

Crash Course

In 1991, Michelle Goebel, of Boca Raton, was hit by a truck and suffered whiplash, a concussion, severe head trauma, facial injuries and spinal disk damage.

"My face was so torn up, the nurse in the ER let out a telltale sound," she recalls. "My mother came in, took one look at me and cried. And she's like a drill sergeant!"

At the time, Goebel was in her late 20s, working by day and going to college at night. She was on her way to FAU when the accident occurred, and her whole world came crashing down.

"I could no longer work because I could hardly walk," she says. "I had to let my apartment go and move in with my mom, who drove me to countless doctors' appointments. I made my mother cover all the mirrors so I didn't know what I looked like.

Goebel was prescribed pain medication, muscle relaxers and anti-inflammatories, which caused nausea and mouth sores.

"I cried a lot, suffered from depression and anxiety and had no energy," she says. "I had virtually no memory and couldn't sleep at night. My mom took me to a cosmetic surgeon, but he said he couldn't do anything to repair my face for five months, until I healed."

Eventually, she weaned herself off the pills but was still depressed. Then a friend told her about a great meditation teacher in the area.

"I took my last \$400 from the bank and made an appointment," she recalls. "The teacher shared her own personal story of how meditation helped her when she was a college student. I had my first glimmer of hope."

Through meditation and visualization techniques, Goebel made a remarkable recovery and got her stress levels under control.

"I would lie in bed and picture my body as being perfect and whole," she says.

When she returned to the cosmetic surgeon, he was astonished.

"He said I didn't need a thing

done," Goebel says. "My hair and eyebrows had grown back. He pulled out the first photo he took of me, and I looked like Frankenstein's monster. This time, I bawled my eyes out from sheer gratitude and joy."

She returned to college in 1992 and graduated with honors, earning bachelor's degrees in humanities and international business. In 1993, she attended a lecture by Chopra in Fort Lauderdale, studied at his center in California and earned her certification as a meditation instructor. She's also a practitioner of transcendental meditation, reiki, holistic aromatherapy and reconnective healing.

Today, through her practice, Inspired Intent, she shares stress-busting knowledge and techniques with individuals and major corporations, including Tyco International.

"After taking the group meditation with Michelle Goebel, employees have reported reduced stress at work and at home," says Risa Harwood, of the human resources department at Tyco. "The results have been so positive that

we continue to expand the meditation program that she teaches."

Goebel says that the results of her deep meditation training have been remarkable across the board: "I have helped my clients recover and manage high stress levels so that they develop more clarity and have a better quality of life. They have received health benefits such as reduced stress and restful sleep – as soon as their heads hit the pillow, they are out for the night."

She adds that, in the midst of all the stressors we face on a daily basis, it's vital to focus on what's important.

"We think we have to be connected to the outside world 24/7, which places enormous stress on our minds and bodies," she says. "Self-care is a priority. Deep meditation



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can not only resolve stress issues but health problems like high blood pressure as well. As one Zen master said, 'You can't go around in a broken boat and pick up passengers.' Self-care is not being selfish!" ○

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