

# Stress Bytes Newsletter

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**"WHEN STRESS BITES, BITE BACK!"**

THE NEWSLETTER OF ANNETTE VAILLANCOURT, PH.D.

LICENSED CLINICAL PROFESSIONAL COUNSELOR AND MOTIVATIONAL SPEAKER

## Why We Sabotage Our Success

Okay, you've set a goal - something you really want for yourself. You're going to get into shape, stop smoking or earn more money. You even have set up a program or outlined the steps to take each day to reach your goal. You are excited. You have good intentions. You get started.

You do well for awhile - maybe a couple of weeks or a month. Then something happens that stresses you out and your program drops to a lower priority or grinds to a halt. Or maybe "nothing" happened, but someone makes a comment about what you're doing and it takes all the wind out of your sails. You can't figure out why you suddenly don't feel like taking the necessary steps to keep moving forward. You start to wonder if you're lazy or start focusing on all the reasons you can't do or are blocked from doing what you started out to do. Maybe you've even forgotten why the goal was so important to you in the first place. You get discouraged because the plan is falling apart and

the motivation isn't there. No one seems to support you or be able to give you the encouragement you need to restart your energy again. All of a sudden the exciting goal feels like too much work. You're ready to give up. It's too stressful.

What's happening is you've hit the wall. You've run into uncomfortable emotions or have activated subconscious beliefs that are blocking you from moving ahead. You think it's something outside of yourself and out of your control. You can point to several external barriers. What's really blocking you is what is going on inside of you at an emotional level that might be outside of your awareness. You've run into your internal barriers to success. Somehow it's just not comfortable for you to make these changes. It might go against something you believe or put you in conflict with what you value. It threatens who you think you are, calls into question what you believe you deserve, or threatens the status of your dearest

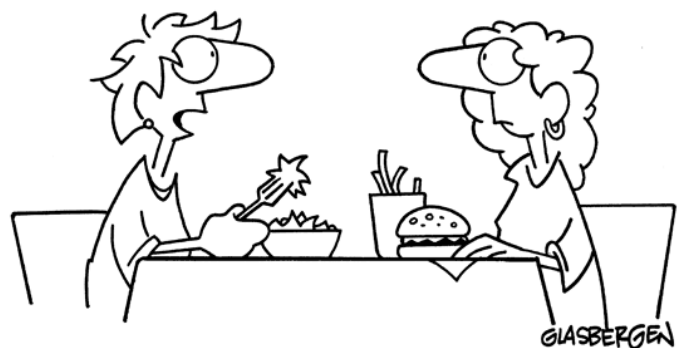
relationships.

Someone once said that inner space is the final frontier and the one we're most afraid of exploring. We're afraid to go inside because that's where our fears and self-limiting beliefs live. It's hard to consciously go there. We want to avoid feeling pain at all costs. We want to think we're above these fears and limitations.

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**"A vegetarian diet is very good for stress. If you crunch raw vegetables loud enough, you can't hear your kids quarrel at dinner!"**

**Annette Vaillancourt, Ph.D.**  
Psychotherapist & Motivational Speaker  
Phone: 1-877-949-5935  
[www.GotStressGetHelp.com](http://www.GotStressGetHelp.com)  
E-mail: [Annette@GotStressGetHelp.com](mailto:Annette@GotStressGetHelp.com)

## Why We Sabotage Our Success—cont'd

We're smarter than that...unless we're not. We want to think that what happened to us in the past is behind us and what hurt or scared us when we were younger no longer affects us. But it does. Those experiences are lodged in our subconscious mind and when something reminds us of them we do whatever we can to avoid re-experiencing those negative emotions, including sabotage our success.

For example, I used to be so puzzled as to why I'd start an exercise program and as soon as someone noticed that I was getting leaner, I'd stop. What was happening is that getting noticed wasn't safe and to be lean was to betray my family. If I stood out, I'd get criticized, made fun of or get rejected. When I was 18 years old, I decided to start a diet and exercise program. I would run up and down the road by my parents' home. To increase my endurance, I would run the distance between two telephone poles and then walk the distance between the next two and so on. Well, my family thought I was crazy. They'd tease me instead of encourage me. After all, who did I think I was to want to be fitter than they were? We were *all* supposed to be heavy.

Similarly, still trying to get my family's approval, at age 29, I entered a weight loss program when I was in graduate school. I lost 33 pounds and set a goal to run a 5K road race. Unfortunately for me, I decided to run the one in my hometown, again hoping my family would be proud of me and come to cheer me on at the finish line. It was a grueling race in 80 degree heat in the middle of July. I was getting sick from the heat, but I persisted. Nearing the finish line, I started looking at the crowd. To my dismay, not a single family member showed up. I was crushed and felt so rejected. Needless to say, the weight eventually came back on. I was too conflicted about being disloyal to my family by being different in that way. Further, I couldn't stand the teasing and rejection that happened when I was successful that way. So I had to sabotage my weight loss.

Now that I know what my subconscious fears and blocking beliefs are about weight loss, I can neutralize them with EFT (Emotional Freedom Technique). To date I have lost 50 pounds and have kept it off for 3 years. EFT or Emotional Freedom Technique is best described as a form of acupressure. It clearly demonstrates the principles of mind/body medicine. EFT is based on new discoveries regarding the connection between your body's subtle energies, your emotions, and your health. Using EFT, you can eliminate the triggers and neutralize the self-limiting beliefs that lead to emotional eating and yo-yo dieting.

EFT can be self-administered. You don't need a therapist. You can learn EFT yourself by downloading the free manual at [www.emofree.com](http://www.emofree.com). Then you simply develop a series of set-up phrases and follow along with the directions of the tapping points. For example, tapping phrases for weight loss might be, "Even though it's been difficult for me to lose weight in the past, what if it's effortless now?" or "Even though I carry more weight than I like, I deeply love and accept myself just as I am." Or you can tap more directly on self-sabotage statements like, "Even though I'm afraid to lose weight because my spouse will be threatened, I deeply love and accept myself." "Even though I'm afraid to hope that I can keep the weight off I deeply love and accept myself."

Happy Tapping!

Annette Vaillancourt, Ph.D. is a psychotherapist and motivational speaker with offices in Carbondale, IL and St. Louis, MO. **She offers a group for emotional eaters and yo-yo dieters called: "A Better Weigh: Change Subconscious Beliefs that Sabotage Your Success."**

**<http://www.gotstressgethelp.com/EFT-and-Weight-Loss.htm>. Groups NOW Forming!**

## Putting Words to Feelings

One skill to learn if you are an emotional eater is to *express* your feelings instead of stuffing them (and yourself) with food to numb your emotions. For those of you who are having the very common problem of not knowing what words to put to feelings, here's the basic 5 feelings all humans feel:

1. I feel **bad**.
2. I feel **glad**.
3. I feel **sad**.
4. I feel **mad**.
5. I feel **scared**.

Every other feeling word is some gradation of the above. For example,

I feel mad/miffed/annoyed/angry/enraged when \_\_\_\_\_.

I feel scared/anxious/antsy/jittery/nervous when \_\_\_\_\_.

I feel sad/morose/gloomy/blue/grief-stricken when \_\_\_\_\_.

I feel glad/thrilled/ecstatic/happy/pleased when \_\_\_\_\_.

I feel bad/ashamed/guilty/embarrassed when \_\_\_\_\_.

The trick is to identify the feeling and the thought/assumption/interpretation that goes with it.....

I feel bad when I think that I did something wrong.

I feel scared when I think I'm going to lose my job.

I feel happy when I get a sweet note from you because it reminds me of how much you care.

I feel ashamed when you criticize me because I think I'm worthless.

I feel sad when my cat died.

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE OUR FREE NEWSLETTER VIA EMAIL, PLEASE SEND AN  
EMAIL TO ANNETTE@GOTSTRESSGETHELP.COM  
WITH THE WORDS**

**“SUBSCRIBE TO STRESS BYTES” IN THE SUBJECT LINE.**

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**Annette Vaillancourt, Ph.D.**  
**Psychotherapist & Motivational Speaker**

Schwartz Building  
231 W. Main, 2W  
Carbondale, IL 62901  
Phone: 618-549-5935

And  
PO Box 220034  
Kirkwood, MO 63122  
1-877-949-5935

Annette@GotStressGetHelp.com



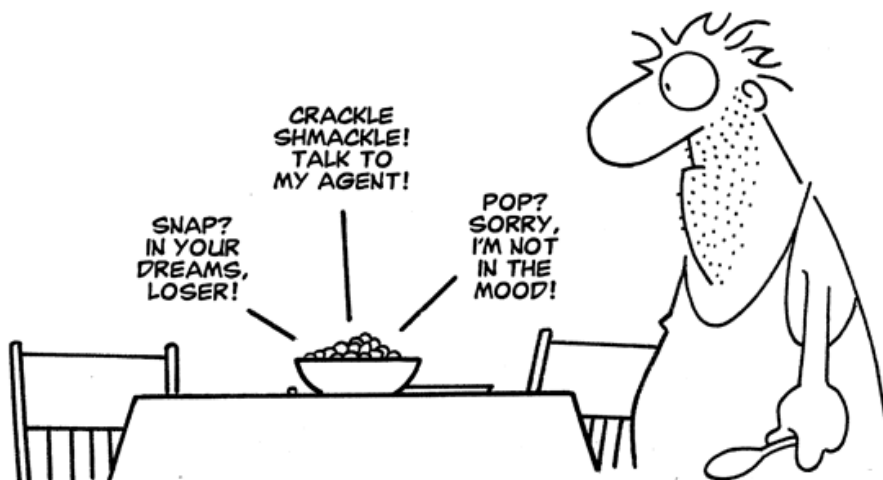
***The Stress Doctor is IN!!!***

"THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS WILLPOWER IN WEIGHT LOSS. IT'S ABOUT CHOICES." - UNKNOWN

"I'VE BEEN ON A DIET FOR TWO WEEKS AND ALL I'VE LOST IS TWO WEEKS." - TOTIE FIELDS

"WHAT SOME CALL HEALTH, IF PURCHASED BY PERPETUAL ANXIETY ABOUT DIET, ISN'T MUCH BETTER THAN TEDIOUS DISEASE." - GEORGE DENNISON PRENTICE

"I FEEL ABOUT AIRPLANES THE WAY I FEEL ABOUT DIETS. IT SEEMS TO ME THEY ARE WONDERFUL THINGS FOR OTHER PEOPLE TO GO ON." - JEAN KERR



**What happens when breakfast finds out it is the most important meal of the day.**

**ANNETTE VAILLANCOURT, PH.D.**

- Gently helping individuals, couples and groups resolve personal problems, manage stress, and reach their full potential since 1990.
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- **A Better Weigh: Stop Sabotaging Your Weight Loss Success! Groups Now Forming!**

#### BOOK RECOMMENDATION

I was first introduced to EFT and weight loss by Dr. Carol Solomon, who offered a 3 week teleseminar on using EFT to reduce food cravings. Now you can get the benefits of the class by ordering Carol's book, **Lose Weight Stay Slim Forever!**

Here's what's in Dr. Carol's book:

- The only weight loss guide you will ever need . . .
- Why diets don't work and how you can lose all the weight you want without them .
- Why losing weight has more to do with how and why you eat than what and how much you eat . . .
- How to get off the vicious cycle of dieting . . .and still lose weight . . .really.
- What you can do right now to start losing weight and be free of dieting, drugs and surgery forever . . .
- My weight loss success story . . .
- And much, much more . . .

To order, go to <http://hop.clickbank.net/hop.cgi?girlgeek53/cs111>