

RECOGNISE, UNDERSTAND AND DEAL WITH STRESS IN YOUR LIFE (PART 1)

If our life isn't based on or filled with Love, we can easily experience fear and stress and find ourselves in "stress mode" without seeing or knowing it. By recognising we can suffer from stress, anxiety or depression, we will understand when we are affected and deal with it appropriately.

A broad description of "stress" is: anything we feel uncomfortable about that affects our life and causing a complex mix of thoughts, feelings and emotions that make us *to be other than we are comfortable with*. It's a fact - how we are and how we deal with (or don't deal with) the problems Life throws at us, determines how stressed we feel.

BKs face all the usual problems life throws at people e.g. money troubles, work pressures and health issues plus a few extras like service deadlines, facing Maya and sanskar clashes etc. which can over-power our abilities to cope. As a result, we adopt *not coping* strategies to deal with our feelings and behaviours to distract us that give us a false sense of coping:

- * Over-working - not allowing enough quality rest or ease;
- * Using compulsive habits / self-destructive behaviours to avoid/ignore feelings;
- * Allowing anger and fear to dominate us;
- * Having obsessive thoughts of failure and fears that literally drive us to distraction;
- * Eating easy, high flavour, high calorie (fast or junk) foods to get by and feel easily full;
- * Drinking lots of stimulants - coffee, tea, chocolate and caffeine-rich boosting drinks and energy shots etc.
- * Sounding off to anyone & everyone how unfair life and circumstances really are!

The first part of mastery is awareness. When you know you're affected by *not coping* strategies, you start recovering your balance. Be kind to your self when you notice that you're not coping and allow yourself Love... Be aware of how you deal with what you find stress-full and decide your response, rather than *react*.

Next issue, we'll explore healthy ways to deal with stress; in the meantime, we recommend you take a deep breath to help deal with any tension(s) you feel.

TAKE A DEEP BREATH...

Breathing is the most essential function of our body. We can live without food for a few weeks, without water for a few days but without oxygen (O₂), only a couple of minutes. Fortunately, breathing is an automatic mechanism that adapts itself to circumstances and needs naturally. If we run or exercise, we need more oxygen and the breathing rate increases....during sleep or rest, it decreases.

This is probably why we often forget that, as well as being automatic, we can also put this function on "manual" and take control of our breathing voluntarily at times for our benefit. For example, to combat stress, slow and deep diaphragmatic breathing (see cartoon below) can bring an instant feeling of relief. Any tension or anxiety usually results in us breathing only through the top of our chest, leaving the stomach area contracted and restricted. A few deep breaths, properly executed, will rid us of that "knot in the stomach" sensation. Breathe like the bunny below: from neutral, inhale, then exhale; repeat.**



** Deep breathing can be achieved seated, lying down or standing, according to your needs.

THE AMAZING BENEFITS OF PINEAPPLES

Pineapples are composed of dozens of flowers that have combined together to form a single, entire fruit; each scale is a flower - the more scales the sweeter, more juicy the fruit.

Approved in Germany as post-operative treatment to reduce inflammation swelling.

Stanford university has found one cup of fresh pineapple daily helps break down pain-causing proteins in the digestive system.

Fresh pineapple juice has a reputation to reduce nausea in the morning.

Pineapple juice is known to discourage dental plaque (we'd recommend tooth brushing afterwards to remove the sugars).

Regular eaters of pineapple experience fewer sinus problems related to allergies.



Ripeness is determined by smell not colour - if it smells fresh, tropical and sweet it will be a good fruit.

Nutrients present:

- * vitamin C (helps deal with colds)
- * manganese (helps build strong bones)
- * bromelain (see below)

Bromelain is an enzyme that helps digest proteins. Benefits include:

- * kills intestinal worms
- * anti-inflammatory for the joints & muscles - eases the pain of osteoarthritis
- * cuts mucous in throat & sinuses; aids productive coughs
- * breaks down protein and eases indigestion
- * discourages blood clots; ideal for frequent fliers to help prevent thromboses.

VITAMIN B12

As vegetarians and vegans we are prone to being vitamin B12 deficient. This is important as B12 nourishes your nerves, blood cells and joints and is essential for adrenal performance, brain, organ functioning and for increasing energy.

Each day, adults require 4.2mg (children less) which the body can store. When we don't eat and absorb enough B12, we use up our stores which can cause deficiency at any age. In children, deficiency leads to developmental delay and autism. In the elderly, deficiency may lead to dementia, Alzheimer's or multiple sclerosis. Deficiency also causes anaemia (tiredness, weakness, fatigue, depression, memory loss/brain fog, mental illness, frequent falls) and allows an increase of a protein called homocysteine which promotes heart attacks, strokes and dementia.

If you have digestive disorders such as Coeliac's disease or Crohn's diseases or had abdominal surgery or are tired, weak, constipated, have lost your appetite or weight, or have any nerve numbness, tingling in your hands & feet, confusion, soreness of the mouth or tongue, speak to your doctor as you may need B12. The NHS provides both B12 tests and treatment.

Vitamin B12 sources: milk & dairy products, fortified foods & breakfast cereals, nutritional yeasts, sprouted sunflower seeds & almonds, spirulina. Fermented soya has B12 that isn't activated for use.

To absorb B12 we need good stomach acid levels. Lansoprazol & Omeprazol (used to treat acid reflux and peptic ulcers) reduce B12 absorption as do Cimetidine, Ranitidine, Metformin (for diabetes) and Chloramphenicol (an antibiotic).