

## WHAT STRESS DOES TO US

In today's world, most of us are impacted by chronic stress, but do you really know what it does to us, physically, mentally and emotionally?

Every time we experience emotions from a stressful event, including anger, frustration, impatience, fear or anxiety, our heart rate increases and hundreds of stress hormones are released into our body, including adrenalin and cortisol.

This physical response also affects our thoughts and our mood, leaving us feeling even more angry or frustrated or impatient! How many times in a day do you feel these emotions?

**Did you know that our brain/body can't tell the difference between a BIG stressor and a little stressor?**



## THE GOOD NEWS

It's generally not the event that creates our stress; it's how we FEEL about that event. Stress can be defined as our 'emotional response' to what's happening in our lives.

While it might sound like it's all in our heads, that's not it at all. This emotional response is normal – everybody does it! We can't control what's going on around us, but we can learn to reset our body/mind during or immediately after being involved in a stressful situation, and this gives us a lot of control and power when it comes to managing our stress.

"Stress management" is so much more than watching your nutrition, exercising and getting enough sleep. Even doctors are acknowledging that our thoughts and emotions play a huge role in how we get through our day.

## SOME REASONS TO REDUCE CHRONIC STRESS

When we live our lives with chronic long-term stress:

- We start to avoid social interactions and become less sociable, leaving us isolated and at a greater risk for depression
- We age faster, have difficulty concentrating and become irritable
- Our risk for PTSD and anxiety disorders increases
- The size of our brain can get smaller - the prefrontal cortex which has to do with memory and learning
- Our physical health is impacted leading to heart disease, high blood pressure, digestive issues and sleep disorders



## TODAY'S TIP TO REDUCE YOUR STRESS

As soon as is practicable after experiencing a stress response, take 3 or 4 minutes and:

- notice how you feel
- place the palm of one hand very lightly across your forehead and keep it there
- slow your breathing down a bit, taking slightly deeper breaths than normal
- after about 3 to 4 minutes, notice how you feel

**Stay tuned for more tips and upcoming programs!**

