



Live Well Be Well

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Ten Simple Questions That Define Your Health

The answers to ten simple questions asked about your first eighteen years of life can provide enough information to make an accurate prediction of your risk for obesity, heart disease, and type 2 diabetes. Even more surprising is that your answers to those ten questions also gives insight to your vulnerability to alcohol and/or drug addiction, depression, anxiety, suicide, sexual promiscuity, and even your longevity. These are the findings of studies carried out by Kaiser Permanente's Preventive Medicine Department and the Center for Disease Control (CDC).

The idea for the study started with the observation that most of the people who dropped out of the Positive Choice Wellness Center's Weight Management program did so when they were in the middle of success with weight loss. Why would someone quit doing something that was working so well? That was the question that Dr. Vincent J. Felitti, the former head physician for Preventive Medicine at Kaiser Permanente, San Diego, wanted to answer. After individually interviewing hundreds of people, what he heard changed the nature of how he viewed obesity.

He realized that the "problem" of obesity, was in reality a subconscious solution for some people to resolve problems in their past, often in childhood.

The people Dr. Felitti interviewed had all lost significant weight using a fasting supplement and within a relatively short period of time regained the weight lost. When asked about their childhoods Dr. Felitti was surprised to find out that a third or more had experienced either childhood abuse or molestation, 40% had at least one parent that suffered from alcohol or drug addiction, and almost half of them had suffered the loss of one or both parents through death, prison, divorce, abandonment, or great physical or emotional illness.

Though counter-intuitive, when they were pressed about the advantages of being overweight their answers were surprisingly similar. People had less expectations of them when they were fat and they, in turn, had less expectations for themselves. They were "invisible" to people, they had less sexual attention, people didn't look at them; they could respond to life's stressors freely with food; it soothed depression or anxieties; it was an excuse to not do things. They felt powerful, they felt safe, or eating just helped them to not feel at all.

Take someone who is 100 pounds or more overweight and comfortable, at least emotionally, in their protected layers of fat and then suddenly in 20 weeks strip the layers away using a supplemented fast. This describes the typical client who fled weight loss in the midst of success.

This led Dr. Felitti to wonder what the impact of traumatic childhood experiences might have on health in general. To find the answer, Dr. Felitti added ten questions onto the health questionnaire given to 17,000 Kaiser Permanente members who scheduled routine Health Risk Assessments. When the Center for Disease Control tabulated the results what they found was startling.

People who answered "yes" to 4 or more of the questions about adverse childhood experiences were 260% more likely to suffer coronary heart disease, diabetes, and obesity. Additionally, they were 460% more likely to experience depression, be on prescribed medications for depression or anxiety, or attempt suicide. Answering "yes" to 6 or more of the questions raised the risk of alcoholism and drug use 900% and intravenous drug use 4600%.

People who answered yes to 4 or more of the questions also had much higher incidences of unexplained health issues, liver disease, pulmonary disease, and autoimmune disease. Even health issues perceived as separate from lifestyle, such as miscarriages were much higher

in people who answered “yes” to adverse childhood experiences.

While it may seem obvious that lifestyle related health conditions are a result of dealing with pain by smoking, using drugs, alcohol, or compulsive overeating, it doesn't completely explain the high rate of illness. Even when the data is corrected for risk factors like smoking, etc., there is still a strong correlation between people with adverse childhood experiences and disease. It appears that early childhood trauma affects adult health in two ways. Certain diseases are caused or greatly aggravated by attempts at self-help using alcohol, drugs, or food, *and there seems to be negative effects caused by chronic stress and continuous circulating stress hormones on the developing brain and body that are detrimental to health.*

People do not “get over” the pain of traumatic life experiences; rather they often live with the pain, shame, and anger and this process causes their health to suffer and shortens their life span.

People were engaged in discussion during their Health Appraisal about their childhood experiences and how they affected their adult life. Interestingly, doctor office visits for these people dropped by 35% for one year after their assessment. Apparently just the act of being able to speak about these life events in a caring and non-judgmental setting relieved, at least for a time, the internal stress and the related health issues of these experiences. Which leads one to question whether it is the life experiences themselves that are so damaging or the stress of not being able to talk about their pain, shame, and anger.

As a result of Dr. Felitti's studies, the Weight Management Programs at Positive Choice were revised to offer support and care for those who had experienced childhood trauma. Since helping people to recognize the connection between emotional trauma and their struggles with weight, the percentage of people reaching their weight loss goals and entering maintenance increased by 30%. That is a lot fewer people fleeing the program while they were successful at losing, but unprepared for the vulnerabilities of a smaller body.

Dr. Felitti continues his studies and has become a pioneer in encouraging traditional western medicine to realize the importance of asking these questions and viewing patient care as one of evaluating life experiences as well as lab values. He has also become an international speaker on what has become known as the ACE studies—Adverse Childhood Experiences.

If you would like to hear Dr. Felitti speak about his research, you are invited to attend a Positive Choice Wellness Club activity on August 28th at the Positive Choice Wellness Center.

The ACE questionnaire is also available in the Web version of this newsletter at: positivechoice.org/LiveWellBeWell09.pdf.

**Surviving a Painful Childhood ~
How Does it Affect Your Health**

Friday, August 28

6 to 7 P.M. or

7:30 to 8:30 P.M.

Dr. Vincent J. Felitti will speak on his collaboration with the Center for Disease Control and his groundbreaking research showing that adults just don't “get over” the effects of a painful childhood.

**Positive Choice Wellness Center
7035 Convoy Court (858) 573-0090**



ACE 10 questions that can define your health

To discover how you score on the Adverse Childhood Experience questionnaire, answer the following questions about the first 18 years of your life.

Prior to your 18th birthday:

1. Did a parent or other adult in the household **often or very often**...
Swear at you, insult you, put you down, or humiliate you **or**
act in a way that made you afraid that you might be physically hurt? If yes, enter 1 _____ Yes No
2. Did a parent or other adult in the household **often or very often**...
Push, grab, slap, or throw something at you **or**
ever hit you so hard that you had marks or were injured? If yes, enter 1 _____ Yes No
3. Did an adult or person at least 5 years older than you **ever**...
Touch or fondle you or have you touch their body in a sexual way **or**
attempt or actually have oral, anal, or vaginal intercourse with you? If yes, enter 1 _____ Yes No
4. Did you **often or very often** feel that...
No one in your family loved you or thought you were important or special **or**
your family didn't look out for each other, feel close to each other, or
support each other? If yes, enter 1 _____ Yes No
5. Did you often or very often feel that...
You didn't have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, and had no one to
protect you **or** your parents were too drunk or high to take care of you or
take you to the doctor if you needed it? If yes, enter 1 _____ Yes No
6. Was a biological parent ever lost to you through divorce,
abandonment, or other reason? If yes, enter 1 _____ Yes No
7. Was your mother or stepmother...
Often or very often pushed, grabbed, slapped, or had something
thrown at her or **sometimes, often, or very often** kicked, bitten, hit
with a fist, or hit with something hard **or ever** repeatedly hit over at
least a few minutes or threatened with a gun or knife? If yes, enter 1 _____ Yes No
8. Did you live with anyone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic
or who used street drugs? If yes, enter 1 _____ Yes No
9. Was a household member depressed or mentally ill or did a
household member attempt suicide? If yes, enter 1 _____ Yes No
10. Did a household member go to prison? If yes, enter 1 _____ Yes No

Now add up your "Yes" answers: _____ This is your ACE Score. The higher your score the greater your risk for obesity, physical illness, depression, anxiety, drugs/alcohol addiction, etc.

Be Well on Your Way

The FREE seminars and workshops listed on these pages are hosted by Kaiser Permanente's Positive Choice Wellness Center as a support network for developing and maintaining healthy lifestyles. Activities are educational, fun, and open to everyone. Kaiser Permanente members and non-members are welcome. All seminars are at the Positive Choice Wellness Center. Call 858-573-0090 to reserve your space.

Visualization as a Tool for Changing Negative Mental Chatter into Positive Behaviors

Friday, June 26 5:30 to 6:30 P.M.
7 to 8 P.M.

Transforming your relationship with yourself, your thoughts, and your feelings is an enjoyable process which involves moving into a calm, watchful state, and simply letting go. Dr. Brian Alman, an internationally known author, clinician, and trainer, will show you how to create positive changes in your life. Dr. Alman teaches self-hypnosis with visualization, meditation, and breathing techniques and helps you personalize these techniques so you can effectively apply them to situations in your life.

Give Your Immune System a Blast ~ Phyto-nutrients that Fight for Your Health

Friday, July 10 6 to 7 P.M.

Dietitian and personal trainer Vince Alvarez, RD, will lead you through the benefits of eating colorful foods and explain the amazing abilities these foods have to bolster your immune system. Learn about the most beneficial fruits and vegetables for your health and the fun ways you can easily add them into your life.

Move to Lose ~ How to Burn More Calories

Friday, July 24 6 to 7 P.M.

Learn how your metabolism works and what kinds of movements it takes to rev your metabolic rate and lose weight. Be ready to work out with Positive Choice's dietitian and personal trainer Kari McCloskey, RD,CPT, and exercise physiologist, Chris Heslin, MS. Wear comfortable clothes that let you move.

Sink Your Teeth Into Health ~ Learn How Healthy Teeth Add Up To a Healthy Body

Friday, August 14 6 to 7 P.M.

Safe water, safe fillings, good plaque or toxic plaque, these are the things that author, dentist, and public speaker, Dr. David Kennedy, DDS, wants to share with you. Listen as he shares data from the International Academy of Oral Medicine and Toxicology and discusses the health of your teeth, the connection they have on your risk for stroke, heart disease, and cancer, and the simple preventive care you can do to help avoid these illnesses.

Surviving a Painful Childhood ~ How Does it Affect Your Health?

Friday, August 28 6 to 7 P.M.
7:30 to 8:30 P.M.

Dr. Vincent J. Felitti speaks on his collaboration with the Center for Disease Control and his groundbreaking research showing that adults just don't "get over" the effects of a painful childhood. Childhood experiences of emotional/physical abuse or of parental drug/alcohol abuse lead to adults that are 4600% more likely to experience drug addiction, 460% more likely to suffer from chronic depression, and a 260% increased of risk for other serious health issues such as lung disease, obesity, diabetes, coronary heart disease, unplanned pregnancies, and sexually transmitted diseases.

My Big Fat Greek Miracle ~ Taking Charge of Your Weight and Health

Friday, September 11 6 to 7:30 P.M.

In April 2001, Dr. Nick Yphantides weighed 467 pounds. It was getting increasingly more difficult to tell his patients that they should lose weight for their health when his own weight was out of control. So "Dr. Nick" decided to take a break from practicing medicine and take charge of his weight and health. Thinking he'd make his weight loss efforts less arduous and more fun, he decided to do a road trip and visit every state and every major ball park along the way. As he traveled 38,000 miles, he lost 270 pounds and experienced all sorts of things along the way. His amazing story has been featured in *People Magazine*, *Reader's Digest*, *The New York Times*, on CNN and Fox News. Dr. Nick shares his discoveries about true and permanent weight loss with you. It's not just about losing weight, it's about never finding it again!

Using Acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine to Heal in Today's World

Friday, October 2 6:30 to 7:30 P.M.

Learn the basics of traditional Chinese medicine and the gentle art of acupuncture with Martha Odegaard, L.Ac., OMD. Martha will give a brief description of acupuncture and the history of oriental medicine. Then she will cover more specifically how these techniques can help with conditions like chronic pain, insomnia, menopause, digestive disorders, etc. Martha will also provide live demonstrations and answer individual questions.

Relief for Chronic Pain, Insomnia, and Stress Using Self-Hypnosis

Friday, November 6 6 to 7 P.M.
7:30 to 8:30 P.M.

Internationally known author, clinician, and teacher, Dr. Brian Alman has written several books with his most recent publication, *Self-Hypnosis: The Complete Manual for Health and Self Change*, published in 10 languages. A compassionate and engaging teacher, his work using self-hypnosis as a tool for treating insomnia, obesity, chronic pain, depression, anxiety and post traumatic stress disorder is of international acclaim. Dr. Alman will speak of his work and lead the group in a series of self-hypnosis techniques and guided imageries.

Holiday Weight Loss Support Groups

Monday, December 21 6 to 8 P.M.
Tuesday, December 22 9:30 to 11:30 A.M.
Wednesday, December 23 9:30 to 11:30 A.M.
6 to 8 P.M.
Tuesday, December 29 9:30 to 11:30 A.M.
6 to 8 P.M.
Wednesday, December 30 9:30 to 11:30 A.M.
6 to 8 P.M.

This year choose to be one of the people who won't gain those unwanted extra 10 pounds over the holiday season. Join others who are losing through the holidays and stay on track and keep up your commitment and motivation. You are welcome to attend one or all of the provided support groups. Happy Holidays!

Positive Choice Wellness Center

positivechoice.org
7035 Convoy Court, San Diego, CA 92111
(858) 573-0090





Turn Up the H.E.A.T. Lose Weight and Get in Shape

**Need a little kick getting into shape?
Turn up the H.E.A.T. (Healthy Eating
and Training) this Summer!***

You'll start out your 6-session **H.E.A.T.** with cardiovascular fitness, body fat, muscular strength, and endurance tests. Our trainers will review your results with you by pointing out areas of strength and the areas where you can improve. Depending on your specific goals, they will design an individualized nutrition and workout plan. If your goal is to lose weight, you have the option of losing on a full food plan or using 1 to 2 liquid nutritional meal replacement supplements a day. **Then watch your body get into shape as you workout with a trainer in 5 more personalized training sessions that combine strength training and nutrition counseling.** You can train individually or with a friend or two.

*This service requires a fee.

Interested? Call us for more information and to sign up to feel the **H.E.A.T.** If you would like to meet the trainers first and learn more about **H.E.A.T.**, attend the free **Positive Choice Club** seminar—**MOVE to LOSE**—scheduled for **Friday, July 24th** at the Positive Choice Wellness Center. Call (858) 573-0090.

When You Need a Helping Hand



Ask the Dietitian

Receive free advice from a dietitian. Sessions are offered on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday at 5 to 5:30 P.M. or Tuesday at 11:45 A.M. to 12:15 P.M. and 5:30 to 6 P.M. at the Positive Choice Wellness Center.

Fitness Forum

Free advice from an exercise physiologist. Sessions are offered on Monday thru Thursday at 5 to 5:30 P.M. at the Positive Choice Wellness Center.

Everyone is welcome.

You do not need to be a Kaiser Permanente member to attend.