes/ins) | • Clothes (maintenance) | • Auto Insurance | • Entertainment |
| • Groceries | • Business/Education | • Health Insurance | • Gifts |

BEHAVIORAL WORD STUDY **PATIENCE**

Patience is considered a virtue and a prominent theme of all major religions. In psychology, *patience* is studied as a decision-making problem and a state of endurance, often under difficult circumstances. *Patience* is important for emotionally intelligent adults as it distinguishes healthy characteristics, such as courage, resilience, and stability. *Patience* requires analyzing and weighing tension, as well as our reaction to provocation, so that we consider the healthiest response possible. We must be aware that *patience* can also be mistaken for inappropriate resignation or submissiveness. *Impatience* is often expressed with a high level of tension and words of wrath. After studying this word, be sure to test your understanding by completing a Blank Word Study.

PRIORITY ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

This particular supplement lists a number of suggested ways for investigating priorities while helping you to identify important considerations, including those you may not realize need to be prioritized. By taking a closer look at what might be a priority, while searching for better understanding, we can greatly enhance our analytical skills.

PRACTICING FOLLOW-UP

According to the #1 executive coach in the world, Marshall Goldsmith, no one ever changes for the better by attending training sessions. In his bestseller, *What Got You Here Won't Get You There*, he writes:

"People improve by doing what they learned in the program, and that doing, by definition, involves follow-up. Follow up turns changing for the better into an ongoing process—not only for you, but for everyone around you who is in the follow-up mix. When you involve other people in your continuing progress, you are virtually guaranteeing your continuing success."

Marshall, himself, has a longtime friend who calls him each night with predetermined questions to answer honestly about his progress. Since this is a lesson about priorities, we suggest that you solicit a friend to ask you the following five questions each evening for at least a month, and to answer honestly:

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- 1. Did you do your best to manage your time wisely today?**
- 2. Did you do your best to control your temperament and treat others kindly today?**
- 3. Did you work to distinguish and then to orderly perform important priorities?**
- 4. Did you communicate well with others in your circle of friends and family?**
- 5. Did you attempt to balance important concerns with personal pleasures?**

If you are unable to solicit someone to ask you these questions, try adding them to your journaling tasks, and detailing your answers with more than just a yes or no answer.

PERSONAL FILING CHART SYSTEM

Filing personal documents is an arduous task, yet it reduces the amount of time we spend searching through scattered, important papers. Labeling and arranging files in an organized filing system can save us much grief; thus, it is a necessary task to consider prioritizing. Below are a few tips for easing the task of personal filing.

- 1. Purchase an A-Z sorter at your local office supply store for simplifying the first step of alphabetical filing.**
- 2. Pinterest website lists a number of organizational suggestions.**
- 3. The following website provides a thorough outline of a personal filing system, including a list of items that you do not need to file.**
<http://spaceforlivingos.com/2012/10/3-steps-to-organized-files.html>.

QUOTES WORTH MEMORIZING

- 1. "The only thing worse than being blind is having sight but no vision."—Helen Keller**
- 2. "Sometimes things happen in life that allow us to understand our priorities very clearly. You can see those as gifts."—Mariska Hargitay**
- 3. "Actions express priorities."—Mahatma Gandhi**
- 4. "What's measured, improves."—Peter F. Drucker**
- 5. "There is a big difference between thinking I can't and it just isn't a high priority."—Anonymous**

4D LESSON - VOCABULARY WORDS

As with previous lessons, please review the words below and reflect upon a different one each day, watching how each word you chose relates to your thoughts and actions that day. Also, note how the definitions relate to this lesson's subject matter. Taking time to memorize these brief definitions will optimize your ability to identify the power of these words in action.

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1. **balance- n.** The power or ability to decide one's outcome by choosing to apply strength, influence, support, or the like to one side or the other. *Our power or ability to balance how we prioritize can have a positive impact on our safety, health, and harmony.* Synonyms: mental steadiness, emotional stability. Antonyms: instability, imbalance.
2. **distinguish- v.** To recognize or discern as distinct or different. *As we analyze our tasks for prioritizing wisely, we try to distinguish which ones are more important than others.* Synonyms: individualize, categorize, classify. Antonyms: confuse, mix up, overlook.
3. **energetic- adj.** Powerful in action or effect. *We can more easily become energetic toward special interests than personal responsibilities.* Synonyms: industrious, spirited, forcible. Antonyms: lethargic, passive, dispirited.
4. **investigate- v.** To examine, search out, and examine particulars in an attempt to learn the facts about something hidden, unique, or complex. *As we investigate what needs our attention, we have a better chance of identifying our priorities.* Synonyms: scrutinize, inspect, probe. Antonyms: ignore, overlook.
5. **productive- adj.** Having the power of producing. *We can be more productive by making a To Do list of what needs accomplished.* Synonyms: advantageous, constructive, effective. Antonyms: unproductive, lethargic, weak.
6. **tactical- adj.** Maneuvering or planning an action designed to expedite efforts toward a desired end or advantage. *We gain a tactical advantage when we are using the right tools and techniques.* Synonyms: strategic, calculated, skillful. Antonyms: unintended, unpremeditated, unsystematic.
7. **structure- n.** Anything composed of parts arranged together; an organization. *We provide better structure for our lives when we arrange our priorities wisely.* Synonyms: arrangement, design, order. Antonyms: disorganization, disorder.