



Stress Transforming Tools that Recharge Your Energy and Accelerate Healing

Transcript

Hello and welcome. This is Dr. Ritamarie Loscalzo and I'm thrilled to be here for stress transforming tools that recharge your energy and accelerate your healing. We're going to delve into the details and you're going to walk away with some tools and strategies that you can get started using right away. Before we get started, I just want to make sure that you're aware that all the information that I'm going to be presenting is not intended to replace a one-on-one relationship with a qualified health professional.

It's not intended as medical advice. It's intended as a sharing of knowledge and information from the research experience of me and my passion for sharing this is on an educational level so that you can make choices based on what you understand. Of course, if you are under the care of a medical practitioner for any reason, for any health concerns, you're on any medication, be sure to run your things by your physician before making any decisions.

We're going to talk about what stress is, how it affects your health, and how it affects your weight and your waistline. We're going to talk about why setting goals and connecting to your vision is so important to your health and your body weight. We're going to talk about how to use your goals and visions to make health supporting daily choices because after all, it's those choices that you make everyday that make the difference in how you feel. We'll also talk about how to incorporate some stress transforming breaks that just take one or two minutes spread out throughout the day rather than having to take an hour to do a meditation or an advance yoga class as you may have been led to believe.

I know I did. The importance of noticing and celebrating your positive attributes and creating a living document to support your dreams in less than five minutes a day. How does that sound? How to create your very own emotional eating strategy so that the food choices that you make on a day-to-day basis are based on your need for nourishment rather than emotional support and entertainment. Then we'll talk about why fun is important to have in your daily life. I love that part. Why it's important that you make it a regular part of your daily health plan, not just occasionally you'll stop and have fun.

Then a few strategies to harness the power of appreciation to transform your health, reach your ideal weight, and energize every cell of your being.

Let's just talk about what's stress. Stress, even the National Mental Health Association talks about why stress is hard to define because it really means different things to different people. It's clear that most stress is a negative feeling rather than a positive feeling. I will say that there is positive stress, like the stress you put on your muscles that causes them to grow.

Let's look at a couple other definitions of stress. Stress is a term that's used to describe the wear and tear your body experiences in reaction to every day tensions and pressures. That's from the Institute of HeartMath. It's your body and mind's response to a pressure that disrupts or threatens to disrupt the normal balance. When that stress comes in and again, it could be just lifting heavy weights is a stress. That disrupts this homeostasis that's there. Well, can't do that anymore. You have to respond to it. When it's a negative stress, your body has to respond in a way that doesn't put you in a place of danger or that takes you out of a place of danger.

We'll see how that gets us into trouble along the way. The major causes of stress. I think, I believe the very top one is limiting beliefs. When you have limiting of beliefs about what you are capable of or what the world is capable of giving you or what your relationships are capable of giving you and you limit that, it causes you stress. Generally those limiting beliefs are not in alignment with your core values. With who you are and who you choose to be in the world. Other major causes of stress can be illness. When you get sick, not only is it a mental and emotional stress on you, but it's a very prominent physical stress.

Your body responds to that physical stress in a way that's similar to the way it responds to emotional stress. Same way that illness can because stress, so can injury because body parts are having to be repaired and a lot of attention needs to go on those parts to deal with the injury, heal it, and get you back to whole again. Certainly some of the stresses are things that happen in our lives like career and lifestyle changes. Financial disruption. That can be good or bad. You suddenly win the lottery, believe it or not that's a stress. It's a good stress. Your body has to find a way to deal with it, but it is stress.

Losing money of course is and losing your job. Relationships. Getting divorced, getting married. They're both considered high stress and there's a form that is available through the Mental Health Association that you can fill out and it lists these lifestyle changes. Getting divorced, getting married, a death in the family, an injury, loss of a job. Those are all considered really high on the list of things that when they happen, you have an increased risk of becoming ill as a result.

Finally world events are a huge cause of stress. We're constantly hearing about that on the news and the whole job of the news is to create stress. What does stress hurt? It doesn't just hurt your body. It certainly hurts your health. It hurts your relationships. You're not really loving and caring generally when you're under stress. It hurts your work performance.

It's not just because you're distracted at work, but it hurts your work performance because one of the hormones that gets secreted when you're under stress called cortisol actually turns off the high level functioning part of your brain in favor of what I call the lizard part of your brain.

The part of your brain that jumps out of danger. Instead of the lizard part, the high level functioning part being in control, the lizard is and that doesn't make for real good work performance unless your job is running away from zoo animals or jungle animals or if you're one of those performers on those PBS type TV shows where they're jumping from place to place in the wilderness and trying to escape danger. Then your lizard brain is really helpful for work performance. Of course stress hurts enjoyment. It's really hard to have fun when you're under stress.

So many people miss the opportunity to have enjoyment because they put so much emphasis and they allow the body to get wrapped up and their mind to get wrapped up into the stress of the situation. When with by shifting thoughts, by shifting beliefs you can shift your enjoyment of the situation. What's your body's reaction when you're stressed? There are some specific physiological and biochemical things that happen and this is what causes some of the downsides, the health issues that occur as a result of stress.

You experience tension in your body. Strain, frustration. Something's not right. Something you don't like is happening or about to happen and your muscles get really tight. As a result of your body perceiving danger, it's readying you to run away. To get out of that danger. Your heart rate increases and you perspire. Your breathing increases. It becomes more shallow, but more rapid. Your logical thought perception, it just often gets replaced by irrational thoughts and unreasonable thoughts. The fear. What if the economy crashes? What if the hurricane hits my town? What if I get fired?

A lot of these aren't even really stresses, real dangers, but your body's getting you ready as if there's a tiger chasing you. All of your psychology, your physiology, it gets out of balance. It gets out of equilibrium and you just feel out of sync. You feel out of sorts. This is okay if it happens on an irregular basis. It used to happen when we were out in the wilderness a lot and tigers would come and they disrupt the equilibrium. We get back on target after they disappeared and things would go okay, but the problem is that in our modern society, these stresses tend to continue moment after moment, day after day, 24/7 sometimes.

People are lying awake at night worrying. Stress is very very dangerous when it's happening on a regular basis. Happens on an irregular basis, not so bad. Let's talk about how stress affects your heart rhythms and your raw health. The Institute of HeartMath has done some amazing research and what they've done is shown that you can learn how to intentionally shift to a positive emotion in the middle of a negative one.

When you do, your heart rhythms immediately change. When you get into the stressful situation, the rhythms of your heart change to a much less favorable, much more what they call incoherent pattern that's not good for you. It's not giving your brain and your heart the in sync.

It's not keeping everything in balance, your hormones or immune system. As soon as you shift that emotion from negative to positive, you get that shift in the heart rhythm and that puts you into this neutral hormonal and biochemical events that benefit your entire body. That are helpful rather than hurting. When you can learn to do these techniques and you practice them and then you can do them on a regular basis, the stress reducing effects are not just immediate. They get to be long lasting. There are some amazing techniques for teaching you how to make them long lasting.

Let's take a look at some of the rhythms. This is your heart rate at the top when you're frustrated. It's all random. Up and down and up and down, sharp and spiky here and there. It's a state they call cortical inhibition. The inhibition of that high level functioning part of your brain called the prefrontal cortex. It's chaos. It's just chaos. You can't thing straight because that's what your heart rhythms are going like and that syncs up with your brain rhythms and throws you out of balance.

Look at the second picture which is the measurement of a person in appreciation. Look how smooth it is. Nice smooth sign wave. That's considered cortical facilitation. Your brain is on. Your brain is hot. You're coherent. This is the difference. With the techniques I'm going to share with you, you can go from the top one to the bottom one in a matter of minutes. When you first learn it, it may take you several. 3, 5 minutes. 10 minutes maybe, which is still not a whole lot of time, but once you get really good at it and you practice it like I'm going to share with you how to practice, you can shift it in a minute. 30 seconds. A minute is all it takes.

The effects of this on your health are profound. Here's an example of the effect of emotion on something called secretory IgA which is a protective antibody in your mucus membranes. Your digestive tract, your lungs, your nose. Secretory IgA helps to protect you from damage and from bacteria and viruses and toxins. What they did was measured your level of secretory IgA all the way down from 0 up to 45 at the top. The higher the better. What we see with people who are really stressed out all the time is their numbers are less than 25. Less than 20. Less than 15.

Way less sometimes. Close to 0. We start out at a base line here at about 25. This is in a good, relatively healthy person. They get angry. They get angry for 5 minutes and look what happens. They're initially ... Now, the secretory IgA raises a little bit, but look what happens over hours, over time. By the end of 2 and a half hours secretory IgA levels are way down.

What this means is your exposed. You're at high risk for illness which is what happens when you get stressed out a lot. Your body gets ill more often. You get more colds and flus and then over time it takes 8 hours. It hasn't even returned to baseline.

When you get angry, you're affecting negatively your body for a long time and that's just with 5 minutes of anger. Imagine if you're angry all day long. You're watching the news and you're getting really just over the top angry. Look what happens when you do 5 minutes of care. By care they mean appreciation. You go into a state of okay, appreciate. I feel the stress coming on. Instead I'm going to go to a place where I can feel appreciative. In 5 minutes, your secretory IgA levels have jumped well over 10 points. 20 points, over 30 points. It's almost from 25. It's up to about 40. That's what? 15? Yeah. 15 points.

That's huge. What happens? Over time it drops back down. About 2 and a half hours it's back down to your baseline, but it trickles up over time if you can maintain that level. If you go back in and do these things again, you get another boost. if you start to do the techniques on a regular basis every few hours like we talk about, you can have this boost to your immune system dramatically over time. Again, this is something else they measured. They look at- This is under a coherent state.

What is your heart rate variability? That's what we saw before. Your respiration rate looks really good and your blood pressure. You go from having it over here, a little bit erratic and right here at the line with the red, that's when you're doing a quick coherence which I'm going to teach you in just a few minutes how to do. A quick coherence is a technique that you actually can do very quickly and it shifts really quickly. Look how quickly. Look how much more smooth and rhythmic your respiratory rate is. It slows down a bit. Look what happens to your heart rate variability. Much more even and controlled.

Your blood pressure. Much more even and controlled instead of all spiky. Just by taking a few seconds to do a quick coherence and look. This is the benefit that this process can have physiologically on you. Let's take a few moments to do a quick coherence. I like to call them mini vacations because people relate to that term. When you talk about quick coherence then you have to go through a lot of what I just went through to give the background on coherence. If I'm just talking in general, "Let's go and do a mini vacation."

I want you to put your feet flat on the ground. Take your right hand and put it over your heart. Take your left hand and put it over your belly and close your eyes if you will. Get a better response the first couple of times through. Just take a few long, slow deep breaths. In through your abdomen. Filling up your abdomen and your chest. Holding at the top. Letting go of the breath. Do that two or three more times and just pretend that you're breathing into your heart space. Just picture the white light, fresh, clean air coming in. Bathing your chest.

Filling your chest. Letting go of the stale air. Then focus on some time, a place, a person, where you feel really serious appreciation. Maybe you're at the beach. Maybe you're on vacation. Strolling, holding a lover's hand. Maybe you're holding your new born baby for the first time or your pet in your lap. Wherever you can go to bring you into a state of tranquility and peace and can feel deep appreciation. As you recall the situation, bring in all your senses. What does it look like? What does it sound like? What are the tastes? What are the smells? What does it feel like on your skin?

The more senses you can bring into a memory, the more you'll feel like you are there and that's really what we want here. We want to trick our nervous system into thinking we're really there. The really great news is whether you're really there or experiencing it through memory, your brain has the same experience and can get you into the same coherence patterns, the same immune system patterns, the same mental clarity. Go ahead and take a few more deep breaths there and experience the joy of coherence.

Know that you can come back here any time, any place. Wherever you are. Whether you're feeling stressed or what a pick me up break. I suggest you practice this every day outside of your stressful moments first so that when you get to the stressful moments, you have lots and lots of clarity around it. Of practice and you're really good at it. Come back now and make a commitment to do this after the talk and practice it right before you go to bed, right before you get out of bed, and right before each meal. It will make your meals oh so much better of sorts.

That's because coherence creates clarity of your mind. Creativity opens up those channels and better problem solving abilities. It gives you better ways of handling stressful situations. When you're in a stressful situation and you're allowing yourself to be stressed and incoherent, you can't think of ways to get out of it real well. Coherence improves your energy metabolism. Helps you to burn fat more effectively. Helps you to generate APT. Fuel. Helps your mitochondria better. Helps your hormones work better. Your immune system work better.

Helps you to create more enzymes and improve your digestion. Overall, just gives you that really really good feeling. This is a comparison of various states, again from the Institute of HeartMath. The top one is relaxation. The bottom one is appreciation. There's a little bit of a difference. Relaxation is a little less active. Appreciation is there and much more actively coherent. Let's look at what do you do about stress?

We all have it. There are stressful situations in everyone's lives. I'm not here to tell you how to get rid of all the stress in your life. That would be to be no longer human and no longer alive. What you need to do is learn how to manage it. First of all you need to identify what are the triggers for you? Is it your husband's voice? Is it your kids leaving stuff on the floor? Is it listening to the news and getting all upset about the world events? Is it your mom and how she criticizes you? Or sister who doesn't understand you?

Those are the triggers and you need to identify what those are for you. Go ahead and jot a few of those down on your piece of paper right now. Pick one and think about it. As you think about it, notice how it feels in your body. Where do you hold that stress? Is it in your chest? Your tummy? Your head? Your neck? Your shoulders? Where is it that you hold it and how does it feel? It certainly doesn't feel good in your body. It may feel a little racy. Probably tight. That's the typical ways. What do you do then?

Identify the triggers and then avoid them. Avoid those stressors. If it's the news, turn it off. If it's your mom, you're going to have to deal with when you talk to her getting yourself ready or don't talk to her as often. Same with the sister or friend that is getting on your case. You either have to deal with them and talk to them about what they're doing that's stressful or avoid it for a while. You can't avoid it indefinitely. You're always going to be coming upon it.

You need to learn to manage it. You avoid as much as you can and then you learn to manage that stress response starting with the quick coherence we talked about. There's a lovely book called Transforming Stress by the HeartMath Institute. A little \$12, \$11 book. Worksheets, any descriptions of all the processes.

In our 30 day transforming stress system, I guide you through step by step all of the processes that are talked about in the HeartMath book. It's an excellent way to put these into practice. It's amazing because you get to listen every day as I guide you through the stressor transformation. If you go to the Institute of HeartMath, heartmath.org, and go to their site there's a lot of free resources out there. I would encourage you to go check them out.

I gave you some statistics. Why? Well, a lot of people need the statistics to see why it's important. "Oh, yeah, yeah. I'll manage my stress, but I really need to worry about my diet and my exercise. In the meantime the stress is no big deal." Believe me. In all the cases I see, stress is huge. It's huge. When you learn to manage the stress the emotional eating goes away. Good food choices happen. The exercise program falls into place. The stress has got to be at the core of this.

There was three 10 year studies that concluded that emotional stress was more predictive of death from cancer and cardiovascular disease than smoking. People were unable to effectively manage their stress had a 40% higher death rate than non-stressed people. A Harvard medical school, pretty prestigious school, 1,600 heart attack survivors. That when subjects got angry during emotional conflicts, their risk of subsequent heart attack was more than double than those that remained calm.

Another Harvard School of Public Health study, a 20 year study, over 1,700 older men found that worrying about their social situation, health, personal finance, whatever they were worried about it significantly increased their risk of cardiovascular disease.

Having a heart attack was increased because they were worried about what? Their social situation? Their personal finances? Their health? You do a lot better to help your health than worry. Worrying about your health actually hurts your health more.

It's interesting that over half of the heart attack disease cases can't be explained by the standard risk factors like high cholesterol, smoking, sedentary life style. Stress is a big part of it. Then the Mayo Clinic, another prestigious organization, did a study of individuals with heart disease and they said psychological stress was the strongest predictor of future cardiac events like heart attack. Just sudden cardiac arrest which means your heart just stops working and sudden cardiac death. Things like congestive heart failure I'm assuming as well.

Like I said before, a little occasional stress is an energy boost. It can help you achieve your goals. "I got to get this done by- I have to get this paper done by." Who's done that, right? The write the term paper into the last minute, finish the work project at the last minute. Chronic stress has those short and long-term health consequences. It has a short-term of poor digestion, elevated heart rate, elevated blood pressure. Long-term, it's damaging to those same tissues.

It effects your hormones. It effects your insulin levels. It effects the way you burn belly fat and it accelerates aging. We're going to talk about the way it effects belly fat and other diseases in a sec. We're talking about stress associated with disease and all of these are documented diseases where stress is associated. Cardiovascular, hormone imbalances, hypertension which is high blood pressure, diabetes, fibromyalgia. A lot of people with fibromyalgia just think they have fibromyalgia. That's why they hurt.

Chronic stress. Chronic fatigue. Being tired all the time. Stress tires you out. We'll talk about how cortisol works in a second and you'll see. Cancer, depression, anxiety, mood disorders, attention deficit, allergies, auto-immune disease, digestive disorders. It runs the gambit of complaints that I see all the time in my practice. Am I saying that stress alone is causing these diseases? In some cases, yeah, it can be. In some cases, no. It's stress compounded with bad diet. Compounded with lack of exercise. Compounded with poor sleep. Bad work environment. Exposure to toxins.

There's so many things that go into poor health, but stress is a biggie. How does stress make you fat? When you're stressed, there's a hormone called cortisol that gets secreted by your adrenal glands. There's another hormone that gets secreted by your adrenal glands called DHEA which is an anti-aging hormone which is also one that maintains good sugar levels. Chronic stress will increase your cortisol and decrease your DHEA. When your cortisol increases, it triggers something called gluconeogenesis which is muscle breakdown to create more blood sugar.

You're supposed to be running away from something, right? There's a physical danger, so you need more sugar in your blood. Cortisol triggers the breakdown of muscle through gluconeogenesis into blood sugar. That results in an increase of insulin. Insulin gets secreted by your pancreas in response to sugar. It normally gets secreted after a meal that contains sugar. The thing about insulin is that it inhibits fat burning and accelerates fat storage. The whole point of insulin is to try to get the sugar into your cells so that it can do its metabolic stuff.

It's a storage hormone. It's trying to store the sugar. When it can't get it into the cells because it's being overproduced and your cells have become insulin resistant, then it even further accelerates fat storage. Whenever insulin is out, you can't burn fat. Insulin can be the result of your lovely junk food meal. High in processed food, high in sugar. High in orange juice and mashed potatoes and bread. Or it can be as a result of you feeling stressed and accelerating the muscle breakdown and blood sugar elevation.

The hormone called DHEA, it helps to decrease visceral and subcutaneous abdominal fat. Well what's that? Visceral fat is the fat around your organs. Subcutaneous is right below the skin. It increases insulin sensitivity, so DHEA is your friend. Yet whenever you get stressed, cortisol increases in DHEA is inhibited. One of the reasons is cortisol and DHEA use the same precursor molecules as do by the way your sex hormones. Testosterone, progesterone, estrogen. Which is why chronic stress will wipe out your sex drive big time. Big time.

This was a result of a study, a long-term 6 month study in JAMA. DHEA decreases fat and increases insulin sensitivity. You want to be in the state of DHEA as much as possible. DHEA will be increased when you're in a calm and happy, positive state. How can you get there? You can do a quick coherence, aka mini vacation. Cortisol inhibits other hormones because of course stress, like I said, increases your cortisol. Within about 30 minutes after cortisol comes out, it breaks down into building blocks for DHEA and other hormones.

If you just quickly get stressed, you allow it to go away, you're okay. You can get your DHEA levels back up within about 30 minutes. If you keep pondering those stressful thoughts and you keep listening to the news, and you keep thinking about, "Why am I not getting well? Why can't I lose weight? Why can't I get a better job? When am I going to get a better job?" Those are stressful thoughts. They're not going to help you to get a better job. They're not going to help you in that stressful situation.

They're just going to prolong the stress, which is going to keep the DHEA low longer. That inhibits healing and repair because that's one of the functions of DHEA. The cortisol steals the building blocks of DHEA as well as your sex hormones. You're left with poor healing, poor fat burning, and no sex drive. Your belly's getting bigger and bigger all as a result of you being stressed.

It's all about perception. It's not really about reality. It's not really the events that cause harm. It's how you respond. I'll give you an example. Last year we had huge fires here right at this time of year in Austin. It was hot. 100 plus, 112 degrees and dry. Hadn't rained in months and a whole bunch of fires broke out. About a couple weeks after the fires, we were having a pot luck at our house and one of my friends who lives down in an area close to the fires, I said, "Hey. How's it going? How'd you do?" He was having a pleasant conversation so I was assuming everything went fine with his house.

He wasn't talking about gloom and doom or anything. He said, "Oh. My house burned down," and he just continued the rest of his conversation what he was talking about. I went, "Wow." He goes, "Well, you know what? There's nothing I can do about it. I'm really happy to be alive and I still have the property. I'm going to rebuild it." That's the way you got to deal with life. He had the right idea and he's like that in his life. That's the way he is. Bad things happen. You could just say, "Yeah, he had a right to be angry and frustrated and carry that with him," but to what good? It would just be damaging to him.

He said, "You know what? I can't do anything about it. I'm just going to pick up the pieces and do my best to improve the situation." That's where we all need to take that. Yeah, we've had surgeries or we've had accidents or we've had fires or we've had financial ruin. Or we've had miscarriages or death of family members. We've all had those bad things happen to us. Some people fly through it and some people fail through it. Where do you want to be? Allow yourself to look at the positive sided. At how you're going to deal with it.

How are you going to move forward? If you sit and you gloom and you feel sorry for yourself, that stress is going to determine how badly your body responds. I like to think about the whole concept of health as related to head, heart, habits. We think that we can just say, "Oh, what habits do I need to change to be healthier? I need to eat more of this and eat less of that." You can go about and try to do it and within a week or two, you're back to your old habits. Why? Because you tried to change your habits first.

You have to change your head. You have to change your heart and your habits will follow. What you experience and what's been built up in your memory store, in your brain, plus what you believe equals your thoughts. If you've had the experience that big black dogs bite and you believe that all big black dogs are dangerous as a result of that experience, what's your thought going to be if you're sitting outside and a black dog walks by? Your thought is, "Ah, I'm in danger." What does the thought trigger? An emotion.

What emotion does it trigger in this case? It triggers fear. Ah. Emotions and thoughts are all energy. They're energy and you can shift the energy. You can change the thought and then the emotion will change. Try. Think about how painful it is to get your foot stuck in a door. Wow. Ow.

Your body gets all ... You think about that and you get all kind of squirmy and uncomfortable. Think about how it feels to be immersed in the warm ocean bobbing up and down. Assuming you like water. Or the sun beating on you.

How does that feel? Feels soothing and comfortable. Okay, so think about what it would feel like if the bank suddenly closed tomorrow and you lost all your money. Now you're feeling fearful and uncomfortable, right? Think about what would it be like if tomorrow the banks were open and you can have access to all your money and oh, by the way, the banks just gave you an extra 2% because the rate went up. What do you feel like then? Oh, well that feels really good. It's your thoughts that trigger how you feel and you can change your thoughts to change your emotions.

When you have these emotions, they can either benefit your body or harm your body and it's because there's a molecular changes that happen as a result. There's physiologic changes. We saw on those graphs what happens in the state of care versus anger. What happens to our immune system, our secretory IgA. We saw what happens to our blood pressure. Our heart rate. When you can get your head and your heart aligned, the beneficial habits will replace them. When you think, "Wow. I deserve to live in a lean, strong body. In order for me to get there, I need to stop eating sugar and processed food."

Sugar and processed food sure do taste good, but does that taste as good as what it feels like to have an energetic body that can keep going and going and doing all sorts of fun things? Yeah, it would be nice to have that pleasant taste of that sugar and refined foods, but which would I rather? The sustained long-term joy and benefit of being in a body that feels great? I don't know about you, but I'm going for the energy. That sugar on your tongue is too quick lived and too negative. When I say sugar, I mean the sugar, the processed foods, the gluten, the dairy, the chemicals.

You can make a difference and it's by choosing how you think. There's the technique. There's the quick coherence and the other techniques that HeartMath teaches. There's meditation, there's yoga. There's lots of ways to get your head and your heart aligned in such a way that you create new chemistry. That you create happy chemistry. Happy hormones that your belly fat starts burning away rather than just constantly getting replaced. You choose and it really just starts with choice.

People say, "Well, how can I be happy?" Happiness is a choice. It's a choice. Really great book by Barry Neil Kaufman, one of my favorite mentors and authors. Happiness is a Choice. He talks a lot about that. We choose. We choose how we feel. Let's just talk a little bit about some of these emotions. If we're going to choose, what thoughts do we have to choose to generate negative emotions? Frustration, insecurity, worry, depressing feelings. Those lead to disorder in your heart's rhythm and your nervous system.

They get in the way of you feeling good. They interfere with your brain function, your hormone function. They interfere with your ability to think clearly and make good decisions. Those are negative emotions. Again, what negative thoughts are you thinking to generate those emotions? How can you shift those emotions to joy, appreciation, care, love, kindness? Someone that works with me and her mother's sick. Her daughter's sick. She's working on helping them and her appreciation is, "I'm so appreciate that I have the health and the knowledge to be able to take care of them."

She can be thinking, "Oh. Woe is me. Poor me. I've got two people to take care of. How do I get time to take care of me?" She takes the time to take care of her because she knows that when she takes care of her, she gets to be there to take care of them. She comes up with all these great things to appreciate. It's just so heartwarming. Just like my friend who had the fire and said, "I'm going to rebuild. What else can I do?" You can spend 10 years being depressed because your mom died. Granted, I know that pain of losing your parent, but am I going to give up my life over it? No. My mom wanted me to keep going.

Same with you. That loss of a job. Is it going to last with you for months or are you going to get over it and go, "Okay. What opportunities do I have now?" It's all up to you. Do you want to create harmony in your heart's rhythms? Do you want to create a really finely tuned nervous system and hormonal system? Do you want to create a fat burning machine? Or do you just want to keep getting heavier and heavier and sicker and sicker by choosing the negative?

Typically people cope with stress using stimulants, foods, and distractions. What about you? There's the various kinds of- There's the caffeinated beverages. Some people do drugs. Some people have addictions. A lot of people use foods. It's all about getting the attention away from the stress. It works, but for how long? You finish the food, you need more of it to keep you distracted or else your mind goes back to the stress. Why not learn techniques to really rejuvenate and replenish you inside so that you can actually actually once and for all switch the stress to the positive emotion?

Go from that erratic heart rate to nice and smooth all within 30 seconds. HeartMath found that appreciation is the best emotion for bringing you there. The power of appreciation. The power of gratitude. We know prayers before meals, grace before meals has been custom for eons and there's more than just the spiritual thankfulness there. Physiologically it's helping you to digest your meal better. What I call mini vacations is a variation on quick coherence. If you can shift yourself like this, you can have amazing experience.

When stress comes rearing its head, you can transform it. You can say, "Oh, great." I've practiced this a lot. I can get to the point where sometimes when a stressful situation comes, I don't even have to remember to do the process. It remembers to do itself for me.

The stress comes on, I breathe, and the next thing you know I'm going into appreciation, mini vacation. My body's tingling and I know I've gotten there. You have to keep doing it. You have to practice it.

You have been doing the other stuff your whole life. What about fun? Come on guys. How long has it been since you've had fun? I recommend every day. Sit down, make a list of all the things you find fun, and then pick one a day to do. Don't skip a day. I'm going to challenge you to do this for the next 7 days and report back on your journals. 7 days. A fun experiment. 7 days of fun. Kind of fun.

Doing things that raise your self esteem. Appreciating yourself. Finding the good things you've done and really patting yourself on the back for it. Yeah, we all make mistakes. We all make mistakes regularly. There's no point in focusing on those mistakes. No point at all. This is a favorite picture of mine and it's taken from the Institute of HeartMath. It's a way that I've explained things to people for a long time and I love how they put it in this, what they call the emotional landscape. Where do you live on the emotional landscape? Do you tend to mostly be on the negative side or the positive side?

Watch yourself. Those high energy, negative emotions are rage and anger and frustration. The low energy ones are depression and powerlessness. Those high energy positive emotions are bliss and joy and exhilaration. The low energy positive ones are peacefulness and relaxation. Calm. The more you stay on the positive side, the more DHEA you have. The more you stay on the negative side, the more cortisol you have. The higher you go towards the high end, the more adrenaline you're secreting. You don't want to stay on the high end all the time even if it's high end energy positive.

You need to balance it and bring yourself so that on average you're towards the middle. Otherwise you'll wear yourself out. Too much adrenaline can wear yourself out as nice as it feels. I would encourage you to just jot down 5 ways that you can nourish yourself emotionally. Instead of reaching for candy or coffee or alcohol to distract you, what are 5 ways you can nourish yourself? One of my clients wrote down, "Well, I can draw a picture." Another said, "I could take pictures." another said, "I could look at pictures."

Another said, "Dancing." I said, "Get in water. Put my feet in water and breathe and relax." Think about ways that you can nourish yourself emotionally instead of reaching for the food. When you reach for food, instead of real strategies to address what's going on for you you get yourself into trouble obviously. You get overweight and you can create all kinds of health issues. One of things you can do when you're finding yourself needing some emotional support is you stop yourself and think about it. Actually think about when you reach for food.

When I get ... What's the emotion? Frustrated, angry, scared, worried. Jot that emotion down. When I get worried, I reach for ... What's your favorite food to reach for? Chips, ice cream, bread, pizza. When I eat that food, I temporarily feel ... That gives you a clue to how you need to be feeling. I feel happy. I feel satisfied. I feel comforted. I don't feel so alone. There's your clue.

Then you think about what can you do instead. When I feel worried, instead of reaching for chips and dip and ice cream, instead I can draw a picture. I can look at photos of people I love. I can put my feet in water. I can go for a walk around the block. I can eat an orange. It's better to have it be emotional, but if it has to be a one to one substitution, go for it. That's part of the emotional strategy.

We're just going to quickly just- I want you to sit back, relax, and just watch the slideshow. Look at ways for you to transform stress. Certainly getting a massage is lovely. Meditating. Laughing. Contemplation. Mindfulness. Yoga. Meditation again. Being appreciative. Thank you. Fresh air and sunshine. Woohoo. Exercise. Great way to transform stress. HeartMath exercises. www.heartmath.org. If you really want to control stress through food, drink purified water. Use whole, unrefined sea salt. A little pinch if your water will help to reduce your stress.

Fresh raw fruits and veggies. Grow your own garden and get your hands in the soil. Nothing like that to transform stress. Eat sea vegetables to nourish your hormones from the inside out. Drink green smoothies. Eat green leafies. Eat wild greens. Be kind to yourself. Be patient with yourself. Be loving with yourself. Give yourself a chance to shift. Don't expect this to happen overnight, but start the practice.

Start the quick coherence practice. Learn the way. Here's some books that you can go to that I find to be happy and helpful. Learn, practice, do. Pick yourself up when you fall down because you will fall back into old habits over and over. Create your transforming stress process. Use the HeartMath techniques. Use exercise, use water. Use all those beautiful pictures that we just saw. Know that it's worth it. That you're worth it.

When you can transform stress, you will be able to stick with the diet. The exercise. The lifestyle habits that you need to keep you healthy, happy, and whole.