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# EFAP

## THREE TRAILS EFAP

SPRING 2016

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### THREE TRAILS OFFICE HOURS:

- Monday 9:00am to 6:00pm
- Tuesday 9:00am to 7:00pm
- Wednesday 9:00am to 6:00pm
- Thursday 9:00am to 7:00pm
- Friday 8:00am to 1:00pm
- Saturday Closed
- Sunday Closed



It's that time of year when the days are lasting longer and that ever elusive sun finally starts to stay around a lot more than before. Spring is known as a time of renewal. It brings with it a rebirth of nature. It can also be a time of changes we can make toward personal wellness. This is usually a time when people start getting active and outside more. This article will examine the amazing mental health benefits from exercise and sunlight.

We have all heard the medical recommendation of at least exercising three times a week for thirty minutes. And most of us

are aware of the health benefits of exercise (i.e. controls weight, decreases chance of disease, good for your heart). However, there are also lots of mental health benefits to exercise. According to HuffPost Healthy Living, exercise can reduce stress. Working out can actually manage physical and mental stress. By exercising, you are increasing your concentrations of norepinephrine. This is a chemical that helps your brain handle its response to stress. Exercise also releases endorphins and these chemicals are needed to help create feelings of happiness. Exercise can

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## Upcoming Community Outreach for Three Trails EFAP

Three Trails EFAP will have a booth at the 2016 Wyoming Employee Health and Wellness Conference.

There will be brochures, pens, magnets, and stress balls for attendees of the conference. For more information about the 2016 Wyoming Employee Health and Wellness Conference, check out the web page:  
<http://wyomingmedicalcenter.org/pulse/conference-shows-employers-how-to-improve-morale-and-profits-through-health>

When:  
May 5th  
Time:  
10:00 am – 3:00 pm  
Place:  
Parkway Plaza in Casper, WY

Three Trails EFAP will be doing a presentation on communication and handling conflict with others for the City of Casper.

This presentation will cover communication tips and ways to deescalate conflict. If you are an employee for City of Casper mark the date to attend!

When:  
June 15th  
Time:  
10 am and also 2pm  
Place:  
Casper City Hall

Three Trails would love the chance to do a presentation for your workplace or take part in a wellness fair!

So speak to your wellness coordinator, HR representative or executive director about having us come to your worksite.

## BOOKSHELF



### Three Trails Book Review

#### **Total Money Makeover Workbook**

by **Dave Ramsey**

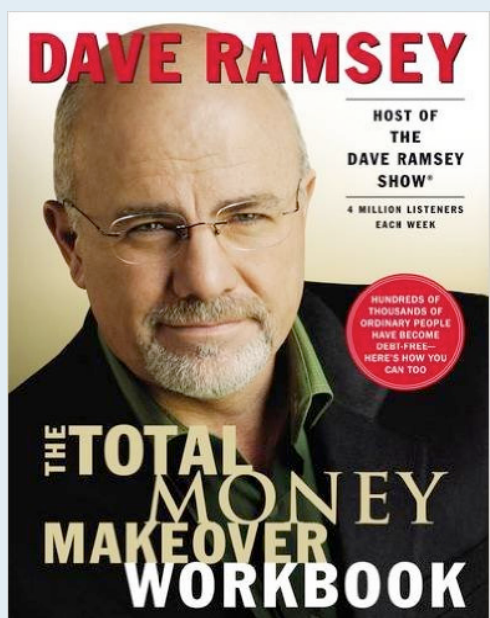
A review by Charles McBride, MA, NCC, LPC

Whether it be premarital, post-marital or with a benefitted employee and a live-in partner, couples' counseling is something we conduct often here at Three Trails. In my experience, finances are one of the three biggest areas of concern which bring couples into my office (the other two being intimacy issues and poor communication). It may be an inability to create a budget and live within its means, adjusting to a sudden loss of income, or struggling with credit card debt, financial issues and the stress, anxiety and anger they create can fracture even the closest couple. They have discovered that being in love doesn't pay the bills. For that reason I chose to review a book in our lending library which addresses these issues, *The Total Money Makeover Workbook* by Dave Ramsey.

In the book, Ramsey makes the case that most people are not willing and eager to discuss financial matters openly and honestly because they are worried, or even outright scared, about their financial situation. And if a person is scared, it is common to react with anxiety and/or anger. We hate to look and feel out of control. Ramsey says that we must first accept responsibility for our financial situation and then we can go about changing it. This idea of change is fundamental in counseling: the reason people seek counseling is that they need to change something in their lives that isn't working.

Ramsey debunks the myth that being in debt is good for you, although it certainly seems to be the American way [approximately 70% of people live paycheck to paycheck, counting on credit to get what we need (want)]. He shows us how we can live on a cash-only basis. After all, if you're not using credit, what's the use of a credit rating? He also demonstrates how to create a budget, how to build up a \$1000. emergency fund, and how to get rid of debt using the debt snowball. (In essence, you pay off the smallest balance first. Then, whatever monthly payment you were making on that debt, add to the next one. Pay that one off and so forth. Soon your payment grows and grows like a...well, you get it.)

If you are debt-free, saving for important things in life (vacations, college educations, retirement) and giving to charity with abundant joy, this book is not for you. But, if you're like most of us, I encourage you to check out *The Total Money Makeover Workbook* and discover how you can get there.



## Spring into Wellness ... (cont. pg. 1)

also increase serotonin function. This is another one of those “happy” chemicals that is needed to balance mood.

Are you looking to improve your self-confidence? Another added mental health benefit of exercise is an improved self-esteem. Taking the time to exercise usually leads to an increase in positive self-perception. And sticking to an exercise routine will increase the sense of satisfaction in being able to complete a possible personal goal. This, too, will help improve on self-esteem.

Another great benefit of exercise is that it helps prevent cognitive decline. HuffPost Healthy Living notes that exercise can help prevent Alzheimer’s and the general memory decline that is experienced as we all age. It can also boost brainpower. Studies have noted that working out increases levels of a protein in the brain known as BDNF. This protein is needed to help with decision making.

Believe it or not, exercise can also help control addiction. Your brain will release dopamine in response to any form of pleasure (i.e. drugs, alcohol, food, sex and exercise). This release of dopamine can become addicting and individuals can become dependent on a substance to produce it. Exercise, can be used as an alternative dopamine releaser, vs. food, drugs or alcohol.

Exercise can also increase energy. The research shows that if you take more time to exercise on a regular

basis you will be more productive and have more energy. HuffPost Healthy Living recommends exercise during the mid part of the day as it is best for your body’s circadian rhythms. So take advantage of a lunch break to go for a walk or do some chair yoga while you are at work.

There are also great benefits to getting sun exposure. For example, according to Care2.com sun is beneficial to Alzheimer’s patients. Research is showing the exposure to sun can reduce agitation, increase sleep and decrease nighttime wakefulness for Alzheimer’s patients.

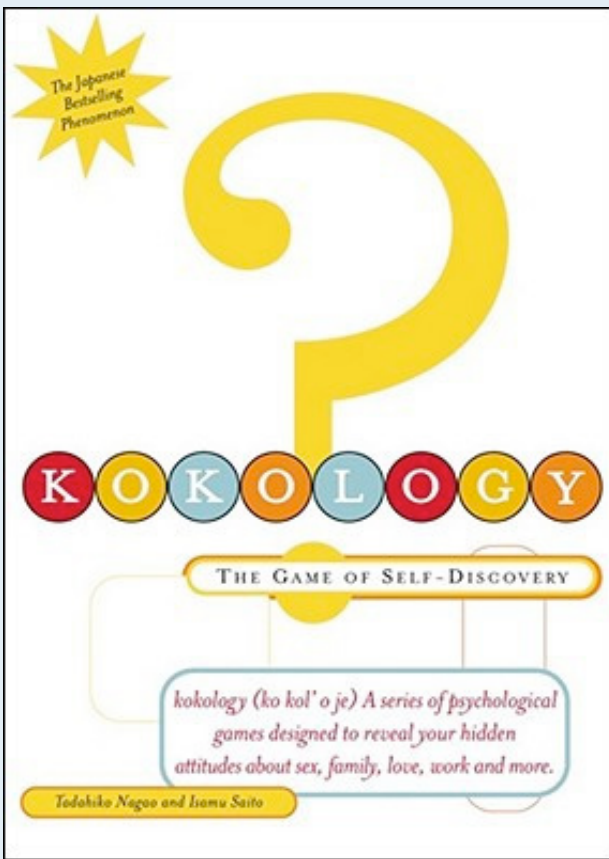
Sunlight can also ease mild depression. It does this by producing serotonin that is needed to help alleviate depression. Remember this is one of those happy chemicals that your brain needs to balance mood. That is why it is not uncommon for people to experience depression during the winter months, as they are not

exposed to sunlight as often during that time of year.

Sunlight can also improve sleep quality. According to Care2.com, when sunlight enters your eyes, your brain starts to produce more melatonin. This is a natural hormone that is needed for sleep. Sunlight can also give you an energy boost. According to WebMD, sunlight produces Vitamin D, which is needed for energy.

So spring into wellness for yourself and consider these natural ways to help with mental wellness. If you are looking for ways to get a double dose of wellness consider hiking, swimming outdoors, going for a walk along the trails here in Casper, or going for a bike ride. You will be getting your exercise along with you needed sun exposure. Keep in mind that you do not have to make these spring changes by yourself. The counselors here at Three Trails can help support you towards your wellness goals.





From the book *Kokology* by Tadahiko Nagao & Isamu Saito

## On your Birthday Quiz

Your birthday is the one day a year when you're justified in expecting things to be just a little nicer than usual. Well wishes and congratulations, presents and cards, maybe even a party or a romantic dinner for two.

It's your birthday today, and when you check your mailbox you see you've gotten a card from someone you would have never suspected. Who is the sender? You have also received a number of gifts from family and friends. Of that group, who sent you the biggest package?

(Give the names of people in your life when answering this quiz.)

### Key to On Your Birthday

The responses you gave signify your true feelings about people in your life, feelings you might not even be aware of yourself.

The person who unexpectedly sent you a card is actually someone you would like to care more about you or give you more attention. In short, the person you named as the sender is someone you worship from afar. Is it someone you barely know, someone you've been hesitant to approach, or just a friend you haven't heard from in a while? Maybe it's time you made the first move toward bridging that gap.

On the surface, you might associate the biggest package you received with good feelings about the sender. But from a psychological perspective, the person you named as the sender is actually someone whose affections you take for granted. This doesn't necessarily signify a lack of respect, but you definitely feel confident of their feelings for you. Be careful not to get overconfident. What feels like security to you may look like plain selfishness to others.

