

## The biggest threat to depression is your awareness of it.

Serious depression strikes millions. Serious depression strikes indiscriminately. Serious depression is MOST dangerous when it goes unrecognized. That's why it's so important to always be aware of the threat of depression. And if your life is ever interrupted by a period of depression, remember that it is readily, medically treatable.

**UNTREATED DEPRESSION**  
#1 Cause of Suicide

Public Service message from SAIVE (Suicide Awareness/Voices of Education) <http://www.save.org>

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## Aerobic instructors set tension free

**AMANDA SCHINDLER is a freshman news-editorial major and a Daily Nebraskan staff reporter.**

Stress is strange. It bothers people in a way like no other – a confusing, frustrating way. Thus, it's hard to deal with.

Instead of slapping it like we would a mosquito, or facing it like we would a final, we often divert our attention from it. It's like a whiny child – the less attention we pay to it, the quicker it will leave us alone. Often this entails finding another form of stress on which to concentrate.

Take the rather popular method known as exercise. Granted, it works, and at the same time helps you get in shape, but how exactly? How does adding physical stress to an already horrible day enable us to relax?

I have developed a theory explaining this very question.

Stress reduction because of exercise doesn't stem from exercise at all.

Instead, it comes from venting all your frustration onto the always-perky, Barbie-doll-shaped aerobics instructor you watch bounce effortlessly on and off a 5-foot-high platform every other night. You know, the blonde one with the ponytail that never falls despite her acrobatic step routines. The one who never sweats, just cutely collects tiny droplets on her perfectly tanned forehead. The one who talks like Minnie Mouse, and always manages to end her sentences with "Akay?" She's a Disney movie trapped in a Penthouse bod.

Sickening, isn't it? Having participated in a few aerobics classes myself, I'm familiar with

her plan of action. For the first few classes, she'll take it easy – you'll do jumping jacks and embarrassing stuff like that. But it's only a ploy to build up your confidence.

Once she's sure you've mustered just enough courage to stick with the course (never wear biker shorts, they're a dead giveaway) she'll begin her craft.

It starts with a new routine. Not like the other routines, but an *endless* routine. There'll be jumps and kicks and boxing moves out of Rocky movies; and not even good ones either. Later ones like Rocky IV and V. Her music selection will change from Randy Travis to AC/DC, and finally come to rest on some foreign techno-dance group. She'll start to scream incessantly, "Show me some power! Feel the burn!" while you do your best impression of an elephant in the 100-meter dash. The confidence you formerly built runs out like sweat down your cleavage.

Soon enough, all hope has left your body, and while class lags on, you begin to unconsciously de-stress yourself by silently planning Barbie's death.

"And 10 more leg lifts!"  
*No one will ever know...*  
"And three, and two, and one. Now SWITCH legs! And 50, and 49..."

*She must die!*  
"Now pump!"  
*Could buy gun with money from student loan.*

"And squeeze!"  
*Poisoning is cheaper – but wait, does she even eat?*  
"Feel the burn!"

*Burn? Did she say burn?*  
"Now for those triceps! Lift with the right arm!"

*Could a three-pound barbell kill a woman?*

The room is filled with the sound of desperate panting. It's no longer a matter of jeans size – it's one of survival. Every once in awhile, you look up to see a fellow stepper struggling, and you nod to let her know of Your Plan.

Before you can nod more, Barbie catches on, and brings out the mats for the abs session. Don't be fooled though – it's not a muscle group. It's actually an acronym: Anti-Breathing System. If you can't breathe – you can't revolt, right? What's more, all that incessant crunching squeezes out whatever tension remains.

By the time this infernal session is over, you have just enough energy to unlock your door and wrench off your sneakers before falling on your face.

And supper? Completely out of the question. All you'll have the energy left to do is open a packet of Ramen noodles and suck on them dry.

Such is the truth about the method of stress reduction that has become so popular lately. Exercise, namely aerobics, combines both physical and mental torment in its de-stressing process. People can't help but forget their problems while being led like donkeys through humiliating step choreography. It's dehumanizing, and we hate it, but it works.

So we continue. I myself even signed up for a new aerobics class recently. Sure, I know what I'm getting into. I think.

But maybe I'll look like Barbie someday.

## Don't 'sweat' it: You're still young

**IEVA AUGSTUMS is a freshman news-editorial major and a Daily Nebraskan staff reporter.**

Sunday night, a phone call. You have a deadline at noon tomorrow.

Monday morning, up at four, into work by five. Leave at 7:15 a.m., take a Library 110 final exam. Stop down at the Daily Nebraskan around eight. Find that the stress you have been experiencing in college is not good enough.

You're only a freshman, an editor tells you.

You've only been on this campus for seven weeks.

You don't know what stress is. He's kidding, right?

The expectations. The responsibilities. The harder classes. The financial burdens. Living with a stranger you first met on the phone.

Stress is a daily occurrence in my life. Stress laughed in my face the first day of college. Stress is part of every day as a college student.

There's no question that being a young adult in college is stressful. But over these past seven weeks, most freshmen, including myself, have managed to deal with the new college experience.

Don't ask me how we do it, but we get things done. Miracle of miracles.

Walking onto this campus was not a drastic change in my life. I've lived in Lincoln for the past 18 years, been employed by the university since my sophomore year in high school, and have attended endless numbers of conferences, seminars and lectures held here on campus. I can handle responsi-

bilities. I admit, I'm organized, even anal at times.

But this doesn't matter when you are dealing with stress.

No matter how hard you try – or how hard you don't try – stress is unavoidable. Death and taxes, baby.

I was hoping, innocently enough, that once I graduated, all of the stresses in my life would just vanish. Not quite. They did for three months. Then summer ended.

And college started. In the past seven weeks, I have endured the loss of a close friend, the ongoing battle between my recently divorced parents, coping with breast cancer within my family, the apprehension of moving away from home, the plaguing hours of homework, and of course the everyday responsibilities of being a student. I have experienced all of these things while holding a part-time job, completing an internship, getting involved with organizations on campus, and preparing myself for the Miss Lancaster County pageant.

Crazy, huh?

I keep on wondering when – or if – it's all going to end.

I'm not a sympathy case. That is the last thing from my mind. However, maybe it is time for a reality check. A step back. A new look.

Why in the hell am I doing all this?

A very close friend of mine once told me that when stress strikes, smile. Not a psychotic, mad hatter smile. Just a grin. Helps you stay focused, and sane. Friends are good too. They do what friends do – listen, console, take verbal abuse. The usual.

But then there are other ways.

Walk around your dorm floor wearing a green avocado mud mask. Trust me, you'll be more concerned with when your floormates are going to call the cops than with whatever was stressing you.

Run two miles every day. If you need motivation, think to yourself that if you don't run fast enough, a drooling, mangy dog with snaggle teeth and the word "stress" shaved in its greasy fur is going to bite you where you don't want to be bitten. Not only do you get a good workout, it gives you time to yourself, where you can think about other things in your life. Like that good-looking person running laps ahead of you. Definite stress relief.

But my favorite way of dealing with stress is over the Internet. What better way to make an impression than by venting your frustrations and stresses to kindred souls on the Net whom you hardly know? If people were stressed out when they invented the technological superhighway, you might as well put it some good use. Even if it is for selfish reasons.

College can't be that bad, can it? Living up to others' expectations, agonizing over what to major in, and trying to prove to the parents that you can live on your own: What isn't there to love about college?

I've learned at least one thing in college so far: You can't let the idea of stress stress you out.

Relax, for crying out loud.

Remember you are still young.

So you don't have to worry about heart attacks just yet.

But don't push it.