

DR. CHRISTOPHER'S  
*Herbal Legacy Newsletter*

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**“This is getting on my nerves.”** -Mishelle Knuteson MH

“This is getting on my nerves.” is a statement that may be spouted out by someone in frustration, yet it is also much truer than one may think. When we enter into a stressful or emotionally heightened situation our autonomic nervous system goes into action to make regulatory adjustments of the glands, smooth muscles of hollow organs, vessels and heart muscle. This action is often manifested by the pupils of the eye dilating, sweat glands being activated, increase in heart rate etc. The body reacts to the stimulus without conscious awareness.

These responses from the body are a way of the body protecting itself. The sympathetic nervous system (SNS) kicks in and acts as an accelerator for those organs needed to meet the stressful situation. It promotes what is called the fight or flight response, a person responds with heightened senses to stay and “fight it out” or to flee. The times when the SNS comes into play can be summarized into the four E’s, times of emergency, excitement, embarrassment and exercise.

Once the emergency passes the parasympathetic nervous system (PNS) will work to bring the body back into balance. This is the “rest and digest” system. The PNS will also keep the arousal of the SNS under control and not let the fight or flight response manifest in full force.

When the autonomic nervous system is out of balance, such as the SNS being in charge and the PNS is overwhelmed, a person is primed to respond with energy and focus but also with anger, anxiety and aggression. Life’s hassles can put people in a constant state of stress, where even the slightest emotional swing can cause the body to react as if an emergency exists, real or imagined, which can take a toll on the body and brain, leading to all kinds of health problems, including insomnia, depression, chronic pain and cardiovascular disease. Everything will be “getting on your nerves.”

Keeping your nervous system healthy and balanced as well as changing the way you perceive stress can help your overall health. When your body is always running on overdrive the sympathetic nervous system may need to be calmed. Or if you just can't get

your body moving and you want to run from everything, the SNS may need to be stimulated. Deep breathing is one of the best ways to bring the nervous system into balance. With every inhalation, the nervous system shifts a bit toward the sympathetic activation and with every exhalation, it shifts towards parasympathetic activation.

Dr. Christopher often recommended walking in the grass with bare feet to release the built up energy charge in the body. To feed the nervous system, Dr. Christopher's Nerve Formula massaged down the spine and taking Relax-Ease formula are great ways to aid in the healing.

While excess stress can take a toll on you, the very things that cause it are often the same things that make life rewarding and full. Feeding an overworked nervous system with good herbs and learning to manage your stress may help you to find the right blend of inner fire and inner calm.

*Mishelle Knuteson is certified in Rapid Eye Technology (RET) an emotional release therapy, teaches classes in The Art of Feminine Presence and a Master Herbalist ~ graduate of The School of Natural Healing. Mishelle currently works as an Educative Master Herbalist (MH) for The School of Natural Healing and as Office Manager of Christopher Publications.*