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# Practitioners Can Stay Healthy During Life's Challenges

Melanie Smith

**W**e all experience life challenges. Whether it is a divorce, supporting aging parents, loss due to death, changing jobs, illness or relocating, it is inevitable that we will all experience significant changes as we move through life. Sometimes we struggle with our day-to-day life experiences such as supporting a family, managing finances or handling the constant barrage of information from various media sources.

The important questions are: What is our perspective of these difficult life events and circumstances? How well do we manage challenges that come our way? Are we able to stay healthy during life's challenges and continue to work with our clients effectively?

What is your perspective of life's events and stressors?

According to the American Institute of Stress, as many as 75 to 90 percent of all visits to primary care physicians result from stress-related disorders.<sup>4,5</sup> In our modern world, the body's stress response encompasses more than fourteen hundred known physical and chemical reactions and over thirty different hormones and neurotransmitters.<sup>6,7</sup> The two key physiological systems that coordinate the body's response to stress are the autonomic nervous system, which reacts almost immediately, and the hormonal system, from which reactions occur and persist over a longer time.

But many of the other organs also pour out hormones to accomplish the body's vast response to stress.<sup>6</sup>

When we experience stress, our bodies quickly react by releasing the hormone adrenaline into the bloodstream. Adrenaline elevates our heart rate and blood pressure, tenses up our muscles and speeds our breathing, preparing us to confront the threat or run for our lives.

People respond very differently to stress. Some view life's difficult events and circumstances as opportunities to grow and expand. These individuals understand that all things in life are impermanent and will change. With this perspective, they do not hold on to fixed ideas about how things should be or how they were in the past. It does not mean that they do not experience emotions about the event, but it does mean that they do not get stuck in the emotion. Instead, they feel the emotion and release it as it arises. They reach out for support and treatment and remain open to healing. They try to stay present with the current circumstance and focus on what needs to be done in the present moment, rather than worrying and catastrophizing what might happen in the future.

Another common perspective is viewing these life challenges as a personal burden in one's life. Individuals with this viewpoint see challenges as impositions



rather than natural occurrences in life. They can be angry and frustrated that the stressor is happening to them and may have little insight into the larger picture. They can be very absorbed in the stressor and allow it to become all-consuming, which ultimately causes additional stress in other areas of their lives. They can be reluctant to let go of the stressor as it has become "their story," which often masks other emotional issues that need to be addressed. While it is important to have support with stress, if it is chronically reviewed and repeated, it can create a negative feedback loop that makes it more difficult for the individual to see the situation clearly.

of self-care. As healers, we can easily spend too much time taking care of others and not enough time taking care of ourselves. But we have to remember that because everything is energy, our work is most effective when we are healthy and balanced.

Below are some of my favorite Energy Medicine self-care practices:

1. **Spending Time in Nature** – take time to get outside and find your happy place. Find a place in nature that resonates with you. For me, I immediately feel better when I am at the beach enjoying

*If you believe that life is a series of stressful events to be endured, then that is what life will offer you.*

My experience has been that most people hold some combination of both perspectives described above.

It is important as energy practitioners to understand what our own perspective is for handling life's challenges. Is it a healthy perspective that serves you well? Or do you feel drained by life's challenges and have less resilience as you age to cope with stress? If you believe that life is a series of stressful events to be endured, then that is what life will offer you. If you believe that life is full of opportunities to grow and expand, that is what life will offer you. As practitioners, we sometimes consciously and unconsciously pass on our personal perspective while working on our client's via energy, so we must energetically be clear about what that perspective is to keep healthy energetic boundaries. Once we are clear about our own perspective toward difficult life events, it is helpful to take an inventory of our current life stressors. Sometimes we are moving through life so fast we do not even realize the degree to which we are stressed. And, it is helpful to look at what you are doing to take care of your stress.

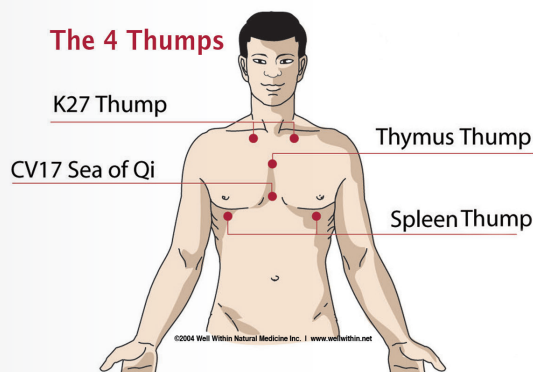
Personally, I have found it easier to handle life stressors when I am committed to a daily energy practice

the calm of the waves and feeling energetically recharged by the sun. How much time are you spending connecting with nature? And what type of nature experience do you most resonate with?

2. **Grounding** – expanding on #1, try walking bare-foot in the grass and bury your feet in the dirt or sand as you invite Mother Nature to absorb your stressors. Grounding is about nourishing our Yin energy and connecting to a vortex that comes up from the earth through the bottom of our feet. It feels even more calming and relaxing when you can put your entire body flat on the grass or the sand. This is what I call "earthing" the old-fashioned way . . . no grounding sheets or copper rods required. I also enjoy leaning my back against a tree. The Urinary Bladder meridian governs your nervous system and runs up and over your brain and along your entire backside. It is beneficial to periodically clear this electromagnetic static charge naturally from our energy field to calm our nervous system.
3. **Daily Energy Routine Practice** – In 1998 Donna Eden released her first book Energy Medicine sharing with the world what she calls the Daily



Energy Routine designed to keep your energies humming for optimal health and wellness.<sup>1</sup> This includes a series of basic energy exercises that can easily be used for daily self-care.

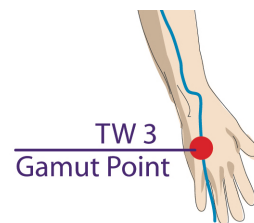


The Daily Energy Routine can be the foundation of a committed self-care practice. Many of you may be familiar with some or all of these exercises. If not, the 4 Thumps is a great place to start by tapping K27 (the last point on the Kidney Meridian) below the collar bone, in the middle of the upper breastbone directly over the thymus gland, between the breasts at The Sea of Qi and below the breasts for Spleen Neurolymphatic Points.<sup>1, 2, 3</sup>

There are many resources for the Daily Energy Routine and other tips at the end of this article in both video and written format.<sup>1, 2, 3</sup> If you have not already, I encourage you to make a commitment to doing the Daily Energy Routine. Begin with a few of the exercises and increase slowly to avoid overwhelm. Soon you will begin to feel comfortable modifying your routine by adding additional exercises based on your own unique health concerns.

- 4. Stress Relief Techniques** – My favorite Energy Medicine stress relief exercises are: holding the Front and Back Neurovascular Points by placing one palm on your forehead and the other behind your head while focusing on the stress; using the Thymus Thump (see #3 above); or tapping TW3, the Gamut Point, on the back of either hand between the bones of the fourth and fifth fingers.<sup>8</sup>

Do each of these exercises as soon as you feel stressed. While focusing on the stress, breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth. Stay with the stressor in your mind's eye until the emotional charge begins to dissipate.



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- 5. Get Support** – It is helpful to surround yourself with supportive people. I really cannot emphasize enough how important it is as practitioners to receive energy and emotional work (Eden Energy Medicine, Touch for Health, Healing Touch, Reiki, acupuncture, chiropractic, massage, psychotherapy, EFT, etc.). Since we are constantly “giving” and “serving,” I am frequently amazed at how many Energy Medicine practitioners I meet who are not receiving regular sessions for themselves. Receiving energy work is about maintaining a healthy energy balance and energy exchange.

Even though I do many things on a daily basis for self-care, I take time out to receive some combination of energy healing at least 3-4 times a month. If I have something significant going on with my health causing me to be in a state of stress, then I absolutely want to get out of my own way and receive the healing and guidance from another practitioner who is in a more stable energetic place.

A few years ago, I had a fall and injured my wrist while traveling. I was able to begin immediate self-care with rest, ice, elevation and tracing lots of Figure 8's on my wrist. You might be wondering why a Figure 8 pattern is so powerful for healing. While you may already be familiar with the concept that energies cross over from each hemisphere of the brain to the opposite side of the body, according to Donna Eden, a Figure 8 — or infinity sign — extends throughout our body supporting our energy to cross over from head to toe. These intertwining energies get even smaller, eventually weaving their primordial pattern at

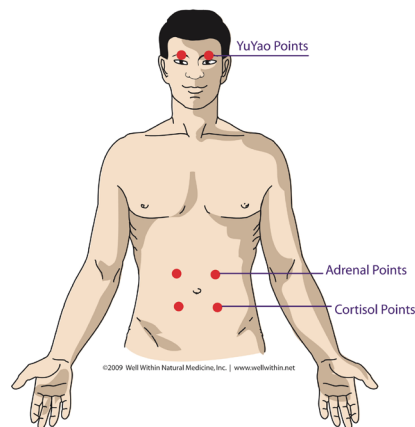


the cellular level. If you recall from biology, a double helix strand of DNA is a large chain that looks like Figure 8's, therefore, our body innately resonates with this natural healing pattern.<sup>1</sup>

With my trusty Energy Medicine travel kit, I was able to apply a compression bandage, use acupuncture needles, Energy Medicine pain relief techniques like chakra clearing, magnets and trace Lotus Blossoms<sup>9</sup> (figure 8's in four directions) with a selenite wand. It was also important to reduce the stress and clear the emotions around ruining my vacation. The next thing I did after returning home was to cancel my clients for several days and schedule a variety of healing treatments so I could relax and receive versus having to do all of the work on myself. Receiving support right away meant I was quickly back at work and feeling great.

Many of the clients I work with in-office and via Skype are Energy Medicine Practitioners. I applaud them for receiving regular energy healing sessions and mentoring to support their own personal Energy Medicine practice. Take a moment to consider the last time you received a full energy healing session. If it has been awhile, you may want to consider finding a practitioner to support you.

- 6. Do not Over Commit** – Do not add more to your schedule than you can energetically support. This is another big one for me to pay attention to as it ends up leading to adrenal exhaustion. It is not uncommon for those of us in the healing profession to naturally want to give and serve others and they can often find it difficult to say no and to take time out for yourself. Take an inventory of your work and life balance. How many clients do you see in a day? How much time do you spend with each client? Are you constantly late or running behind in your schedule? How many days a week are you working? What are you doing for fun? Hopefully, amongst these questions you will uncover the clarity you need to make supportive changes.

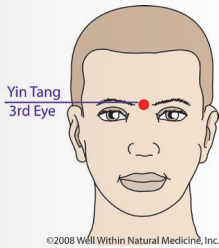


If you are over-committed and notice emotions or stressors are coming up for you, then I recommend you try using one of the stress relief techniques mentioned in #4 above to shift your energy.<sup>8,9</sup>

If you are feeling burned out or exhausted, you may find this easy energy exercise for adrenal support to be helpful. Begin by placing your thumb and middle finger of one hand in the hollow found in the middle of your eyebrow or at the outer edges of each brow. With your other hand, go one inch above your navel and one each out to each side as you use your thumb and middle finger to hold the Adrenal Gateway Points. Focus on your breath as you hold them for 3-5 minutes. Repeat with the Cortisol Points, which are one inch below and out from your navel.<sup>10</sup> You can harmonize them together with the Hormone Hara Balancer (see the video link below).<sup>11</sup>

- 7. Joy, Happiness and Fun** – Part of self-care is also working your positive, happy manifestation energies too. When you spend time in places you enjoy with people you love, doing things that make you happy, then you also activate your Radiant Circuits, as Donna Eden calls them, or from Oriental Medicine — your Strange Flows. Take a moment and close your eyes as you begin to think about something or someone that brings joy to your heart and a smile to your face. Now with either hand, gently tap your Third Eye Joy Point (YinTang) between your eyebrows. Continue tap-





ping as you bring your focus to something you desire to manifest in your health, your personal life or your business. Notice how good your entire body is feeling. Now bring both hands over your heart chakra (middle of chest above the breasts) as you tune in and listen to your own wisdom and intuition. If you are noticing pain or dealing with a health concern, gently slide your hands to that area as you fill it with healthy, positive, happy and joy-filled energy.

I had stressful challenges in my life before I had access to Energy Medicine tools and these challenges were actually the catalyst for me to make a career change — really a life change toward health and wellness. Now I am grateful for these gifts and appreciate all they have taught me on my path. Stress has an energy all its own. It can sweep us off our feet in an instant. It can stop us in our tracks and it can put us down for the count. By working with your own energy systems to change patterns, habits and limiting beliefs, you can take back your power and your health.

As Energy Medicine Practitioners, it is imperative to stay grounded, centered and balanced on a daily basis to more easily maneuver the ebb and flow of our lives. In 400 BC Hippocrates (the Father of Medicine) said, "The natural healing force within us is the greatest force in getting well." Donna Eden would say "Energy Medicine has been called the medicine of the future, but it also empowers you to adapt to the challenges of the 21st century and to thrive within them." Now, more than ever, is the time to connect into your own natural healing force and be well within. €



Author Melanie Smith can be found at [www.WellWithin.net](http://www.WellWithin.net).

#### Resources

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