

# At the end of your rope? Programs are lifeline to sanity

■ The University Health Center offers ways to beat stress; sure signs include anxiety and poor eating and sleeping habits.

BY MARGARET BEHM

You're 10 minutes late for class, your dog ate your homework and some old woman in a Volvo just stole your parking spot.

Sounds like you're stressed. Stress is an everyday part of our lives. Sometimes it can be overwhelming. But with some practice, it can get easier to deal with.

Mary Swoboda, a clinical social worker at the University Health Center, said it's common for people to go through times

when they're stressed.

"I think everybody has periods of life when they're overwhelmed," Swoboda said.

Typical signs of being overstressed can be anything from being anxious or not sleeping well to not eating properly.

If someone is under overwhelming stress for a longer period of time, it may lead to depression, said Luis Diaz-Perdomo, a psychologist at the University Health Center.

Not dealing with stress properly is what makes people not feel well, he said.

"It's not the stress that makes these signs appear, it's you not managing your stress," Diaz-Perdomo said.

To help students learn how to deal with stress, the University Health Center has the

Relaxation Hour. The program takes place Tuesdays from 12:30 to 1:20 p.m. It is free for students and no reservation is necessary.

The program will feature a new relaxation exercise such as muscle relaxation, visualization or breathing exercises each week.

Students can determine which exercise works the best for them.

It is important to train yourself to deal with stress like you would train yourself for other things, Diaz-Perdomo said.

"The idea of any kind of training is practice," he said. "You have to do it like you would physical conditioning."

Sometimes people use stress relievers that are damaging, Diaz-Perdomo said.

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*"Stress relievers can be damaging if the only thing they know how to do is go and drink to relieve stress."*

Luis Diaz-Perdomo

University Health Center psychologist

aging if the only thing they know how to do is go and drink to relieve stress," he said. "Pretty soon that one beer doesn't do it anymore. Then it's two, then three."

Students can also go to the University Health Center for biofeedback training, which is when a machine measures how much stress a person's body is under.

This is important because you may not even know that

you're body is stressed, Swoboda said.

"A lot of people don't realize when they're stressed," she said. "Your body gets to thinking it's normal. So you should recondition yourself to be relaxed instead of being stressed."

Students also get three free counseling sessions at the University Health Center.

Students should take advantage of the sessions, Diaz-Perdomo said.

"It's not like you have to be crazy to go to a counselor," he said. "If you have some doubts or concerns, come see a counselor."

College students can be stressed by a variety of things. Many college students feel overwhelmed from the burden of classes, Swoboda said.

"A lot of people talk about that when you're in school, you're never really done with it," she said. "You can't just go home and say 'OK, I'm done with it for today.'"

College students also often work too many hours, Diaz-Perdomo said.

"Sometimes I have to ask a student to take a step back and ask themselves, 'Am I a student or a worker that's taking classes?'"

## British study probes asteroids

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LONDON — They may only strike every 100,000 years on average, but life-threatening asteroids could be heading Earth's way, and scientists said Monday they want a closer look.

A panel set up this year by the British government to assess the risk of asteroids slamming into the planet called for an international program to build a powerful \$22.5 million telescope in the southern hemisphere.

"The risk is very real — and very tiny — but with awful consequences, and we ought to be doing something about it," said Sir Crispin Tickell, Britain's former ambassador to the United Nations and a member of the panel, which published its report on Monday.

Although millions are already being spent trying to track Near Earth Objects, or NEOs, scientists acknowledge they're very much in the dark. Asteroids near Earth travel at between 10 and 20 miles per second, making them hard to detect. As a result, scientists watch their orbits to predict their expected course.

According to the U.S. space agency NASA, at the beginning of 2000, only about half the estimated 500-to-1,000 near-Earth aster-

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oids measuring half a mile across or larger — big enough to cause a global catastrophe — had been detected.

The proposed 10-foot telescope would see further and wider and be able to pick up the faintest of glows, the panel said. Operated robotically, it would supplement the coverage of other telescopes in operation in the northern hemisphere.

"It's a question of giving ourselves a chance," said Robert Massey, an astronomer at Britain's Royal Observatory in Greenwich. "We would be able to spot trouble 10 to 100 years away and could take steps accordingly. On the other hand, if it were a year away, probably the best we could do would be to duck," Massey said.

Objects hitting the Earth have caused devastating damage over millions of years. One impact off the coast of what is now Mexico 65 million years ago is thought to have led to the extinction of the dinosaurs.

Another impact in 1908 in Siberia knocked down trees with its shock waves over hundreds of square miles.

The report listed nine objects that have come within two lunar distances of the Earth — about 497,120 miles — since 1991. In May 1996, an object 984 feet wide, called JAI, came as close as about 298,000 miles to the planet.

It also called for further study into how to destroy a sizable object on a collision course with the planet. One possibility is a nuclear explosion by the side of an asteroid to divert it from its course.

Recent Hollywood blockbusters "Armageddon" and "Deep Impact" have heightened public awareness about asteroid disasters.

NASA has already earmarked more than \$1 billion to gain a better scientific understanding of asteroids, which are rocky or metallic bodies hurtling through space mostly in a band between Jupiter and Mars.

## Dean candidate: Job preparation, liberal arts key

DEAN from page 1

sciences to foster conditions that allow the inspirations of faculty and students to flourish."

Tomlin said he was aware of the large number of administrative openings at the university but said that hadn't yet affected his desire to come to UNL.

But it has made him wonder why so many openings exist, he said.

Tomlin said it may become an issue if he moves farther along in the selection process.

"All of the candidates are excited to be here now," Tomlin said. "I'm interested in learning about the campus. Second thoughts would arise when we moved into the next stage."

Susan Rosowski, English professor, said she found Tomlin to be articulate and thoughtful.

It is also helpful to hear about other universities, Rosowski said, and Tomlin talked quite a bit about his experience at Oregon.

Rosowski did not want to comment on Tomlin as a dean candidate specifically but said she thought the new dean needed to have a clear understanding of the faculty's mission.

"He or she will need to be at the core of the identity of undergraduate education," she said. "They should also be effective working with other colleges and representing us."

The next dean candidate to come to campus is Richard J. Hoffman, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at the State University of New York at Albany. He will be on campus from Sept. 20-22.

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## Poll shows Nelson ahead of Stenberg

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Hagel and himself. "The focus has been on getting Republicans to vote Republican," Vanderford said. "If he does that, he will win."

Robert Sittig, a political science professor at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, said he was surprised by the size of Nelson's lead.

Six months ago, Sittig said, he would have predicted Stenberg to win on the basis of the Republican Party's sizable lead among regis-

tered Nebraska voters. Although he expects the race to tighten, he said Nelson looks poised to win.

He said the poll could hurt Stenberg's chances by making national donors and the national Republican Party more reluctant to invest in his campaign.

"This kind of poll result is pretty damaging for Stenberg," Sittig said. "I imagine the Stenberg campaign is in quite a tizzy."

Sittig said Nelson enjoys essentially the same popularity he did four years ago. The difference, he said, is that instead of facing a

new face like Hagel, Nelson is now facing the "staid, solid, unprovocative" campaign of Stenberg.

The World-Herald poll showed that one-third of those who planned to vote for Bush were supporting Nelson for now. In order for Stenberg to pull off a comeback, he will have to solidify that base, Sittig said.

"The challenge now for Stenberg is to try to take those squishy Republicans and bring them home," he said. "How does he do that? It's hard to say."

## Both sides of marriage amendment optimistic

AMENDMENT from page 1

recognized in Nebraska. The uniting of two persons of the same sex in a civil union, domestic partnership or other similar same-sex relationship shall not be valid or recognized in Nebraska."

Thirty-three other states have already enacted legislation or approved initiatives banning same-sex marriages. If Initiative 416 passed, Nebraska would become the first state to specifically ban civil unions and domestic-partner arrangements, too.

Earlier this year, Vermont legalized civil unions for gay partners. Mills said passage of

Initiative 416 would ensure Nebraska would not be forced to recognize civil unions for Nebraskans who traveled to Vermont to enter into them.

"For all intents and purposes, (Vermont) redefined marriage," she said.

Mills said she was disturbed by one of the World-Herald poll's findings: 27 percent of respondents said they disapproved of homosexuality but thought it was a private matter.

"I think this indicates that a number of people are increasingly afraid to voice opposition to homosexuality as a lifestyle for

fear of being labeled a hate-monger," she said.

Clements said supporters of the amendment gained the necessary signatures to place it on the November ballot by misleading voters. She said she was confident Nebraskans would reject the amendment.

"Who's attacking marriage? Not gay and lesbian people in Nebraska," she said. "Amendment supporters are trying to make second-class citizens out of a portion of Nebraskans. No one, whether gay or straight, liberal or conservative, would support that."



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