



John Walsh
Editor

A HEALTHIER YOU

You can't turn on the tube, surf the Web or open a newspaper without reading or watching news about Americans trying to improve their health. Whether it's eating right or exercising more, fitness gurus and journalists are talking constantly about people's health – both mental and physical. Much like being “green,” a healthy lifestyle is trendy. Fattening foods are out, and organics are in. Also, many people talk a lot about wanting a better life/work balance. Golf course superintendents are no exception.

Reportedly, there are 13.4 million lost work days annually caused from stress, anxiety and depression in the United States. Common causes of stress include: employees, worry/anxiety, customer complaints, guilt, overwork, sleep deprivation, trauma/injury, physical and mental strain, bad diet, toxic exposure and overstimulation. Related to all of those, but more specific to the golf course management industry, are increased golfer/owner expectations, the economy, achieving more with fewer resources and growing shorter grass. Mix these factors with working long hours, spending a less-than-desired amount of time with family and dealing with irksome club members, and you have one strong concoction that pushes some superintendents to the brink of losing it.

Physiologically, in stressful situations, nonessential bodily functions shut down. Reactions can include: adrenaline increases, weight loss or gain, hunger, gastrointestinal issues, blood pressure increases, headaches, immune system deficiencies, decreased energy and libido levels, and diarrhea or constipation. Emotionally, stressed-out people can experience apathy, depression, irritability, anger, forgetfulness and detachment. Not pleasant.

So, how do you prevent from feeling that way? For some, it's the old standbys – booze, tobacco and pills – which can calm nerves and help suppress the stresses of the day. However, even though these methods work in the short term, they're not so good for the body long term, aren't healthy and are becoming more taboo in society.

But there are better ways – although not as “fun” at times – to address stress and its symptoms. One way is to replenish nutrient deficiencies in the body by ingesting B-complex with vitamin C, antioxidants, zinc, magnesium, enzymes and electrolytes. Also, you can manage stress healthily by exercising, executing and organizing your priorities, napping, spending time with family, venting, getting a massage, and through hobbies such as reading, listening to music, etc.

One area of improving your health and dealing with stress that might be easiest for you is changing your eating habits. Healthy nutritional techniques include: decreasing the amount of caffeine and alcohol you ingest, controlling your blood sugar level, eating regularly, limiting fried foods, drinking more water, eating more fruits and vegetables, and taking magnesium, B-complex and a multivitamin.

Aside from nutritional health, try to reduce the number of hours you work per week – and I know you think it's impossible. Delegate jobs to different members of your staff. One veteran superintendent once told me members don't know if you work 70 hours a week or 60 hours. So it makes sense to focus on the aspects of the operation members notice most. The fewer hours you work on the course, the more you can spend with your family and improve that life/work balance we hear so much about.

Finally, for a good laugh, watch the movie “Office Space” and learn from character Peter Gibbons about how to relax and live a more carefree lifestyle. While the work environment in the movie is different than yours, it still correlates.

Now that I've suggested ways to improve your well-being, step outside, crack a beer, light a smoke and talk to the dog about how you're going to start living a more healthy, stress-free life – without sending in your resignation. **GCI**

We would like to hear from you. Please post any comments you have about this column on our message board, which is at www.golfcourseindustry.com/messageboard.



GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY

Serving the Business of Golf Course Management

Vol. 20 No. 4

EDITORIAL

GIE Media, Inc.
4020 Kinross Lakes Pkwy, 2nd floor
Richfield, OH 44286
Phone: (800) 456-0707
Fax: (330) 659-0824

Cindy Code

Editorial director
Phone: 330-523-5331
ccode@gie.net

John Walsh

Editor
Phone: 330-523-5361
jwalsh@gie.net

Heather Wood

Web editor
Phone: 330-523-5348
hwood@gie.net

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Terry Buchen, CGCS, MG
terrybuchen@earthlink.net

Pat Jones

psjhawk@cox.net

David Wolff

dgwolff@charter.net

EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD

Terry Buchen, CGCS, MG
Golf Agronomy International

Raymond Davies, CGCS
CourseCo

Tim Hiers, CGCS
The Old Collier Golf Club

Laurence Hirsh
Golf Property Analysts

Ted Horton, CGCS
Ted Horton Consulting

Michael Hurdzan, Ph.D.
Hurdzan/Fry Golf Course Design

Pat Jones
Flagstick LLC

Joe Livingston, CGCS
River Crest Country Club

Jim McLoughlin
TMG Golf

Matt Rostal
Interlachen Country Club

Golf Course Industry is published 12 times a year by GIE Media, Inc., which also publishes *Lawn & Landscape*, *Commercial Dealer*, *Snow Magazine*, *Pest Control Technology* and *Recycling Today* magazines. GIE Media is a leader in custom publishing, book publishing, database marketing, conferences and special events.