

## LET GO AND MAKE A DIFFERENT CHOICE

We talk, and sometimes even brag, about the amount of stress we're experiencing these days. Yet, I still hear the same excuses for not doing something about it.

***I just don't have the time!*** We're all busy and as long as we believe stress reduction requires time, we continue to reserve it for Saturday morning in the garden or 9:00 pm in the bath or late August in Turkey! The truth is stress doesn't wait until you have time to 'manage' it. You need something that works 24/7, QUICK! It takes less than a minute to stop the stressful feeling:

- Just stop and focus on your breathing
- then focus on your heart – do this for a count of 10 and repeat three times.

You get back to you and you get back your focus.

***Nothing's going to change anyway.*** Don't expect life to suddenly transform around you every time you shift into focus. Do it for your own sake. Don't ignore the impact you can have on others when you are more balanced or calm.

***It's not working.*** Be patient. Like learning any new skill, this takes practice. And simply thinking about it won't have the same benefit. You need to focus on and engage the heart; shift how you feel. Anytime you learn something new, the least line of resistance has the tendency to win out. The time it takes to find an excuse can be better spent to:

***Recharge your batteries.*** Make a shift before you feel stressed. Pause for 15-30 seconds and find something in your life to appreciate. Each time you do this, you boost your whole system.

***Have fun with your practice.*** If you approach your practice too seriously, it will feel like a chore and create even more stress. Find ways to make it part of your daily routines as well as an option to take when you do notice stress.

***Recognise your stressful feelings*** one more time today than you did yesterday and then do something about it. Just one extra opportunity to focus a day can save wear and tear on your body.

***There are only 24 hours in the day.*** Consider instead how you are deciding what to spend your time on. What is driving your choices both internally and externally – perhaps it's the last person that made a request or you just find it hard to say no. What can you do differently next time? Over time as you spend more time focusing you will get to know your responses better and this will open up other possibilities.