SW152: STRESS REDUCTION USING SPIRITUALITY & HUMOR is an On-Ground, Undergraduate course for 2 credit hours

**WINTER 2020 (Late start) LOOP  WELCOME!**

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**DATES/TIMES:** THURSDAYS, FEBRUARY 13 – MARCH 12, 2020  5:45 pm – 9:00 pm

**COURSE LOCATION:** Loop Campus, DePaul Center 8014

**CREDIT HOURS:** 2 Hours or 1 Competence (some SCPS programs are competence-based)

The workload is manageable in this elective in order for you to excel. The Syllabus has a lot of detail for clarity. It’s best to read through this document **and keep it as an e-file**, rather than printing it. Let’s save trees. The Professor has the right to amend this Syllabus to clarify, to correct any mistake, to shift an assignment from one week to the next, or to reduce an assignment. Professors can’t add work. To reduce stress, students are given two late passes for assignments (up to a week late and they need to be requested) to reduce stress. **One thing at a time and all the important things get done** is the motto of this course (and life).

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**TABLE OF CONTENTS and pages**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Description; Learning Competencies &amp; Outcomes</td>
<td>2 - 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Strategies &amp; Resources</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grading Criteria &amp; Scale</td>
<td>5 (- 8), 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humor Project</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual Gems, Stress Reduction (QCT) Projects</td>
<td>7 - 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Schedule, Assignments, Pre-Assignment</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week/Session 1</td>
<td>11 - 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week/Session 2</td>
<td>12 - 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week/Session 3</td>
<td>13 - 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week/Session 4</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week/Session 5</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Policies</td>
<td>17 - 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources and Professor Biography</td>
<td>19 - 20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is a cutting-edge science and spirit course where we explore the new scientific paradigm of energetic connection through a variety of experiences, including a heart-centered stress management technique which engages HRV – Heart Rate Variability. We delve into and expound upon the personal spiritual search for truth and meaning, and experience the sharing of humor in community for stress relief and to engage with the mind-body connection.

Stress affects the body in dramatic ways, and is a major contributing factor in creating inflammation and chronic, degenerative diseases. We will understand and describe the physiology and biochemistry of stress and its impact on the body, mind, emotions, energy and spirit. Yet, more importantly, we experience and apply effective methods, tools, techniques and strategies to reduce, manage and transform stress, as well as our thoughts, beliefs and reactions to stress. Class goals include better whole vital health and work-life balance with more ease, flow, calm, humor and joy.

Effective stress reduction and burnout prevention then become important health, wellness, productivity and disease prevention strategies for individuals, schools, businesses, the medical industry and the culture. Stress reduction is the principal objective of this course. The effective stress reduction techniques include breathing, changing thoughts, improving energy flow, using endorphin-creating humor and movement, as well as spiritual exploration, connection and inspiration. The holistic paradigm of body, mind and spirit supports our informed search for meaning, deep connection, calm productivity, joy and enhanced health.

This course is designed to provide an environment to reduce stress, to connect more deeply to something greater and deeper, to discuss issues of spirituality, and to enjoy the endorphin-creating and community-creating activity of laughter. The sharing of joy, spirit and calm within a community can be a deeply helpful and healthful activity. And we celebrate the cutting-edge science that supports this exploration and these practical and helpful activities.

LEARNING OUTCOMES AND COMPETENCIES

COMPETENCIES: 1 Some students are taking this course for a competency. CCS and CCA students take this course for two credit hours. They follow the Syllabus, share the Learning Outcomes and also have two projects.

A3X- Can explore and compare various perspectives of spiritual thought and expression for personal development and health.

FX - Student writes a competence statement based on the content of this class. It needs to be approved by the professor and their faculty advisor.

A-3-X: Can explore and compare various perspectives of spiritual thought and expression for personal development and health.

1. Discusses the key assumptions and implications of various spiritual, religious, philosophical and psychological perspectives.
2. Articulates key ideas as they apply to personal spiritual growth, stress reduction, joy and health enhancement.
3. Applies one or more of these spiritual ideas for enhanced health of body, mind and spirit.
Students fulfill this competence by discussing and applying various models of spiritual thought and practice. Such models always imply assumptions about the meaning of the spiritual aspect of being, as well as the value and purpose of spiritual development. Models of spiritual development might include timeless wisdom from the world’s religions, spiritual practices, philosophical ideas, modern psychology, cutting-edge scientific research, humor, inspirational poetry, music, art and quotes. These perspectives have implications for how we can choose to live well.

CCA students do all the assignments in this course as in the Syllabus. The Learning Outcomes are the same as the SCPS students taking this course for a competency. Each student will choose by the second week which second project they will do. This will be made clear in class.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:
Students who successfully complete the course will:

- Define stress and its impact on body (anatomy, biochemistry), mind, energy and spirit.
- Understand the new scientific energy paradigm where we are all connected.
- Explore and name the stress reducing and health enhancing aspects of humor.
- Understand biological systems and how they are affected by stress, energy, beliefs, genetics, food, technology and lifestyle choices.
- Experience various stress reduction techniques, humor styles and spiritual perspectives.
- Understand scientific concepts such as heart-rate variability, the mind-body connection, the biology of belief, the biochemistry of joy and stress relief.
- Become aware of strategies to support body, mind, energy and spirit for whole health and are able to incorporate them into their life.
- Assess aspects of adrenal fatigue and burnout prevention.
- Compare various spiritual perspectives to help assess personal beliefs.
- Explore and track the Quick Coherence Technique™ for the Stress Management Project (for CCS, S2X or for some extra credit for A3X or FX) and any changes in the body, mind, spirit, energy, lifestyle or in the ways you cope with personal, professional or cultural stress.
- Choose an array of personally important spiritual readings, excerpts, quotes, stories for the Spiritual Gems/Finding Meaning Project (for A3X or as some extra credit for S2X or FX; can also be chosen for CCS instead of the Stress Reduction Project above if the student is taking this as a free elective) and explain how and why these selections are important.
- Create a personal Creed (for A3X, CCA or as some extra credit for S2X, FX or CCS).
- Create a Humor Project and share aspects of it with the class.
- Understand biochemical individuality, and that one size does not fit all for stress reduction techniques, food choices, exercise strategies and work-life balance.
- Comprehend how energy physics allows science and spirit to come together once again.
- Evaluate stress and burnout levels and learn tools to improve a sense of relaxed focus and work-life balance.
- Practice stress reduction and stress management methods, breathing techniques, body movement, and energy balancing as tools for a healthier, happier life.
- Assess and evaluate multiple viewpoints on stress reduction, spirituality, humor and paths toward whole, vibrant health.
LEARNING STRATEGIES & RESOURCES

Students will have the opportunity to experience a safe place in which to explore the new scientific energy paradigm of interconnectedness as they experience new ways to reduce stress, connect more creatively and deeply to that which is greater (which some call God) and to enjoy laughter and connection in community.

All learning styles will be honored; visual, auditory and kinesthetic. Professor Gina Orlando will share her wealth of experience in stress reduction and spiritual exploration. Students may have access to a biofeedback device to track their stress reduction by tracking their heart rate variability through a heart-based stress reduction technique called Quick Coherence™ Technique, the main technique in their text book, Transforming Stress: The HeartMath Solution for Relieving Worry, Fatigue and Tension.

In every class, students will be offered a combination of inspirational readings, quotes, poems or songs. Modalities will include silent reflection, written reflection, small and large group discussion. There will also be a guided meditation and stress reduction techniques to experience. Each class will include time to experience humor through watching, reading, creating, listening to various styles of humor. The texture of the class is varied and interesting. Students will help create the safe and creative timbre. Respect for others’ spiritual thoughts and paths will always be honored.

Every week the student will be asked to submit their Reflection Journal, an open book quiz. This Journal will contain questions for reflection and will be posted each week on D2L, and students will submit it on D2L. It will always have space for personal reflection. There will also be questions to ponder and respond to from the week’s readings and class experience. These Reflection Journals comprise an important part of the class and your grade. They are due the afternoon before the class, so Professor Orlando has some time to read them before class.

Each student will have two projects to submit, one on humor and the other on spirituality (for A3X) or on stress management (for S2X). A portion of the one on humor will be presented to the class as part of our shared enjoyment and connection starting in Week/Session Two.

REQUIRED READINGS: Please note: These books can be purchased at DePaul. We read all chapters of these two small, important and inexpensive books. It’s very important to have the books before the first class and read the Forward and Introduction chapters before the first class. Check D2L and the Syllabus each week for the additional readings, handouts and/or video clips.

1). Transforming Stress: The HeartMath Solution for Relieving Worry, Fatigue and Tension
Doc Childre, Deborah Rozman, PhD, 2005, New Harbinger Publications, Oakland, CA. $14.95

2). Love Is Letting Go Of Fear  Gerald G. Jampolsky, MD, 1979 and 2011, Celestial Arts, Berkeley, CA. $11.95
LEARNING DELIVERABLES

- 5 classes
- 2 small books, plus some additional assigned readings
- 5 Reflection Journals/Open-book Quizzes which contain questions to track the concepts in the readings and the class experience
- Assignments, readings, handouts and videos are posted in D2L
- One Humor Project with commentary (in MS Word) due the 3rd session of this class
- Several bits of this humor shared as a class presentation for our mutual enjoyment, from 6 - 10 clock minutes from Wks. 2- 5; share why this is funny to you (if you need tech assistance, work that out with the professor before the class)
- A Spiritual Gems/Finding Meaning Project with Creed and Spiritual Symbol (A3X, FX, CCA) or a Stress Reduction Project (CCS, FX) due the 4th session of class
- Tracking Quick Coherence Technique
- Class participation
- Online discussions
- Deadlines are somewhat negotiable with communication and follow through as we model stress reduction, burnout prevention and healthy boundaries.

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING; GRADING CRITERIA AND SCALE

You are graded on excellence in the quality of your work, your assignments posted on time (or communicating about your two assignments that can be late up to one week), and your excellent attendance.

50% (50 points) Class Attendance and class participation throughout course is vitally important.  

Note: Missing class cannot be made up but you are expected to do the work of that week and hand the work in on time. The Journals are written to help absent students get caught up on material.

25% (25 points) Weekly Reflection Journals/Open Book Quizes are handed in every week, posted on D2L. There are 5 journals, thus each one represents 5 points. The journal documents contain questions on the homework and class experience. It gives the student time to reflect and gives the teacher an opportunity to see if students are doing the reading and understanding the concepts, what is important to students and how it helps inspire them to a more full, healthy, happy life. You are encouraged to answer succinctly and thoughtfully. Short and deep is the goal, about 2 – 4 sentences with substance. They are due by TUESDAY evening through WEDNESDAY noon each week, posted on D2L.

10% (10 points) Humor Project:
Gather several examples (about 30 minutes of material) of a variety of the best humor that totally delights you and explain why you chose these selections and why they are funny to you. The length of explanation is not important, but be thoughtful in your commentary. Also explain how humor helps you in your life and in dealing with stress and difficulties. Share at least 5 examples of a variety of humor. Memes can count as 1 minute each, limit of 10 in the project.

These humor bits can be in any form that can be conveyed easily: written, video, story, cartoon or audio clip, etc. Use variety; don’t share only one type of humor or comedian for your project. Put any video YouTube links in a Word document along with the commentary, rather than posting video clips on D2L. The format of this project is creative and will vary widely. This is a university setting, so use wisdom in choosing humor with many swear words, dark humor or the possibility of offending or traumatizing anyone in class. This has happened. Your goal is to have fun, allow the majority of the class to laugh, and feel the fun and connection that humor allows.

From this project, each student is asked to share several bits of this humor in class which is from 6 - 10 minutes of clock time, starting in the second class session. Please clear these with Prof. Gina before you present them. You are asked to be responsible for the tech aspect of sharing this in class. If you need Prof. Gina’s assistance, that needs to be done well before the start of class.

You don’t have to finish your Humor Project before presenting your humor example in class. Most students choose to show several YouTube videos. Some share a comic strip, memes, an audio clip or a written story that they read. The class presentation could be the student performing humor, if that is comfortable to do; sharing a funny personal or family story, doing a standup routine, reading a funny skit, etc. Please clear all of your class humor selections with the teacher. Since this is a university setting, use your best judgment to avoid offending anyone, and minimize the swear words. The goal here is to share something that is hysterically funny to you, so we can all enjoy it together. And comment verbally in writing why this is funny to you. Humor styles vary widely, but with a large class, we are in for some laughs, joy and heightened endorphins!

We are talking about 2 things in this project: the Humor Project which everyone is asked to do and submit by the deadline posted to D2L, regardless of when their humor bit is scheduled in class. The student is ALSO asked to pick one to three of these selections (from 6 to 10 minutes) and share it as a presentation with classmates during class, which may be before or after the Humor Project is due. Clear your selections with Prof. Gina first. She reserves the right to edit due to some problems in the past.

Professor Orlando would like this project submitted by Wk/Session 3 of the quarter, February 27- March 1.

15% (15 points) This second project depends on the competence or credit hours you signed up for, either the Spiritual Gems/Finding Meaning Project (A3X, CCA) or the Stress Reduction Project (S2X, CCS). FX students will choose the project that reflects their FX (stress reduction or spirituality). Please confirm this with the professor the first week of class. Due March 5 - 8.
Spiritual Gems/ Finding Meaning Project for A3X, CCA or FX:
The purpose of this project is for you to spend time gathering what deeply informs your spirituality. **It has three parts:**
1). Carefully gather several of your best, most inspiring spiritual (or religious, philosophical, psychological, self-help) quotes from religious texts, prayers, song lyrics, video clips from favorite spiritually-inspiring movies, poems, sermons, rituals, church services, inspiring radio or TV shows, literature, theater, art etc. Write some commentary on why and how these inspire you. You get the opportunity to share some of your best stuff with Gina.
Also, share at least one thing from class or elsewhere that confronted or challenged the way you frame your spirituality, religion, philosophy, psychology, ethics, etc. Explain why and how this challenged you, what it stirred up in you, and what you learned about yourself.
The format of this project is open to your creativity. The number of pages is not as important as the quality. Prof. Gina is looking for depth and clear explanation of how and why you are inspired by these. Minimum of 2 pages, maximum – 6 pages, doubled spaced, 12 point type.

2). Create your Creed. “I believe....” Take some time to creatively express your spiritual beliefs and values. Longer is not better. Again, feel free to be creative in the format of this important project. It can be written, visual, audio, an art project, a community project, etc. Express what your core beliefs are. Maximum 2 pages. Prof. Gina feels honored to read this important project. If you feel comfortable, you may wish to share a statement or two of it in class.

3). Share your Spiritual Symbol and explain why this symbolizes you and/or your spiritual search for truth and meaning. This project is due March 5 - 8.

Stress Reduction QCT Project another option for FX, A3X or CCA:
The purpose of this project is for you to experience and track the heart-centered stress reduction technique called Quick Coherence Technique™ daily (QCT). It can also work with other states and emotions. You will create a daily chart in the Excel spreadsheet posted in D2). Attempt to track the technique three times a day (even though some days you may not meet that goal), state if you are using it for stress or other states or emotions, assess the Subjective Units of Distress Level (SUDS level 0-10), the amount of time you use it (in minutes), the positive emotion you are using with the QCT and the results. You track and write down your stress level (or other emotion) when you start the technique and end the technique, on a scale of 0 – 10. Write down any and all changes you experience in using the Quick Coherence Technique™ in your body systems, health issues, your thoughts, emotions, spirit, energy, personal interactions, professional interactions or changes in your lifestyle.

This project is about using the Quick Coherence Technique™ several times daily and tracking any changes in your stress or emotional levels, as well as sharing specific changes you are experiencing. You are also asked to share the bad days or the relapses, too. This is a very human project. It’s not about perfection. It’s for you to learn and gain more awareness about your stress and emotion levels and track a practical and powerful heart-based stress reduction technique to change your responses to stress and improve your whole health and life.
Also, at the end of the 12 days of tracking your data, you will draw a conclusion to this project in several paragraphs. Write this brief conclusion/summary in Word and also post this Word doc in D2L. Some issues you will address in this conclusion: how well you liked the QCT; how effective it was; what times or situations the QCT seemed most effective; the length of QCT that worked the best for you; what positive emotion seemed to have the best results; what didn’t work well with this stress reduction tool. Then list one or more of your other favorite stress reduction techniques, how they work for you and when you use them. Compare them to the Quick Coherence Technique™ and comment on which stress reduction techniques work the best for you, and which ones you will continue to use.

You may have an opportunity to use a biofeedback monitor to track heart rate variability (HRV) with QCT and get some feedback on your coherence. Then add these numbers to your project, and comment on this biofeedback information. This Quick Coherence Stress Reduction Project is due March 5 - 8.

EXTRA CREDIT: You can do part of the other project to gain 5 extra points. Examples: if you are doing the Stress Reduction Project, you can write a personal Creed or share some of your spiritual gems for up to an extra 5 points. If you are doing the Spiritual Gems Project, you can track the Quick Coherence Technique™ for 5 days and write your summary/conclusion for up to an extra 5 points. Please check in with Gina if you are choosing to do Extra Credit. Either of these second projects are due March 5 - 8. If you can’t meet this deadline, you must communicate about this with the teacher and use one of your late passes.

THE LAST DATE THAT ALL WORK AND PROJECTS WILL BE ACCEPTED IS SUNDAY, March 22, but this implies some lost points, of course.

STUDENT WORK WILL BE EVALUATED WITH QUALITY OF WORK AND POINTS: Most students want an “A” grade. You can achieve that with your hard work. You are graded on excellence in the quality of your work and engagement in the concepts, your assignments posted on time (or communicating about your three assignments that can be late up to one week), your excellent attendance and the total points accumulated. Late work is accepted, yet points will be lost if you didn’t communicate that it will be late and it’s not on one of your late passes.

A is 93-100% (93-100 points) designates work of excellent quality; reflects thorough and comprehensive understanding of the issues at hand; reflects a clearly identifiable thesis and argument that demonstrates cogent and creative development and support of ideas. The student goes deeply into many of the concepts, ideas and questions posed in class. A- is 90-92% (90 – 92 points)
**B+** is 87–89% (87–89 points) designates work of **very good** quality; reflects clearly organized and comprehensive understanding of the issues at hand; presents substantive thesis and argument with evident development and support of ideas. The student engages with the material, but does not necessarily delve deeply in the material but does all assignments well.

**B** is 83–86% (83–86 points)

**B-** is 80–82% (80–82 points)

**C+** is 77–79% (77–79 points) designates work which minimally meets requirements set forward in assignment; reflects some organization and development of ideas but develops argument in superficial or simplistic manner; may only address part of the assignment or otherwise is incomplete.

**C** is 73–76% (73–76 points)

**C-** is 70–72% (70–72 points)

**D** is below 70% (under 70 points) designates work of poor quality which does not meet minimum requirement set forth in assignment; demonstrates poor organization of ideas and/or inattention to the development of ideas, grammar, and spelling; treatment of material is superficial and/or simplistic; may indicate that student has not done reading assignments thoroughly. **The grade of D is not a passing grade at DePaul.**

A **Pass/Fail Grade** is available to students if this is an option for your particular program at DePaul. You must get 70 points to pass by the assignment deadline.

**Incomplete grade** process follows University policy.

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**COURSE SCHEDULE**

A note on the readings and assignments: the complete and amended Syllabus will be posted by the first day of the quarter. During the course, there may be some slight changes to the weekly course assignments due to the organic nature of this class and material. Class reading assignments, including class handouts and exercises, must be completed in a timely fashion. Thank you.

**PLEASE NOTE:**

DePaul encourages students to work hard and engage deeply in course material and critical thinking to “break and academic sweat.” A general guideline to achieve a
satisfactory grade is 2 hours of homework for every hour in class. That would be about 6 hours of homework per week for a C or maybe a B grade. For an A grade the formula can be approximately 3 hours of homework for every hour of class time. That would be about 9 hours of homework per week. Professor Gina Orlando keeps the assignments for this course well within the 9 hours of homework per week to achieve an excellent grade.

SCPS courses are relevant, cutting-edge and academically rigorous. Professor Gina asks you to work smart in your program and in this stress reduction course. To save time, pay attention in class and engage in the concepts. Take notes of important concepts. Always know that you can skim any of the readings for main points if you are in overload. Skimming for content is a better strategy than getting behind or overwhelmed. One thing at a time and all the important things get done is a helpful suggestion to manage course load and stress. Another way to take off pressure is that you can take this course for Pass-Fail if your program allows that. You have two late passes that can be used on any assignment. When communicated to the professor, you get up to an extra week to complete this assignment. We are adults with busy lives and this class is modeling stress management, self-care, burnout prevention and supporting quality work and engagement in this course. We hold up the vision of engagement in this personally relevant and meaningful course to achieve a win-win.

To help reduce your workload towards the end of the quarter, you have two important, yet manageable projects to submit; one on humor and the other either on spirituality or stress reduction, depending on your competency or program. You will share a portion of your humor project (video, story, audio, poem, professional comedian clip, your own performance, standup) at any time during class sessions 2 – 5. Your written Spiritual Gems or Stress Reduction Project is due March 5 - 8, the week before we end. There is some flexibility with the deadlines with two assignments IF you communicate with the professor in advance, ask for your late pass and honor the later deadline. You’ll do great!

➤ Homework Due For The First Class: (Please do it BEFORE THE FIRST Session):

- PLEASE get your text books early. It’s VERY important to have your two books before the first day of class. They are very reasonably priced. This is a five-week course with two books, so you won’t have time to get them after the class starts. Remember, sometimes the bookstore runs out of books.
- Look through each of the books to get a sense of the content and flow in material. Please read the Forward and Introduction in each book before the first class.
- The first class is vital to attend. If you know you will be absent, please register for this class in another quarter.
- Go to D2L. Read the Syllabus through the first week. Review the Spiritual Gems (A3X) and Stress Reduction projects. For an FX choose the project that most closely aligns with your competence statement.
- In D2L under the SUBMISSIONS heading, fill out the Questionnaire and post it by Sunday, February 9.
- Begin to think about a favorite source(s) of spiritual inspiration.
- Begin to find a favorite bit(s) of humor to share in class.
SESSION ONE, Thursday, Feb. 13: Intro, reducing stress through sharing humor and other ways, experiencing the Quick Coherence Technique, understanding the body’s impact of stress, exploring The Golden Rule and gratitude

- Gina Orlando introduction and welcome
- Setting the tone of the class as creative exploration in safe, sacred space, free of judgment, with deep respect for others’ choices of spiritual beliefs and humor choices
- Assess your stress level on a SUDS (Subjective Units of Distress Scale 0-10)
- Watch an inspiring video from nature
- Understand and practice HeartMath’s Quick Coherence Technique.™ Discuss reduced stress levels. Read the Quick Coherence Technique™ handout. Check SUDS level.
  - Experience a selection of spiritual quotes, prayers and poems; notice the effect they have on your stress level. Check SUDS level.
- Listen to some comedy.
- Student introductions
- Break
- Class Objectives, Syllabus, Weekly Assignments, Reflection Journals, Final Projects, how D2L is set up. Since students already read the Syllabus, this is review and time for questions.
- Get acquainted with your class books and concepts:
  - Transforming Stress by Doc Childre and Deborah Rozman, PhD; discuss some concepts from Forward and Introduction
  - Love Is Letting Go Of Fear by Gerry Jampolsky, MD; discuss some concepts from Author’s Notes, Forward and Introduction
- Explore and discuss a spiritual lesson from all traditions: The Golden Rule
- Review an article in D2L on the biological and biochemical impact of stress; discussion question will be part of Reflection Journal
- Understand the biochemistry and role of humor in health to generate endorphins for stress reduction. Explore the adage, “Laughter is the best medicine.”
  - Review a video on gratitude.
- Check your SUDS level; share your gem from this class session.
Homework Due for Session Two:

- Reflection Journal (which is an open book quiz) Assignment from Wk 1 – due before class, TUESDAY evening February 18 through Wednesday February noon, posted to D2L (so Gina can read them before class on Thursday)
- Practice Quick Coherence Technique at least three times per day for 1-2 minutes (or longer if you wish)
- Read Chapters 1, 2, 3 of Transforming Stress, pgs. 11-42
- Read Chapters Part1 (Preparation for Personal Transformation), Part 2 (Ingredients for Personal Transformation), Part 3 (Lessons for Personal Transformation) Lesson 1 through pg. 62 of Love Is Letting Go Of Fear (allow at least one day per chapter, to give time to practice the spiritual lesson)
- Read or skim Fritjof Capra's The Tao of Physics posted on D2L
- Begin to think of your Humor Project and start picking your favorite humor bits. These can be a mixture of video clips, cartoons, stories, family stories, family videos, standup, memes, Facebook clips, you performing, etc. They can be on any topic, but we avoid dark humor with murder, torture, sex abuse, disability or any that could offend a group of people. Goal is to laugh, not shock your classmates!
- A3X or FX or CCA (if dealing with spirituality) - Begin to think of your selections for your Spiritual Gems/Finding Meaning Project. This can be excerpts from a sacred text, book, a poem, song, etc. Read the Creeds in D2L, Wk 2 Readings. Begin to think about what your Creed is.
- FX or CCS (if science credit = stress reduction project) Begin your Stress Reduction Project. Graph it (an Excel spreadsheet is posted in D2L). Comment on changes you experience using the Quick Coherence Technique.
- Post on the D2L Discussion Board on The Golden Rule.

SESSION TWO, Thursday, February 20: Transforming stress, sharing humor, understanding the projects, exploring the spiritual issue of living more in the present moment and ways to deal with suffering
- Use biofeedback with the Quick Coherence Technique™ to assess coherence.
- Experience humor selections by fellow students
- Explore some affirmations to help you reduce your suffering
- Watch video of HeartMath’s Heart-Based Living
- Practice HeartMath’s Quick Coherence Technique™. Discuss reduced stress levels
- Begin to understand and explore the stress effects of electropollution and tech devices.
- Spiritual exploration: How does your spirituality help you deal with suffering?
- View a video on present moment living and discuss
- Briefly discuss chapters in Transforming Stress (questions will be in the Journal)
- Experience one example of the Stress Reduction Project
- Clarify the Spiritual Gems, Creed and Spiritual Symbol Project
- Experience some journal excerpts of fellow students; discuss
- Experience some Creeds: the profound, the profane, the heartfelt, the radical
- Discuss chapters in Love Is Letting Go Of Fear (questions will be in the Journal)
- Share a class gem.

**Homework Due for Session Three:**

- Reflection Journal Assignment from Wk 2 – due by TUESDAY evening February 25 through Wednesday, February 26 at noon, to D2L.
- Complete your Humor Project and post it to D2L from Thursday, February 27 through Sunday, March 1 in the evening.
- Practice Quick Coherence Technique™ at least three times per day for 1 - 3 minutes (or longer if you wish)
- Read Chapters 4, 5, 6 of Transforming Stress, pgs. 43-82.
- Read Lessons 2, 3, 4, 5 of Love Is Letting Go Of Fear, pgs. 63 - 88 (allow at least one day per chapter, to give time to practice the spiritual lesson). Read the handout on forgiveness which was distributed in class (and posted on D2L). Be open for a miracle, or more.
- Reading on burnout prevention posted to D2L
- Optional Discussion Board Question in D2L on dealing with life’s difficulties.
- All students need to be scheduled at this time to share their humor bit.
- A3X, FX or CCA (spirituality focus) select additional excerpts for your Spiritual Gems/Finding Meaning Project. Add to your Creed. Please note that your Creed is an ongoing life project! Put some honest effort into getting your core beliefs down on paper, or in whatever creative form you choose. Let your soul sing. Start thinking about what your spiritual symbol is.
- FX or CCS (stress reduction, science focus), continue with tracking your Stress Reduction/Quick Coherence Technique™ Project.

**SESSION THREE, Thursday, February 27:** Transforming stress, engaging in self-care to prevent burnout, sharing humor, understanding forgiveness, exploring social justice and peacemaking issues

- Complete and submit your Humor Project to D2L through this evening and the deadline. If you need extra time, that is available with communication and follow-through by using one of your two late passes.
- Review HeartMath’s Quick Coherence Technique™ with heart breathing. Experience a personal biofeedback session tracking your Heart Rate Variability.
- Experience and compare this technique with other breathing techniques (handout posted in D2L)
- Experience humor selections of fellow students
- Optional: use biofeedback to track coherence of heart and brain with this technique. Review concepts from the Mysteries of the Heart (posted to D2L)
- Discuss chapters in Transforming Stress
- Students will experience some cutting edge approaches to exercise
- Spiritual exploration: How does your spiritual/religious/philosophical/ethical tradition help you engage in social justice and peacemaking issues to make the world a better place? Which ones do you choose?
- Explore the warning signs of burnout; discuss burnout prevention; assess aspects of adrenal fatigue and its impact on physiology and biochemistry
- Experience a guided meditation on self-care and healthy boundaries
- Discuss chapters in Love Is Letting Go Of Fear, especially Lesson 2 on Forgiveness
- More humor sharing, time permitting.
Homework Due for Session Four: As always, if you are crunched for time, skim for main points. Reflection Journal Assignment from Wk 3 – due by WEDSDAY noon
March 4 to D2L.

- Practice Quick Coherence Technique at least three times per day for 1 - 2 minutes (or longer if you wish). Students post finished Stress Reduction QCT Project from Thursday, March 5 through Sunday, March 8. (Excel file plus Word description of your process and assessment).
- For those with the Spiritual Gems Project, finish up your project with quotes, Creed and spiritual symbol. Post your finished project from Thursday, March 5 through Sunday, March 8.

- Read Chapters 7, 8 of Transforming Stress, pgs. 83 - 112
- Read Lessons 6, 7, 8, 9 of Love Is Letting Go Of Fear pgs. 89 - 114 (allow at least one day per chapter, to give time to practice the spiritual lesson)
- Read the handout with quotes on the papal encyclical, Laudato Si’ on the environment
- Optional: Read about adrenal fatigue with three easy tests you can do at home (D2L post)
- Optional Discussion Board Questions on social justice issues.

SESSION FOUR, Thursday, March 4: Continue to transform stress and prevent adrenal fatigue, share humor, process feelings, engage in environmental issues and actions to care for our common home

- Review important concepts; time for questions
- Experience humor bits shared by students
- Discuss chapters in course texts; additional questions will be in the Journal
- Spiritual exploration: how does your spirituality help you engage in environmental issues, appropriate actions and strategies to care for our common home and address the climate crisis?
- Learn a new way to process feelings (EFT - Emotional Freedom Techniques)
- Discussion about mindful eating and food choices for vibrant health and stress reduction
- Optional Discussion Board Question on the environmental issues raised in class
- Your Spiritual Gems/Finding Meaning or Stress Reduction QCT Project is due to D2L from Thursday, March 5 through Sunday, March 8.
Homework Due for Session Five:

- **Reflection Journal Assignment from Wk 4 — due by WEDNESDAY evening March 11, to D2L.**
- Read Chapters 9, 10, pgs. 113 - 143 and Learn More About HeartMath and References of Transforming Stress.
- Read Chapters 10, 11, 12 and Epilogue of Love Is Letting Go Of Fear, pgs. 115 – 131.
- Reading, Finding Meaning (posted in D2L, Readings Wk 5)
- Reading, There Isn’t Enough Time! (posted in D2L, Readings Wk 5)
- Submit your Stress Reduction Project or Spiritual Gems Project, if you haven’t done that yet. Humor projects are past due.
- Optional Discussion Board Question on ecological actions.

SESSION FIVE, Wednesday, August 21:

- Experiencing additional stress release techniques, sharing humor, experiencing a range of interfaith issues and traditions, class wrap-up

IN-CLASS

- Experience remaining student’s humor from their projects
- Catch up and wrap up
- Gina may share some humor to round out the sharings.
- Discuss favorite stress reduction techniques
- Discuss class readings in Love Is Letting Go Of Fear and Stress Reduction
- Review and exploration of spiritual concepts and traditions through an experiential hour that may include a review of the Golden Rule; experience an inspiring story and compare it with your own reactions and principles explored in class; understand the roles of letting go/forgiveness, self-forgiveness, owning our shadow self, and having the courage to be imperfect; witness a sacred dance; understand some prayer research, sing and explore the research on effective prayers; tips on living more fully in the present moment; understanding some basics of Islam; explore your beliefs on what happens when you die; experience a cosmic perspective about our human drama; understanding how increasing self-esteem and self-love is a worthy and approachable spiritual exercise
- Small group discussion: each student will choose one of these spiritual themes and discuss in a mixed-theme small group.
- Post-test, Journal 5 and Evaluation (will be posted the night after class and due on D2L by THURSDAY evening, March 19).
- Sharing your favorite class pearl: an inspiration, new learning, humor bit, sharing from a classmate, a spiritual insight, stress reduction technique, other gem.
- Optional Discussion Board on one of the topics discussed in this class.
Grades will be posted by the date suggested by DePaul.

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**COURSE POLICIES**

**ATTENDANCE:** Attendance and participation are essential. In the event of an absence it is imperative that you (1) let Prof. Orlando know ahead of time by phone or email by 4:00 pm, and (2) do all of the readings and assignments and (3) choose a classmate ahead of time to be your “buddy” for the missed session. Since each class is organic, Prof. Orlando does not send out class notes, so if you miss a class, you will miss some information. Yet the readings, handouts and videos posted on D2L, as well as the week’s Wellness Journal, will give you adequate information for that week. Any assignments due for the week you are absent must be submitted via D2L by the date of that session. **If you know an assignment will be late, please communicate with the teacher.** COMMUNICATION IS IMPORTANT.

**EVALUATION:** Students will be evaluated on their ability to examine various concepts and strategies presented during class exercises, weekly readings and journals, their Humor Project, and Stress Reduction or Spiritual Gems Project. Through these they will show an understanding of how stress reduction, humor, critical thinking, new coping skills and spiritual exploration can help improve the quality of their personal and professional life.

**LATE ASSIGNMENTS**

Deadlines are somewhat negotiable with your communication and follow through as we model a win-win regarding health, stress reduction, burnout prevention and healthy habits. We balance all of this with excellent work and getting things done.

You are allowed two late assignments in this class, with your communication by email (no apologies necessary) and follow through. One of these assignments can be up to a week late. If class work is late without communication, the student will lose some points, depending on the assignment and how late the work is. **All assignments need to be in by the absolute class deadline of SUNDAY, March 22.**

**CLASS ETIQUETTE**

As adult learners you are expected to have respect for the professor, the material and your fellow classmates. This is the foundation of safety and support that allows each of us to delve deeply into these important issues. You are supported to take what you
need and leave the rest regarding the content in this class. Disrespect will not be tolerated in any way. This includes shouting out a differing opinion to the teacher or fellow student. You are asked to not use your cell phone in class. The break is a time to catch up on your calls and texts. Please refrain from using all electromagnetic technology devices (cell phones, tablets, pagers, laptops, etc.) except those used for taking notes and research.

Students are encouraged to eat dinner before they come to class, but if you can't then you are encouraged to eat during class since waiting until the break is too late and you need food to let your brain work well. We support brains that work well. Please choose foods that are reasonable for a class situation (not too aromatic, noisy, messy). You are encouraged to bring healthy foods from home to eat. Please don't eat anything with peanuts or other food allergens that can be transmitted by air, as some students may have a sensitivity.

COMMUNICATION

Good communication is key in healthy relationships. Please call or email Gina Orlando with any questions or concerns you have. She is excellent at getting back to students by phone or email within 24 hours. She expects you to respond within 24 hours, too.

This course includes and adheres to the college and university policies described in the links below:
- [Academic Integrity Policy](#) (UGRAD)
- [Academic Integrity Policy](#) (GRAD)
- [Incomplete Policy](#)
- [Course Withdrawal Timelines and Grade/Fee Consequences](#)
- [Accommodations Based on the Impact of a Disability](#)
- [Protection of Human Research Participants](#)
- [APA citation format](#) (GRAD)

DEPAUL ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Attendance is important! DePaul University requires certification of the attendance of students in classes to fulfill requirements established by several governmental agencies. To satisfy these requirements it is DePaul University policy that attendance will be monitored in all classes. Promptness is expected of a student for all regular class sessions. Tardiness of more than 10 minutes can be considered by the instructor as an absence. Missing more than 20% of scheduled class meetings within our school is considered unacceptable, and the instructor will subtract points for tardiness and missed classes since each class is worth 10 points.
DEPAUL POLICY ON PLAGIARISM:
Students are expected to observe the University’s established guidelines regarding academic integrity, including the following statement regarding plagiarism, as quoted from the University’s “Handbook for Undergraduate Studies”:

Plagiarism is a major form of academic dishonesty invoking the presentation of the work of another’s as one’s own. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to the following:
The direct copying of any source, such as written and verbal material, computer files, audio disks, video programs or musical scores, whether published or unpublished, in whole or in part, without proper acknowledgement that it is someone else’s. Copying of any source in whole or in part with only minor changes in wording or syntax without proper acknowledgement. Submitting as one’s own work a report, examination paper, computer file, lab report or other assignment, which has been prepared by someone else. This includes research papers purchased from any other person or agency. The paraphrasing of another’s work or ideas without proper acknowledgement.

Plagiarism, like other forms of academic dishonesty, is always a serious matter. If an instructor finds that a student has plagiarized, the appropriate penalty is at the instructor’s discretion. Actions taken by the instructor do not preclude the College or University taking further punitive action, including dismissal from the University.

COURSE RESOURCES
University Center for Writing-based Learning
SNL Writing Guide
Dean of Students Office

INSTRUCTOR BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH
Gina Orlando, MA, CH has a passion for health in body, mind, emotions and spirit and has worked for 37 years as an educator, consultant, writer, coach and practitioner in the holistic health, integrative healthcare, natural foods and disease prevention fields, helping people of all ages to make positive changes in their lives, health and “wellth.” With a strong Biology background she earned her Master of Arts degree from DePaul University in the School for New Learning in 1998 as an educator and consultant in holistic health promotion and complementary medical approaches to health and disease prevention. Her Master’s thesis dealt with the power of prayer and positive intention in healing as well as disease prevention. Having found that positive change can be more easily facilitated by accessing the fascinating science of the mind-body connection and subconscious mind she was certified as a hypnotherapist in 200. She is trained in self-hypnosis, relaxation techniques, guided imagery, Emotional Freedom Techniques and other mind-body-energy techniques. Fascinated with energy medicine, which is the science of biophysics, she is trained and certified in various modalities. Feel free to explore those on
her site, www.ginaorlando.com. She is intrigued with the role of spirituality in health and wellness and is delighted that science and spirit are coming together again as part of the wellness whole health paradigm at this time in our culture and world.

Gina Orlando conducts a private holistic health consulting, hypnotherapy and coaching practice in Oak Park, IL which is called Naturally Wellthy at www.naturallywellthy.com. She facilitates community, hospital and corporate health, wellness and self-hypnosis groups for stress reduction, career change, anti-aging, wellness strategies, anxiety relief, sports improvement, pain relief, smoking cessation and sleep improvement. Also trained and certified in Complementary Medical Hypnosis, she works with clients to reduce symptoms of anxiety, performance issues, fears, phobias, pain, IBS, trauma and sleep issues. She teaches another science elective at DePaul SNL called Energy and Health. She has co-created and taught an online course at the University of Illinois at Chicago called Self-Care for the Nonprofit Leader for adult professionals to help them prevent burnout.

As a Certified Wellness and Health Coach, she understands how to support people to adopt new healthy behaviors. She has a strong passion for the U.S. health care system to incorporate holistic and true prevention modalities to create and support the new Integrative Healthcare System. The focus and support can then be on self-responsibility, empowerment, creating vibrant health, addressing disease conditions at their root causes, substantially lowering healthcare costs for the individual and the country, as well as preventing the majority of chronic diseases. The current medical-cultural system indoctrinates people to believe that someone else is responsible for their health, that there’s a magic pill, and someone else should and will pay for it.

This course Stress Reduction Using Spirituality and Humor helps the student explore effective and efficient ways to reduce their stress using a variety of evidence-based techniques including diving more deeply into their spirituality (whatever that may mean or be defined by the student) and the amazing role that humor can play. The goal is resilience in this stress-filled world.

This course description and biographical sketch can also be located in the school’s registration materials.

end

Revised 11/21/19 go