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For immediate release

Q and A with Anton Anderson:

Founder, The Power Nap Club™

Ready...Set...Rest!

Anton Anderson is an affable, popular, high school English teacher with a deep, melodious voice and the slightly ruffled appearance of a college professor. On any given Monday afternoon, right after the final class of the day, Anderson can be found in his classroom with a group of 10-20 teenagers, all chatting and rehashing the events of the day and weekend. He quietly brings them to order and instructs them to get into a comfortable position, take off their shoes if they wish and get ready to relax. He begins, "Your lungs are a pear shape—imagine filling them with air from the bottom. Let them slowly expand, then slowly exhale. Imagine that your consciousness is a ball of light hovering over your head. Feel its warmth on your scalp. Feel your facial muscles relax. Look back at yourself and see that your head is aglow with a warm, soothing light. Breathe so your abdomen fills up first..." Is it any wonder that his students, some seated at their desks with their heads down and some lying on the carpeted floor, are completely silent and still? Anderson continues with the guided meditation with soothing music background for another 20 minutes. He instructs them to feel a band of relaxation around their elbows, their wrists...to let the relaxation flow like water down their forearms, to open up little dams and let the tension flow from their fingers...During this time, one boy nudges himself awake, silently gathers his backpack and tiptoes out of the room to go to basketball practice. Anderson then begins to bring the students back to consciousness just as methodically as he helped them relax.

Q: How does stress affect the kids you see everyday in school?

Young people today experience a tremendous amount of stress and that their ability to learn is compromised by it. Stress reduction is directly related to the ability to learn. If you are able to defuse stress, you will feel better rested and will be able to concentrate and pay attention more effectively.

Q: Is this why you started the Power Nap Club?

Yes, I saw that my students were increasingly burdened with an overwhelming load of responsibilities -- academic course work, extracurricular activities, sports, work, etc. My consciousness was raised about the level of anxiety and stress in the adolescent population. Guided relaxation with sleep as the goal is easy to learn but we needed to create the club to turn it into a regularly scheduled activity, where I could dedicate myself to teaching students how to relax and recharge themselves.

Q: Did some people think your idea was a joke?

To some people, Power Nap sounds like an oxymoron. We tend to think power=busy and napper=slacker. But, in fact, a Power Nap increases your ability to concentrate, to pay close attention and to make critical decisions—what could be more powerful than that?

Q: How has taking a "power nap" helped you?

Early in my teaching career, I was working two and three jobs at a time to make ends meet and often found I needed an energy boost. My meditation instructors recommended I practice twice a day for 20 minutes but I found there was no place where I could go and be alone and not be interrupted. The irony is that school is supposed to be an environment where the brain is the paramount tool, but there's no place for the quiet development of the brain. My recollection of this frustration sparked the idea to start the Power Nap Club, to create a place for students to have uninterrupted quiet time to recharge themselves.

Q: How is a power nap different from guided meditation?

A power nap differs from meditation in several ways. The primary way is in orientation. The power nap experience makes sleep the goal; the meditation experience does not. In fact, it actively discourages it. During meditation sessions, I found myself trying to fight falling asleep and didn't get a good meditation session. When you are trained in meditation, if you fall asleep, you may feel you have 'failed'. A power nap has fewer requirements and the same benefits --renewed energy and clear thinking -- of meditation.

The advantage of a power nap is that you are refreshed and don't have to feel guilty about falling asleep. **FALLING ASLEEP IS THE GOAL.**

Q: How often does your Power Nap Club™ meet?

My Power Nap Club meets on Mondays after school at 2:30 but before sports team practices begin. It gets the week off to a great start, though it would also benefit the kids anytime during the school week. My students said it was great to get recharged at the end of what is typically a high-stress day. Did you know that more heart attacks take place on Monday mornings than on any other day of the week? It gave them a boost for the rest of the week.

My experience, and that of my students, has shown that frequent practice makes for a well-rested and more energetic physical and mental life-experience. The more you Power Nap, the better your ability to enjoy life and learning. With practice, you can even gain control over the level of sleep you achieve. If you are waiting in a doctor's office and need to hear when they call your name, you can control how deeply you sleep.

Q: You even have a club slogan?

I teach students about the classics in my AP English class. Our club slogan -- "Veni, vidi, dormivi" (I came, I saw, I slept) is a lighthearted variation of Caesar's motto: I came, I saw, I conquered. But this doesn't mean that the purpose of the club is not serious and that the benefits are not real. Club members view their ability to Power Nap as a life skill they will take with them to college and beyond. There's no escape from stress --the key is to learn coping skills to deal with it.

Q: Is it easy to start a Power Nap Club?

Yes, it is easy to learn how to power nap but it is helpful to know where to start. That's why we created the Power Nap Kit™. The kit includes a 72 minute **Power Nap CD** with three different power nap sessions that I wrote and narrated, accompanied by the same At Peace™ music that my students listen to in our Power Nap Club. We also selected music for a 66 minute **Power Study CD**. This CD has wonderful At Peace music that my students have found effective for activities requiring concentration and focus, such as reading, writing and studying.

A two-sided, four color poster features the Power Nap Club logo on one side so it can be used as a sign to designate the meeting location of an after-school Power Nap Club in a school. The flip side of the poster has peaceful images from nature so it can be hung anywhere -- above your desk, on your dorm wall -- to help you relax and unwind.

Finally, the 44 page **TEEN STRESS: An Inside View** book does a great job of putting into perspective the issues facing today's teens and young adults -- the overload of stress and expectations -- that has created a need for coping strategies such as taking a power nap. I highly recommend this book to educators, parents and young people.