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"It's a Jungle Out There" for healthcare providers.

Times are tough. The regulations keep piling on and reimbursement rates have been cut. Competition is fierce and costs are rising. Successful healthcare leaders know they must stay ahead of changes in the marketplace and continue to seek out innovative new revenue opportunities. Navigating through the maze is a challenge and leaders often don't have other leadership resources for help in strategizing the direction of their business.

Now, Clint Maun is offering consulting and executive coaching for healthcare leadership and management. Imagine being able to confidentially discuss daily challenges, opportunities and receive immediate ideas, information and action recommendations for an affordable monthly fee. Essentially, you'd have a personal consultant and life coach on retainer for much less than his on-site fee, with no

expenses.

Clint would be available via live webcam, phone conferences and email to discuss and coach on the challenges successful healthcare leaders face, such as:

- Reimbursement Issues
- Tough employees
- Strategic opportunities
- Methods to improve teamwork
- Revenue strategies
- Merger and acquisition opportunities
- Partnership with other health care providers

If you are interested in having Clint on retainer as a personal and professional advisor and coach, please contact Kathy Cain, VP, 800.356.2233.

Breathe Easy, Protect Your Heart?

Although researchers have yet to pinpoint stress as an independent risk factor for heart disease, we do know that chronic stress negatively affects your cardiovascular system in several ways. Indeed, when you're under stress, your body goes through a primitive "fight or flight" response in which you are likely to experience:

- A release of cortisol (a stress hormone)
- An increased heart rate
- Increased blood pressure
- A release of fatty acids into the bloodstream (which after time can increase cholesterol and triglycerides)

If you are in the midst of a brief crisis (think house fire, attack, robbery, etc.) this stress response can help you quickly react and survive the situation. Of course, most of the stress we experience today is not related to escaping a fire, but rather a long day filled with understaffing and angry or extremely sick patients. Unfortunately, your body doesn't know the difference between a life-threatening situation and chronic stress. Without strategies to deal with the stress of modern day life, your body—and in particular your heart—will greatly suffer.

Address the Stress in a Breath

To be sure, deep breathing is one of the best ways to lower stress in the body. When you breathe deeply your brain receives more oxygen, and moreover, deep breathing sends a message to your brain to calm down and relax. Your brain then sends this message to the rest of your body. All of the effects of stress, such as an increased heart rate and increased blood pressure begin to decrease as you breathe deeply.

Deep breathing certainly won't remove the chronic stress from your life, but it will almost instantaneously help your body and cardiovascular system fight the physiological effects of stress. Try the deep breathing exercise on this page to get started!

1-Minute Deep Breathing Exercise

Perhaps as the result of a lifetime of stress, adults learn to breathe shallowly, into the upper part of the lungs. With this type of breathing there isn't much air exchanged (about half a pint), which leaves stale air in the lower lobes of the lungs. On the other hand, breathing deeply brings in about a gallon of air per breath:

Place your hand over your belly. Take a deep breath in. You should feel your hand rise just slightly on the in-breath, and most likely you'll feel your hand fall even more on the out-breath.

Focus on your breath and feel your hand rise and fall with each inhalation and exhalation. See if you

can make your exhalation last a few seconds longer than your inhalation. Take three to five deep breaths in this way or until you feel relaxed.

*"Stress is like spice - in the right proportion it enhances the flavor of a dish.
Too little produces a bland, dull meal; too much may choke you."
—Donald Tubesing*

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