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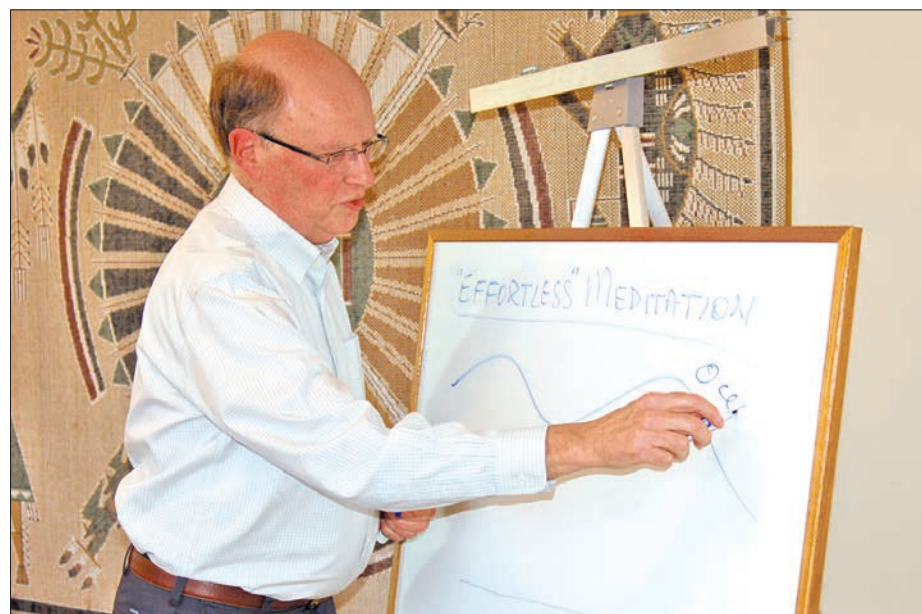
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PHOTO/JENNIFER GLOSE

Greg Schweitzer uses a whiteboard to teach his class in Upper Macungie Township.

Reading engineer develops meditation brand to help with stress

By JENNIFER GLOSE
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When Reading native Greg Schweitzer was an engineering student at Drexel University in 1969, never did he imagine that an on-campus meditation lecture he attended would five years later resurface and change his life.

After graduating in 1971 with a degree in commerce and engineering, Schweitzer landed a job in Fogelsville as an industrial engineer at Kraft Food Groups Inc. At Kraft, a friend invited Schweitzer to an introductory class for Transcendental Meditation – the trademarked holistic practice the iconic band The Beatles made popular in the late 1960s – which helps a person obtain wellness and inner peace.

Little did Schweitzer know that the class ultimately would spark a new career, leading him in 1976 to become a certified teacher of Transcendental Meditation, and in 1994 developing and trademarking his own brand of the holistic practice – Effortless Meditation – and starting a business.

“I learned that something is missing in some people’s lives, and what’s missing is something inside,” said Schweitzer, 66. “When you start to develop that, everything gets better.”

A NEW DAY

Losing interest in his career at Kraft and struggling with the unexpected death of his wife, Schweitzer in 1974 attended the introductory meditation class. He soon realized it was the same one he had gone to five years earlier at Drexel.

“I felt so much better, immediately,” Schweitzer said. “I felt happier and more purposeful and continued meditating every day.”

By 1976, Schweitzer was meditating every day, and said he was enjoying life more and more and felt like he had a new day ahead of him each time he meditated.

This prompted him to teach meditation. He took an 18-month training program in which he traveled to Europe and India. He

left Kraft and started to teach meditation classes at the Reading TM center.

“When people meditate, they experience deep states of rest and their mind starts to get quiet,” Schweitzer said. “And that releases stress and tension, and as it is released, people come out of it recharged.”

By 1994, Schweitzer formed his business, Stress Reduction Resources, and set up shop in Reading to teach his new method of meditation. Two decades later, Schweitzer’s business continues to flourish in a third-floor space in Twin Ponds Integrative Health Center in Upper Macungie Township.

“Everyone who comes through that front door should take his course,” said Carolyn Reese, founder and owner of Twin Ponds Integrative Health Center. “Because it changes people’s lives.”

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

In the 1980s, when the meditation fad waned, Schweitzer attended Maharishi University of Management in Fairfield, Iowa, earning a master’s in business administration.

His graduate degree helped with the skills needed to launch his business, as well as to expand his meditation teachings to medical clients and to corporate settings for business leaders and employees to cope with stress.

“I feel passionately that corporations should have meditation teaching as an integral part of their training,” said Dr. Helene Leonetti, a gynecologist in the Lehigh Valley for more than 30 years who has referred her patients to Schweitzer. “We have known for a long while that people given a tool to increase their ability to provide quality work do so to the benefit of the entire organization.”

Today, Schweitzer sees eight to 10 clients a month at the Breinigsville office. They take a 10-hour course in Effortless Meditation: an introductory class and four private days of instruction.

“What I do today makes a difference in people’s lives, and that’s what gives my life meaning,” Schweitzer said.



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