

Mind –Body-Spirit

Dr. Michaela O’Toole discusses:

PERSPECTIVES ON STRESS

Stress seems to have become a constant in our society today. During stress our bodies undergoes physiological changes. Some people tell me they “perform better under stress”. There may be some truth to this. For a while, adrenaline levels rise slowly with increased pressure, and performance may be enhanced. However, when hormone and adrenaline production is always elevated, pressure inadvertently turns into increasing amounts of stress and if prolonged and left ignored, a downward spiral begins affecting physical and mental functioning. Stress seems to be manifested in certain physiological and psychological symptoms. Some people smoke, drink, isolate, overeats have compulsions, mood swings, and sleep disturbances. Rarely do we stop to think about where our stress originates from. The symptoms that do arise are signs telling us to re-evaluate priorities. Your state of mind, or body, is telling you that something important in your life needs to change. The first step in fighting stress is how to admit that it exists as a result of attitudes and lifestyle. Many people can benefit from learning how to relax, exercising and eating more nutritiously. There are many self-help books that can quickly help make more positive changes. Therapy can also help clients overcome conscious or unconscious obstacles that are perpetuating a lifestyle of stress and imbalance.