

Stress experts offer advice, May 23, 2004, Tribune

Program teaches Time-management techniques By J. Craig Anderson Tribune

Is an overload of responsibilities at work or home throwing life out of balance?

Two stress management experts offered unorthodox but sound advice for creating personal and professional equilibrium at a Chandler community conference Saturday. Abandon the old notions of managing time and stress, said Arizona State University professor Marianne Jennings at the conference, presented by The Leadership Centre to teach ways to preserve and enhance Arizona communities.

“You do not manage stress,” said Jennings, an author: “Stress manages you.” Instead she said, eliminate unnecessary stress by placing problems into two categories “Fixable,” and “nonfixable,” and deciding not to worry about the nonfixable. When it comes to time, the key is to “shift” it rather than manage it, Jennings said.

In other words, do something early that you normally would at the last minute, like filling an empty gas tank or paying bills. Make dinner in the morning. Write Christmas cards in July. “Shift everything to a different time – it cuts way down on the stress, she said.

Jennings and Kitty Wiemelt, a motivational trainer and “levity” expert, teamed up to give one of several workshops offered at the all-day conference. Other sessions focused on leadership neighborhood communication and homeowners associations.

Wiemelt said laughter is the key to reducing stress. She suggested 10 minutes of laughter a day, whether it’s by watching a funny show or laughing at your own mistakes.

“Humor is a survival skill ,” Wiemelt said. “It keeps you fluid and flexible, not rigid and breakable, in the face of relentless change and unexpected happenings.”