

Stress - Part 2

Dealing with Stress

How do you know that you're stressed? Can you pinpoint what the cause is? How do you deal with the things that stress you out? Can you clearly answer any of these questions?

When it comes to feeling stressed out, it's often due to us feeling overwhelmed and that we have lost control. We blame the stress on things like work overload, family pressures, money issues, etc. But is it the situation that causes us to feel this way or is it our reaction to the situation?

Some of us will try to deal with our stress using relaxation techniques, breathing, meditation, a Happy Cerealyoga class, a workout at the gym or exercising - as long as they don't cause you stress!

Let's focus on two ways of dealing with stress other than what you may do now. You can become familiar with and change the things that cause stress in your life. And/or you can change how you approach and react to the things that cause stress in your life.



'How do you know you're stressed?'

Try closing your eyes and imagine yourself in an overwhelming situation or think about something that recently stressed you out. Sense what happens. Does your breath change? Is there a change in your muscle tone - maybe in your jaw, eyes, shoulders or stomach? Now imagine the opposite - a situation that made you feel happy, content, at ease. Go back and forth a couple of times, taking your time and see if you can sense the changes your body makes. These changes may be subtle but if you begin to become aware of them you can start to sense them in situations that may cause you stress. If we become familiar with how our body reacts to stress, we can learn to detect the first initial signs and choose to react in a way that keeps us in control.

'What causes stress in your life?'

Discovering what causes stress in our life can be a challenge. Often the true source isn't obvious and there are usually a number of things contributing to this feeling of being overwhelmed. By sensing how you physically react to stress, you can begin to explore what it is that is causing the stress. When you stillness on Lake sense a change in your muscle tone, breath, jaw etc, notice what the cause is. Easier said than done, right? Not really. It just takes some awareness. If we all took the time to educate ourselves on the habits and patterns we have developed over the years on dealing with and handling what we perceive as stressful situations in our lives, that perception can change. What was once stressful can become something you can easily deal with just by changing your attitude and reaction to the situation.



'How do you deal with the things that stress you out?'

Once aware of what causes stress in our life we can choose to do many things to change our outcome. We can discover what stressful situations can be avoided - whether it's a task, a person, or a topic of conversation.

We can organize our "to-dos" and deal with the "must-dos" before the "should" or "want to-dos". We can learn to say no, discover our boundaries, and not take on too much.

For those situations which can't be avoided and that we have no control over, know that we can control our reaction.

Becoming familiar and changing what cause stress in your life, and changing how you deal with these situations go hand in hand. We all see situations differently and have different coping skills due to the resources that are available to us from our unique upbringing and past experiences. Through self-awareness we can all learn what it is we currently do, and discover what we can do.

Please note that my newsletters and articles are simply my opinion. I am sharing with you what I am studying and exploring. I encourage you to be curious yourself. Be your own teacher and enjoy what you discover through your own journey. Happy learning.