

Relax and feel the love

Let's talk about stress



RELATIONSHIPS
With Joanne Wilson

"Let's talk about stress baby. Let's talk about you and me. Let's talk about all the good times and the bad times that may be..."

I am quite renowned for getting my Salt-N-Pepa lyrics wrong, but this time with intention. Sorry – the topic of "sex" is for next week. Don't turn the page just yet. This too affects your sex life!

Now I quite like a bit of salt, pepper and a kick of red hot chilli peppers in my food. Not unlike the good kick I get from stress. Do you know that if you view controlled stress as a really good thing, you'll be much better off?

If it wasn't for stress, you wouldn't have got to work, study or your event this week. That's a healthy dose of stage-one stress, when you're alert and focussed at the task at hand. There are interesting research findings about how our perception of how stress affects our health can adversely impact your health and mortality. How you think about stress impacts your lifespan!

Stage two is the stress response prolonged. Consistent increased cortisol in the bloodstream damages our brains and bodies. As you can imagine, life for you and your partner will turn more of the good times into bad times, that may be! Even longer and you're in stage three, when your body is exhausted, leading to disease and worse.

Have you considered how often you present your best, less-stressed version of yourself to your marriage or relationship? Our intimate relationships should be a safe haven to express our raw feelings and unload. You are, however, ultimately responsible for maintaining your well-being and being an enjoyable, calm partner to be around in the long term.

What are your stress indicators? Is it a tightening throat sensation, sore neck, aching back, headaches, quick temper, nail biting, excessive sweating, sleeplessness, constantly worrying? Maybe you're just mighty crabby most of the time?

Ultimately, stress comes from your thoughts. It is quite likely the spillover effect of your mood from stressors will spill over to your relationships, so here are just some ideas to help:

Recognise and eliminate reoccurring distressing thoughts: Most of your conscious life you're engaging in self-talk, your internal thought language. What sort of useless "I'm not..." or "I can't..." debilitating self-talk are you allowing?

You've heard this one before but breathe: Deep breathing has a significant impact on our immune system.

Get that check-up: Visit your health professional for an overall well-being check, including your diet and exercise, to check any nagging ailments are not leading to something serious. That's one less thing to stress over.

Journal moments of severe anxiety: Ask yourself what triggered the anxiety. Address it and, importantly, seek help to change your approach.

Laugh... find your inner jester: Try coughing first, then see if you can turn it into a laughing sound.

Stretch: If exercise doesn't fit your agenda, stretching in the comfort and privacy of your home can prepare you for that well-needed aerobic exercise that releases natural chemicals to combat stress.

Visualisation: Use your powerful imagination. It is difficult to will yourself into a calm state, but you can certainly imagine it. Your mind will follow.

Silence, meditation or prayer: Even just a few minutes a day can make a difference. When we meditate, our mind naturally begins to relax and 'sink' into deeper levels of rest.

Confide in a good listener: It helps to talk with your partner, loved ones or a counsellor. Sometimes an expert outside your circle can relieve your pressure cooker and ensure more good times than bad, that may be!

Next week: "Let's talk about sex, baby."

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USE YOUR IMAGINATION:
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Reducing stress is great for relationships. PHOTO: THINKSTOCK

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Locally Sunshine Coast produced Curry Pastes are continuing to be passionately created at Caloundra using fresh ingredients.

Travels throughout South East Asia, the Indian Subcontinent and Europe and a quest to ensure a replication of the intensity of flavours without the addition of preservatives and additives was successful.

Sam and Alice being local and coming from a dynasty of Restaurateurs chose Caloundra their home base to perfect and manufacture the range of curry have been enthusiastically customers all over Australia.

The ingredients, being sourced locally, allows Sam and Alice from Life's Good Curry Pastes to capture the authenticity and freshness of flavours of Asia without compromise.

Mel from Open House Birtinya found the products amazingly easy to prepare and use and are now featured as a weekly Cafe Special of the Day.

Five different curry pastes, relish, sambal & chilli Jam are standouts.

Having been tested by the Department of Primary Industries for shelf stability customers can be assured of the utmost quality.

The products reflect the shared passion and balance of working hard and still enjoying precious time with their four busy crazy children which ensures Life's Good.



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