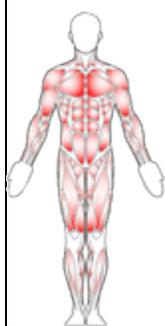


Are You Still Turned On?

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Ok, so now you're curious right? With Valentine's Day in just a few days, you may be expecting an article about your sexual mojo. Well, there is a thread of connection with what I am really asking you to explore in this article.

Is your nervous system in over-drive? Is your fight, flight or freeze mechanism still turned on? According to Lissa Rankin MD, PBS presenter, mind-body medicine physician and author of "Mind Over Medicine...Scientific Proof That You Can Heal Yourself", our primal defense mechanism was meant to last only 30 seconds in response to the threat of danger. Unfortunately, these days we have found that there is a chronic stress-response that is pervasive in many of our daily lives. It is this very same chronic physical response that is wreaking havoc in our bodies and leaving us more pre-disposed to illness and disease. The bottom line...chronic stress is bad news. Taking time to ask yourself if you are still "turned on" is an important step in self-awareness. Assessing if you would benefit from mastering some form of stress management, relaxation training or healthier lifestyle habits to support you in breaking the chronic stress cycle and reducing the negative risk associated is vital.



The Body's Stress Response

"When you perceive a threat, your nervous system responds by releasing a flood of stress hormones, including adrenaline and cortisol. These hormones rouse the body for emergency action.

Your heart pounds faster, muscles tighten, blood pressure rises, breath quickens, and your senses become sharper. These physical changes increase your strength and stamina, speed your reaction time, and enhance your focus—preparing you to either fight or flee from the danger at hand."

SOURCE: http://www.helpguide.org/mental/stress_signs.htm

Unfortunately, our basic schooling has left many of us ill-equipped and lacking practical self-care strategies. If anything, we have found ourselves caught up in the rush of life and performance demands of our modern culture that pushes us to our limits and overloads us. No wonder we begin to feel powerless. Many begin to believe that we just have to suck it up and move forward. With hope lost, we desensitize to our bodies cries for change or deny how deeply we are feeling about things. Our toxic thoughts and emotions, and the over stimulation of those stress hormones begin to take over our health and happiness.

So what is the cost to us? We are less productive, feel bad about ourselves, and feel overwhelmed by the everyday up and downs of life. We may also experience increased mental, emotional, and physical pain. Anxiety, depression, obesity, cardio-vascular disease, impotence, gastro-intestinal disorders, insomnia, skin and hair conditions can become more real than we would like. Did I mention Cancer? Visit: http://www.webmd.com/balance/stress-management/stress-symptoms-effects_of-stress-on-the-body for more detailed symptoms of stress and how you might see it hinting its presence in your life and body.

While it is true that we can't always change things in our outer world for the better, or quick enough for our relief, we do hold the power to choose to take healthy action, nurture ourselves, and be mindful of our thoughts and beliefs. Let's explore some tools you can use to invite greater inner peace and harmony for your mind and body.

- Breath Awareness
- Progressive Muscle Relaxation
- Mindfulness Meditation
- Hypnosis
- Meridian Tapping
- Energy Healing
- Better Nutrition/Eating/Sleep
- Creative Self-Expression
- Engaging Exercise/Movement
- Meaningful Social Connection
- Spiritual Awareness & Prayer
- Coaching/Counseling /Therapy

In recognizing the need for change and making the decision to cultivate an active self-care regime for ourselves, we move from victims of circumstance to empowered individuals beginning the road to self-mastery and wellness. Doing something pro-actively is a great way to reduce stress and anxiety. Have fun exploring the possibilities. Making healthy changes can be fun, nurturing, and empowering.

Other stress generators...

Have you fallen into the materialism trap promoted by the Madison Avenue marketing masters? I am always amused how our culture has made having the latest, greatest, "stuff" more important than investing in learning how to be an individual who lives life masterfully and joyfully. The truth is that there are many wonderful teachers, practitioners, healers, coaches, and therapists, etc. ready to serve and support you in getting off the chronic stress merry-go-round and begin living a better life. Maybe it's time to give value to your health and well-being

and invest in your Self. They say you can't take it with you, but being the type of person you can be proud of is invaluable. If limited finances seem to deny you professional support, you can invest in a good old-fashioned library card or go online to check out books, articles, and videos that point you in the right direction with some healthy strategies.

Speaking of Madison Avenue, how have you let your definition of success and personal worth be influenced? So much stress, dissatisfaction, and low self-esteem is found in trying to live someone else's ideal life. I invite you to take time to define what really matters to you. Who do you choose to be? What thoughts, values, feelings and skills will allow you to be the best authentic and original you possible? What do you really need vs. choose to have materially? Are you really grateful for what you already have? Taking time to have a clear and empowered understanding of what will really add value to your life will leave you more confident, satisfied, and peaceful. It is living by another's truth or priority that can cause our bodies to react negatively. What is your body trying to tell you about your choices, priorities, and actions, or your unexpressed dreams and desires?

As a result of our conscious and subconscious learning in life, we may experience our world with a biased sense of expectation and outcome. We end up living in a world of limitations that may not actually be true, but feel real. This is where a variety of modalities can help us clear away the stinking-thinking and perceptions. As a clinical hypnotherapist, I love introducing individuals to an understanding of how those limiting beliefs, attitudes, feelings, and behaviors rooted in the subconscious mind can actually be re-aligned for greater health and happiness.

So, the question to ask at this point is what can we shift in our thinking to invite greater peace and harmony in our lives and bodies? What thoughts or aspects of our consciousness are perpetuating that chronic stress as a reaction to our life experience? What new healthy practices can we learn and introduce to invite greater wholeness and physical well-being every day? How can we take advantage of the healing wisdom that is available to support us in our quest for a healthy and fulfilling life?

Ok, back to the sexual mojo...Chronic stress can impact your libido and sexual performance. They say sex sells. So get started on taking charge of your life and health, and, you may just find yourself "Turned On" in the best way possible!

Giselle Felicia Vivian, BM CHT, Albuquerque, NM is available for private consultations. Visit www.gisellefeliciavivian.com for more articles and to learn more about her services to help you create the life you imagine.