

live

health notes

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Hospital gym and Mondays and Wednesdays, 9:30 a.m., at North Shore Neighbourhood House. Info: 604-986-5934.

Karate-Shotokan: Learn martial art skills, self-defence, improve fitness and have fun. Classes Tuesdays, 5:30-6:50 p.m. and Thursdays 6:15-7 p.m., until the end of June at North Shore Neighbourhood House, 225 East 2nd St.,

North Vancouver. Info: 604-987-8138.

— Compiled by Pamela Stone and Debbie Caldwell
E-mail information for your non-profit, by donation or nominal fee event to listings@nsnews.com.

Why suffer winter blues?

SEASONAL AFFECTIVE DISORDER (SAD)

- FATIGUE
- DEPRESSION
- WEIGHT GAIN
- IRRITABILITY
- LACK OF ENERGY
- REDUCED LIBIDO
- SLEEP DISORDERS
- SADNESS

COMPACT—Simple to operate
SAFE—No UV—No Heat
Relief from as little as 15 minutes/day




Capsule Comments
For some people, winter is fun and exciting, for S.A.D. sufferers, winter can be dreadful. Research from around the world has shown that artificial bright light (10,000 lux) can put the fun and excitement back into winter.

Even though we have evolved as outdoor people, we now spend our time in dimly lit offices, watching TV in malls, etc. We lack the bright light that is so essential to our well being. During fall and winter, about 20% of our population is affected by S.A.D., resulting in fatigue, lethargy, anxiety, weight gain, social withdrawal, etc. 75% of those affected are women.

So, during those dark depressing winter days, make sure you have one of our bright lights to bring back your sunny disposition.

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Keeping the peace not always a healthy choice

QUESTION:

My friend always puts her needs aside to keep the peace with her husband.

I think she is just worn down now and seems really exhausted. I have told her just to let him get angry, but she says it just gets worse. Any ideas?

Answer:

Many women are struggling with this and it relates to the question, is this anger, from husband to wife, or is it controlling and abusive behaviour. The two are different.

Couples get angry with each other for various things, often relating to some level of disappointment or not getting their needs met in the relationship.

The reason for the anger can be big, like being caught lying, or small, like arriving home from work late. In these cases, anger that expresses feelings directly, is not threatening, and can be worked out, is healthy in the majority of couples. These couples find a resolution together.

In this case, keeping the peace is a way of avoiding conflict.

Reasons for this vary, such as growing up in a family where feelings were not allowed. Getting into therapy is a good idea and helps connect people with their emotions.

Unfortunately, we see more women here who are keeping the peace for reasons relating to controlling and



you're (expletive) stupid."

He would also rant about how she cooked, spent money, had gained weight, and demanded that she be different sexually. When she tried to talk to him, he'd escalate. She then felt worse and learned to disengage.

This subtle and consistent erosion of self-esteem is what women are avoiding when they keep the peace.

Engaging doesn't work because an abusive/controlling husband just wants to feel big and powerful.

Your friend would know that confronting him causes her more anxiety and stress. She has learned to go underground, placate him, and avoid the conversations.


This takes a tremendous toll.

Pushing feelings deep inside and dealing with the erosion of self-esteem is exhausting.

Getting counselling is key to understanding how all this impacts her. Some women decide to leave the relationship when they realize they are not at fault. Others continue but have greater knowledge of abuse dynamics and how to protect their self-esteem.

Have your friend give us a call when she is ready.

Julia Stanb-French, M.A., R.C.C., director of clinical programs at Family Services of the North Shore. Questions? Write onthecouch@familyservices.bc.ca or call 604-988-5281.



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