



PRACTICE MANAGEMENT

How to Survive a Seminar

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Are you dreading your next seminar? No need to. When you finish reading this, you will have become not only a seminar survivor, but a source of wonder and knowledge to your fellow "seminarians." (If the word doesn't exist, it should!)

It is impossible to be a business or professional person these days without attending seminars from time to time. From the point of view of physical/mental well-being, this may not be a problem when the seminar is short, say one day, but it is far more serious when the seminar is lengthier.

The stress occasioned by the need to sit still for hours at a time, day after day, is a very unfortunate situation for any human being. The enforced immobility may produce such symptoms as sleepiness, leg cramps, indigestion, headaches and anxiety, which leads to the inability to comprehend the subject being dealt with. This defeats the very purpose of attending the seminar in the first place.

Unless you are lecturing, you must sit at a seminar. That's a shame. Because structurally, your pelvis is probably in its most unstable position when you sit. The lower portion of the pelvic bones move closer together and allow the upper joints to move apart. Thus your lower spine loses its usual support. This is even further aggravated when you cross your legs. Aside from instability, the spine now has the added stress of weight imbalance.

Muscle spasm is another problem associated with prolonged sitting. The most common area of pain is the gluteals, (what you sit on), but the leg-crosser adds the discomfort of pain in the lower of the two thighs, which is the result of pressure exerted on the area interfering with local circulation.

Fortunately, a number of simple remedies are available, which help counter the vicious spiral of "Sedentary Seminar Suffering Syndrome." Here is what you can do to avoid the nasty "S.S.S.S."

Wake Up With Deep Breathing

An old karate gambit, you can raise your level of alertness by taking six or seven deep breaths. Breathe in slowly, as deeply as you can. Follow by breathing out, *exhausting as much air from your lungs as possible*. Out with the old, in with the new. An instant pick-me-up!

Lower Your Blood Pressure

You can avoid or relieve leg cramps and improve your alertness with a very short, easy isometric exercise. Simply tighten as many of your body muscles as you can — legs, buttocks, torso, arms and neck, for six seconds. Relax for a few seconds and repeat twice. This exercise carried out only three times daily will improve your circulation and has been shown to substantially lower blood pressure. Best of all, the exercise can be carried out as easily during the lecture as your deep breathing.

Avoid Back and Leg Pains

When sitting, your staying power is only as good as your posture. Put both of your feet on the floor uncrossed. The ideal position is to place your back right against the back of a firm, straight chair with your knees slightly higher than your hips. A briefcase comes in handy here as a make-shift footstool. The ideal angle of the back is 110° for the normally mobile back and 100° for anyone with restricted mobility.

Perk Up Your Nutrition

Your brain's primary source of fuel is blood glucose. Hypoglycemia (low blood sugar) may make you feel dull, tired, anxious, irritable and depressed. Who needs that? Try to cut down on the following foods at least 72 hours before seminar time: coffee, tea, alcohol, sugar, white flour products and drugs containing caffeine. If you like, have an extra drink *after* the seminar to celebrate how well and alert you felt *during* the seminar. Avoid

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concentrated sources of sugar (soft drinks, candy bars, gum, muffins, etc.). These all produce rapid rises in blood glucose, but within a short time (from minutes to a few hours) cause a nasty rebound effect due to low blood glucose through the action of insulin.

On the positive side, before and during the seminar, you should eat plenty of whole grains, fruits, vegetables, seeds and nuts. These unrefined foods supply a steady flow of time-released glucose to the brain. Carry seeds and nuts in your pockets and snack on them from time to time. Aside from being an excellent source of trace minerals and essential fatty acids, these are foods that will provide a stable blood glucose level.

You can also help avoid the "Seminar Blues", by supplementing with some vitamin "B" complex (50-100 mgs. daily), and vitamin "C" (500-1500 mgs. daily). These aid in the more efficient metabolism of carbohydrates.

If these simple measures fail to help your concentration, stamina, and enthusiasm for the seminar, one of two things may be responsible:

- (1) The seminar is a dud. Either you already know the material presented, or the lecturer is "borring!"
- (2) You are out of shape and in urgent need of a thorough biochemical-nutritional evaluation

and assessment for an exercise program. In other words, you may need a visit to a nutrition-oriented doctor and perhaps some aerobic exercise. Also better check your eyes if it's been over a year since your last check-up. "Eyestrain" can put you to sleep too. (How long has it been since you had *your own eyes* checked, Doctor?

A knowledge of the factors that enable you to get the most out of your seminars and come out feeling on top will really pay high dividends at your next seminar. Enjoy.

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BOOK REVIEW

The Senses, H.B. Barlow and J.D. Mollon, New York, Cambridge University Press, 1982, 490 pp., illustrated.

Ce volume a été écrit par 13 auteurs dont deux sont professeurs dans des Ecoles d'Optométrie, les professeurs Millodot et Woodhouse. Les éditeurs du volume, Barlow et Mollon, ont publié un traité d'anatomie et de physiologie sensorielle destiné aux étudiants de médecine, de psychologie, d'optométrie, d'otologie et d'ophtalmologie. Le volume contient les résultats de recherches récentes sur les sujets abordés tout en maintenant une perspective historique. Les textes sont précis tout en n'éliminant pas les sujets douteux ou controversés. Les problèmes sont abordés d'un point de vue théorique et clinique.

Les 12 premiers chapitres sont susceptibles d'intéresser un praticien qui désire réviser des notions fondamentales sur l'anatomie de l'oeil, l'optique de l'oeil, l'accommodation, les aspects biochimiques de la vision, la physiologie de la

réine, la psychophysique de la vision, la perception de l'espace, la motilité oculaire, le strabisme, la vision des couleurs et la neurophysiologie de la vision. Chaque chapitre peut être lu séparément, ce qui représente un avantage certain pour le lecteur pressé. Le volume ne pourrait probablement pas être utilisé comme manuel dans un cours d'optométrie étant donné que les textes ne contiennent pas de description et d'analyse suffisamment détaillées. Les chapitres qui traitent de la vision sont susceptibles d'intéresser des praticiens qui désirent réviser rapidement des sujets étudiés depuis plus de 10 ans. Chaque chapitre contient une liste bibliographique indexée qui permet d'approfondir les sujets traités par les meilleurs auteurs. Le volume devrait faire partie de la bibliothèque ou de la bibliographie d'un clinicien.

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