

Sandra's strategies for life and well-being



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Stressed? Stress is one of the most common words we hear thrown around these days. "I am so stressed" or "The stress is killing me" are heard almost daily by all of us. What comes to mind with the word Stress? Do we think of anything good? Is it all bad? Stress is a very interesting topic as there is much to say about the negative and positive consequences that it brings.

The research on stress is overwhelmingly serious. Our bodies are majorly impacted by stress. Stress affects the brain, nerves, muscles, joints, heart, stomach, pancreas, intestines, reproductive system and especially our immune systems. When we're stressed, the immune system's ability to fight off antigens is reduced. That is why we are more susceptible to diseases and infections. Pretty bad.

Here is the fascinating part of stress: Though there are countless studies that link stress to all sorts of life threatening diseases and shortened life span, the latest research shows that the "perception of stress" and not the stress itself causes the disease. Hmmm....

People who **believe** their stress is affecting their health in a big way are twice as likely to have a heart attack ten years later, according to researchers at the University of Western Ontario. In a study carried out at Pennsylvania State University, the investigators found that stress was not the problem, but rather how we

react to stressors. It appears that how patients react to stress is a predictor of their health a decade later, regardless of their present health and stressors.

So this brings up a big question: Is your perception creating your reality? It seems so. It might well be in our interest to accept that stress is part of life and not even all that bad. As a matter of fact there is a term for good stress: Eustress. The word *eustress* consists of two parts. The prefix *eu-* derives from the Greek word meaning either "well" or "good." When attached to the word *stress*, it literally means "good stress".

What is good stress? *Eustress* refers back to how you perceive stress in your life. If you can cognitively interpret events in your life with a sense of meaning or hope— you are in fact turning your "lemons" *so to speak* into "lemonade". Eustress is positively correlated with life satisfaction and well-being according to many research studies.

So yes, we live in a fast paced time and yes, there is stress in our lives- but what a wonderful option to interpret your stress in a different way and have the choice of changing your life and life expectancy!

Come say hi to us at our upcoming event "Stress Bomb" to find out more about this fascinating topic or partake in our sister company's upcoming retreat at the luxurious Spa Eastman and **really** de- stress. Write me your victories over stress and anxiety in your life and any other topics you would like to hear more about. Spring is around the corner- let's breathe in the beauty of the change of seasons and breathe out any negative stress in our lives.

Sandra