

Our genes tell us: Not all stress is harmful

1. Positive Stress ... when you rise to a challenge and feel exhilarated because you are able to meet that challenge.

2. Tolerable stress... something really bad happens, say the loss of a job, a divorce, or a health challenge, but to balance this you have internal resources and a social support system that can help you out or you have a regular stress management strategy such as a daily meditation practice.... so you can weather the storm.

3. Toxic stress... this is when you do not have the stress management skills or a support structure ... where you don't have control. In this situation the body produces chemicals and hormones, like cortisol, adrenalin and inflammatory cytokines.

When these chemicals are overproduced, the body is at risk of accelerated ageing.

It is the inability of the body to block these cytokines that, over time, contributes to all of the diseases of modern life.

Obesity, osteoporosis, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, arthritis, and even some of the degenerative brain diseases like Alzheimer's disease and so forth are as a result of inflammation and stress accelerates this process.

- Chronic stress, reduces mental flexibility.
- Chronic stress results in changes to the brain structures.
- Certain areas the brain shrink but in other areas of the brain such as the amygdala – (which is an organ responsible for fear and anxiety) the brain cells grow, actually grow and form new connections enhancing these negative emotions further.

The **good news**... if you block the stress these brain areas revert to a more normal state.

A great way to block stress is by having a regular meditation practice.

Our [current meditation course](#) is designed to assist participants to become resilient in the face of excessive life stress.