



Women 2 Women

Women's Advisory Committee Newsletter

Message from the Women's Advisory Committee

Memorial Day signals the beginning of summer: pools open; we don our light and white fabrics; and the routines of the last nine months break down. Some of us scramble to make arrangements for children who will soon no longer be in school. Some anticipate vacations as the slower schedules of summer settle into place. We seek renewal & that elusive balance. Here are a few dreamy summer thoughts to get you started:

"Like a welcome summer rain, humor may suddenly cleanse and cool the earth, the air and you."

- *Langston Hughes*

"Deep summer is when laziness finds respectability."

- *Sam Keen*

"Rest is not idleness, and to lie sometimes on the grass under trees on a summer's day, listening to the murmur of the water, or watching the clouds float across the sky, is by no means a waste of time."

- *John Lubbock*

Talk Back!

It's all about you!

The Women's Advisory Committee (WAC) wants to hear from you. Share your thoughts and feedback with us by dropping a note to the chair, Donya Douglas, Code 545, Donya.M.Douglas@nasa.gov

**Communication is a two-way street...
Thank you for talking back!**

"Beauty is not a costume you put on, it is not a mold that you can fit into. It is an openness to see. Every woman from every spectrum of life redefines the meaning of beauty every day. It is not a singular notion. Beauty is everywhere. In every body, in every face, in every woman."

- *May Troung, Photographer*

Camille Primm offers the following tips for success, in her Business Communication Tips for Women published at www.girlgeeks.org. What do you think?

Use Assertive Mannerisms

Good eye contact will ensure that others take you more seriously. Lack of strong contact can mean submissiveness, fear and nervousness.

Head Nodding Up and Down

Men typically nod to symbolize that they agree with what is being said. Women nod just to indicate that they are taking in information. Avoid nodding to a male coworker when you are just listening and not agreeing.

Speak with Conviction

Remember, self-confidence is the number one requirement for a leader. Don't allow yourself to be interrupted when talking.

Tell It Like It Is

Don't sugarcoat your comments or feedback. Give only direct and honest criticism.

Be Logical in Your Communication

Use facts and data to support your opinions. Avoid limiting your credibility by using such phrases as "I feel." Apply goal-oriented language storytelling.

How do you feel about the suggested tips? Send comments to Tara.E.Holby@nasa.gov

Networking Luncheons

The WAC would like to invite all Goddard women to WAC Women's Networking Luncheons. The luncheons provide an opportunity to meet and greet new people, as well as, share ideas and experiences.

The next networking luncheon is Thursday, **June 9**, at noon in the Bldg. 1 cafeteria. For more information, contact Ann Parsons at Ann.M.Parsons@nasa.gov

Important Dates

06/09	Networking Luncheon 12 noon in Bldg. 1 Cafe
06/21	WAC Meeting - 1:00 p.m. in Bldg. 8, Rm 429
06/22	Celebrate Goddard Day! Visit the WAC Booth
07/12-13	Around the Table 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Location: TBD

Check the [WAC web site, Events calendar](#) for more upcoming events.

WAC Committee Members

OHR Rep.	Arletta Love Esther Johnson (Alt)
EEO Advisor	Lynne Slater
100 Rep.	Gail Williams
200 Rep.	Carla Hubbard Maria Furr
300 Rep.	Laurie Kleppin
400 Rep.	Kellie Behrle
500 Rep.	Donya Douglas (Chair) Maureen Madden (Vice Chair)
600 Rep.	Ann Parsons Pam Millar
Contractor Rep.	Florence Tan
EAP	Jan Buxton Laurie Hanley
Communications Rep.	Tara Holby

Quick Links

WAC web site
<http://wac.gsfc.nasa.gov/>

Lactation Program:
<http://ohr.gsfc.nasa.gov/family/lactation/policy.htm>



Welcome to **Spotlight**, a new feature in Women 2 Women.

In every issue, we will focus on a woman at Goddard to provide you with more insight into women you see and hear everyday. To suggest a profile, e-mail Tara Holby at Tara.E.Holby@nasa.gov

Marjorie Sovinski



Marjorie Sovinski

Marjorie Sovinski started her career at Goddard in January 2000. Sovinski is a Materials Engineer, working in the Materials Engineering Branch, Code 541. "I completed two co-ops with the branch and was offered a full-time position after graduating from University of Detroit-Mercy in August 2001."

What are some of your job duties? My duties include thermal analysis of materials, mainly epoxies, to determine glass transition temperature, coefficient of thermal expansion, melting point, heat capacity, and thermal conductivity; surface contamination analysis of materials; and non-volatile residue (NVR) analysis of gloves, wipes, and swabs.

Why did you choose your current area of expertise? I actually wanted to be a teacher until I took my first high school chemistry class. At that point, I realized that I wanted my career to be chemistry related. I did well in math and my other science classes, and I have always been interested in how things work, so I came up with chemical engineering as a way to try to combine all of it into one area. I love kids, and can still conceivably see myself becoming a teacher in the distant future.

Who has had the most influence on you with respect to your career? In many respects, my parents have had the most influence in that they believed in me even at times that I doubted myself. The three biggest lessons I remember being taught when I was younger were that: 1) I can be anything I want to be if I put my mind to it; 2) I should never let anyone tell me that I can't achieve the goals; and 3) I should always do my best at whatever I do. These lessons taught me perseverance, determination, and diligence, all of which can aptly be applied to my career.

What is your advice to other females working at GSFC?

Once you set your sights on a goal, you should never let anyone deter you from reaching that goal; you can be whatever you want to be.

Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers

Based on the book by Dr. Robert M. Sapolsky

by Gail S. Williams

Robert Sapolsky is a neuroscientist with an ability to convey the serious in a light, sometimes comedic fashion. He divides his time between a molecular biology laboratory at Stanford University and the African savannah – one of the world's longest job commutes. Dr. Sapolsky wrote the book entitled, "*Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers: An Updated Guide to Stress, Stress-Related Diseases, and Coping.*" The title grabbed my attention, leading me to purchase this book and share some highlights from both the book and a public speech he's made on the subject.

Dr. Sapolsky's research on the impact of stress on the human body and brain offers a powerful message – one you've likely heard before – that deserves repeating, "stress kills slowly, suppressing the immune system, shutting down growth, and eroding memory and the ability to learn... Sustained and repeated stress can disrupt our bodies in seemingly endless ways."

So, what does this have to do with zebras and the title of his book? Not surprisingly, Dr. Sapolsky found that zebras handle stress better than humans. "Let's say you're a zebra, and a lion has leaped out, ripped your stomach out. . . this counts as stress. For a zebra, though, stress had an extremely short, if potentially deadly span; it was three minutes of screaming terror after which the animal was either dead, or once again roaming the savannah and feeling safe."

According to Dr. Sapolsky, human beings, on the other hand, have an "anticipatory stress response" that easily spins out of control. "If you think you are about to be knocked out of control and really aren't, and this happens on a regular basis, then you're being anxious. . . paranoid. . . profoundly human." The point is that humans, unlike primates, "can get stressed simply with thought, turning on the same stress response as does the zebra." When that stress response is chronically activated, we get sick.

Quoting from his book, Dr. Sapolsky states that stress can also "wreak havoc with your metabolism, raise your blood pressure, burst your white blood cells, make you flatulent, ruin your sex life, and if that's not enough, possibly damage your brain." That said, there is also good, and unfortunately, more bad news. Good news – stress hormones secreted into the brain can actually make you think more clearly over the short term. Bad news – with long-term [days or weeks] of sustained stress, our neurons and neuronal processes begin to atrophy and retract in the hippocampus. Why is this important? Because the hippocampus is a cortical structure near the center of the brain that plays an important role in memory.

More good news, this effect on the hippocampus is reversible, up to a point. Until recently, it was believed that once you lost brain cells, they were lost forever. Not so – one can generate new neurons, especially in the hippocampus, in response learning and environmental stimulation. Here's the rub, continued stress blocks the formation of new neurons.

Continued on page 3.

Scalability Problems

By Tara Holby



The scale is my enemy, my anxiety, my fear. The scale has the powerful ability to increase my stress levels and throw me into a depressive state. The scale can make my good day do a 360 degree turn into an excruciating trip. The scale can make me feel guilty and helpless.

So why do I allow the scale to shape my perception of beauty? Unfortunately, I am not the only one with a problem. In a 2004 Dove 'Real Truth About Beauty' study of 3,200 female respondents, ages 18 to 64, in ten countries, "only **2%** of women around the world choose beautiful to describe their looks (campaignforrealbeauty.com)." The data showed that most women, regardless of location, consider themselves as "average". These findings are significant because the study also found that "almost half of all women (48%) strongly agree with the statement that: "When I feel less beautiful, I feel worse about myself in general," illustrating the impact these feelings can have on overall self-esteem and happiness (campaignforrealbeauty.com)." Even more frightening, the body image dissatisfaction isn't restricted to teens and adults. "In a study of almost five hundred schoolgirls, 81% of the **ten-year-olds** reported that they had dieted at least once (about-face.org)."

Today's society surrounds women with seemingly anorexic, tan models and actresses, for example Paris Hilton, as well as promise filled weight-loss advertisements. "Thinness has not only come to represent attractiveness, but also has come to symbolize success, self-control and higher socioeconomic status" (about-face.org). Women believe that self worth is largely dependent on appearance, this ridiculous point can be demonstrated because "**women earn more money than men in only two job categories, those of modeling and prostitution** (about-face.org)."



Paris Hilton
SOURCE: <http://www.parishiltonlife.com/>

Many women torture their body with diet pills and cosmetic surgery to meet society's standards. Furthermore, smoking is a common method of weight loss, "40 – 50% of women smokers smoke because they see it as a primary mean to control their weight (about-face.org)." These women are risking the development of a smoking related disease and a shorten lifespan to be thin. Dieting is also common among women. Because diets usually fail, they can lead to depression. "A sobering finding is that most bulimics report that the onset of their eating disorder occurred during a period of dieting (about-face.org)."

After visiting www.about-face.org, and learning about society's pressures on women, I realized that **the scale cannot measure my beauty**, only I can. I will no longer allow the media to dictate to me what they define as beautiful. Beauty grows from within; beauty isn't necessarily 5' 9", 110 pounds with long, blond hair. Being beautiful is much deeper than a superficial physical appearance. The heart, mind and soul are what make a person beautiful. A physical appearance is worthless when a person has nothing on the inside.



Versace advertisement

There is something extremely beautiful about a mother and daughter reading a bedtime story together, there is something constructively beautiful about volunteering at a local animal shelter, and there is something wonderfully beautiful about accepting yourself for who you are.

For more information and stories about women depicted in the media, visit www.about-face.org. About-face.org promotes positive self-esteem in girls and women of all ages, sizes, races and backgrounds through a spirited approach to media education, outreach and activism. For more information about Dove's "The Real Truth About Beauty: A Global Report", visit campaignforrealbeauty.com.

Why Zebra's Don't Get Ulcers, Continued from page 2.

At the 2000 Brain Connection to Education Conference, Dr. Saplosky ended his presentation by referring to stress "as stuff we make up in our heads." He believes that "insofar as we are smart enough to have invented this stuff and stupid enough to occasionally fall for it, potentially we have the wisdom to keep it all in perspective so that we're not done in by it."

Bottom line: Stress is a fact of life. How we react to stress is our choice. How do you choose to react in stressful situations? What choices do you make? Are they powerful choices that serve you and the future you wish to create?

For more information about Dr. Saplosky and this subject, check out <http://www.brainconnection.com/topics/?main=fa/zebras>.