

Outsmart stress

Life coach says we can recognize and systematically defeat stress in busy lives.

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Modern life has become about achieving more results in less time, but the end result is overpowering stress that robs us of enjoying the moment.

But there's a way to beat stress, and it's a lot simpler than you think. That's according to West Vancouver's Monica Magnetti, a life and wellness coach who came to B.C. from Italy 25 years ago.

While preparing to promote her new book, *Outsmart Stress! Understanding the Dynamics behind Stress*, Magnetti explained some of the key points she writes about and uses in her practice.

If you can identify stress patterns and understand how stress impacts your life, you can design a blueprint to beat it, she said. The key is learning to step back and become an observer of your life.

"It's about keeping a record of where you are and becoming an observer," she said.

And once you identify stressful situations, you can make a game plan without overthinking and worrying. For example, Magnetti was able to help one man when he recognized a certain friend who always indulged in negative comments and viewpoints was bringing him down.

"Whenever he spent time alone with this friend he became stressed," Magnetti

said. "We made a plan that he would meet this friend but in the company of others. It helped a lot."

And while most people believe it's nearly impossible to break bad habits, fix brutal work schedules, or cure stressful relationships, it needn't be, Magnetti said.

"We make things out to be hard. If we can access our intuition and listen to our body, life would be easier."

When it comes to duties we think must be completed, Magnetti said if you recognize you are trying to cram too much work into too little time, periods of rest and reflection can be scheduled and enjoyed. It's as simple as stopping to smell the roses. "People get caught

in the doing, and the more you do, the more there is to do," Magnetti said. "Set up some steps and goals and take a deep breath when you reach one."

Since becoming certified as a life coach in 2004, Magnetti has been able to incorporate various life studies into one career. She draws on her knowledge of Jungian philosophy, Greek Mythology, psychology, and creative writing during coaching sessions.

And for anyone who has escapist dreams that life in Europe must be more balanced and happy than our ways here, Magnetti has a piece of personal advice.

"Vancouver always felt like home, Italy doesn't compare," she said. "I find in North America, (by becoming) exposed to multiculturalism people have a tendency to be more open minded."



Monica Magnetti