

LIFE MANAGEMENT
FOR BUSY WOMEN



I Want My Life Back

LORRAINE BOSSÉ-SMITH

CHAPTER TWO: ***I'm Not as Think as You Stressed I am!***

"Death is not the greatest loss in life.

The greatest loss is what dies inside of us while we live."

-Dr. Norman Cousins-



As a society, the pace of life is moving along faster and faster. Almost everything can be obtained through a drive through window now...alcohol and prescription drugs! We are constantly bombarded by noise and media messages...even our cell phones now get spam. The only time we seem to slow down is when we sleep...even then, some choose to "power sleep!" Just reading that probably makes your heart race; I know typing it does for me! Here are some tell-tail signs that you are stressed to the max:

- Everyone around you has an attitude problem
- You're using your cellular phone to dial up every bumper sticker that says, "How's my driving? Call 1-800..."
- Everyone's head looks like an invitation to batting practice
- Everyone seems to have just landed here from outer space
- You're sure that everyone is scheming to drive you crazy
- The ibuprofen bottle is empty, and you bought it yesterday!

Ha! In all seriousness, though, all this madness has to stop or we are going to drop dead!

We are seeing more and more illness, and I believe stress is the culprit. I brought stress

up immediately in this book (the Introduction) because it is typically the root of our unhappiness. Whether poor time/event management or emotional challenges is our issue, we *will* feel stressed. I wanted you to have a foundation about stress before we tackled it here. And often times, we must understand our pain before we can prepare ourselves to fight it. I don't want to focus on the negative consequences of stress in this chapter. You aren't where you want to be, and you know it. Hopefully you did learn some things about where you could end up if you don't make necessary changes soon and that motivated you to get serious. I do want this chapter to be encouraging and inspiring for you. The last thing you need when feeling stress is more stress! So, I am going to throw out a lot of ways for you to manage your stress better. I'm sure nothing new is on the pages that follow, but my prayer is that how I have presented them to you will make a positive impact. And, I believe you are ready for a change, otherwise you wouldn't be reading this book.

*“Our dilemma is that we hate change and love it at the same time;
what we want is for things to remain the same but get better.”*

-Sydney Harris-



Again, try some things and see what works best for you. Out of all the ideas I provide, something will work for you. Personally, I love a hot bath. Typically, no problem is so big that I can't soak it away. My favorite, all-time greeting card is one that says on the outside: "When I'm stressed, I take a nice, hot bubble bath." The inside message reads: "I've been in here since last Thursday!"

Keep Your Sense of Humor

Our mothers were right: laughing IS the best medicine! Usually, though, our sense of humor is the first thing that goes when we are under pressure. In the classic movie, *Mary Poppins*, one of my favorite scenes is when Burt, played by Dick Van Dyke, sings the song “I love to laugh...loud and long and clear.” You can’t watch that part of the movie without starting to laugh yourself because laughing is contagious! So, laugh! Watch funny movies, read funny books, tell funny stories and laugh at life. Laughing brings more oxygen to your body and gets your blood flowing. We take too many things way too serious when, in reality, we should just laugh. Try it. You can’t be depressed AND happy at the same time.

Smile

Did you know that it takes twice as many muscles to frown than it does to smile? I’m all for reducing wrinkles at the same time I lower my stress. How about you? Try this: Stand up and slouch with your head down and frown. Let your arms hang like you can’t move them. How do you feel? Probably low energy and down—that’s because your body is in a negative position! Instead, now stand up nice and tall. Wave your arms around and jump for joy while you smile! Immediately you have more energy and feel better. By putting our body in a more positive position, we are setting ourselves up to feel better. Throughout the day, check yourself. If you are slouching, sit up straight.

One night driving home from work, I wondered why my rearview mirror was always off at night. Who was moving it? I then realized, as I looked at myself in the mirror, that I was sunk down in the seat and hunched over like an old man! In the morning, I sat up nice and tall. It wasn’t the mirror that moved; I wasn’t in the same

position at night because I slouched. Ironically, I would be exhausted when I arrived at home. I decided to try an experiment. I made a conscious effort to sit up straight on my car ride home at night, and you know what? I felt better...and I could use my mirror without moving it!

“Wake up with a smile and go after life...

Live it, enjoy it, taste it, smell it, feel it.”

-Joe Knapp-



Have Fun!

What does make you smile? Sadly, the things we enjoy the most are the very first things that we pull out of lives when the stuff hits the fan or things get nuts. Try to weave back in something you love...is it reading? Running? Knitting? Walking? Playing tennis? Visiting with friends? Whatever it is, make some time for it. Having fun will allow you to face the harder things of life with more enthusiasm. Visualize your energy in a cup. If you only pour out your energy, your cup will become empty rather quickly. You must do things that fill it back up. It's different for each person, but a little time spent on something you enjoy will give you extra energy to tackle something else. Everyone will win!

Give a Little

For me, I realized how important it was for me to give to others when I was going through my horrible divorce. I needed to focus on other people's problems, which in turn made me realize how insignificant mine were compared to others. Someone once told

me that if we were all to drop our troubles in to one big pile that we would probably pick our troubles back up because we would realize how much worse others have it.

Remember, God doesn't give us more than we can handle. He knows us each very well. You may be able to cope with something that would knock me to my knees, but I can deal with something that may be harder for you. All of us, though, benefit from giving back. Coke came out with a commercial that has a theme song, "Give a little love and it all comes back to you." The ad features one man showing an act of kindness to a stranger. That stranger then does something for another stranger, and it gets passed along until the very end when the first man gets blessed. It came full circle.

"It is more blessed to give than receive."

-Acts 20:35, NIV-



Be Love

I must really like the movie, *Bruce Almighty*, because I'm quoting it again. It really is funny and will make you laugh! Rent it if you haven't seen it ☺ Anyway, when God (Morgan Freeman) is talking to Bruce (Jim Carey) towards the end of the movie about life and how people can make really big messes, he reminds Bruce that each of us should "be the miracle." We shouldn't sit there and wait on God to fix it for us; instead, we should do something about it. By being "love" to other people, you are being a light to the world and representing God. God works through you and me. If we are too stressed out to care for anyone else, then we are hindering God's plan. Do something for a neighbor like bake some cookies or watch their dog. Call an elderly woman who is

lonely and invite her to lunch. The world needs love; it needs you! And by giving, you will receive.

Know Your Limits

Now on the flip side of that is making sure you understand your own limits. For some of us, this is more difficult than for others. If you tend to give until it really hurts, you might benefit from the book, *Growing Weary Doing Good?* by Karla Worley. Thinking only of others until you burn out isn't what God had in mind. Karla ended up in the hospital, and for months, she couldn't be a wife, mother, sister or friend. She learned that she had to set limits. The same is true for us, ladies. We have to know when enough is enough. What are your warning signs that you are totally spent? Do you get irritable? Are you short? Do you cry more frequently? Do you just want to sleep? Don't let it go too far but rather understand that you are just one person and can only do so much.

Protect Your Perimeter

One of my dear friends made a CD of songs for trail riding for me since we went horseback riding on our last visit together. On it was the classic song, "Don't fence me in" by Gene Autry. Think of your emotional energy as open land. If you have no fences, your energy is flowing without any restrictions. That may seem free, but it also means your door is wide open to everyone at any time. Fences serve a purpose. They keep in what we treasure and keep out what could possibly threaten us. And, it doesn't mean we don't open the gate for loved ones and friends, but we are in control of it rather than it happening to us. Does that make sense?

Maintain Margins

Another way to look at it is like a sheet of paper. If we didn't include margins when we wrote or typed, the words would literally fall off the paper. We wouldn't be able to comprehend what was being said because it didn't have any white spaces. White spaces, margins, are what give us some breathing room. Don't fill up every page so full that you don't have time to breath.

Christmas is a perfect example. It is a wonderful time of year, but often times, people fill up their schedules so tight that they lose the spirit of the holiday and get cranky. Don't let this happen for another Christmas!

Simplify

More isn't always better. Cut back on your Christmas activities during the holidays and go for quality. Do name draws for the family instead of every person and make the gift more meaningful. Create a Christmas webpage that people can access rather than writing up a huge newsletter, printing it and mailing it. Print up address labels instead of writing them out. Let technology help you simplify not only Christmas but also every day events.

*"Simplicity is an exact medium
between too little and too much."*

-Sir Joshua Reynolds-



Use Technology

Now, technology is a love/hate relationship in my opinion because I do feel it has added more stress to our life. But as I mentioned earlier, if we use it as it was intended, it

can really help us. Technology should serve us. For instance, during the dinner hour with your family, let the calls go to voice mail...that is what it is for! Train people in your life to call ahead of time before they want to visit so you can have the opportunity to say yes or no. Remember, the more in charge of your life you are, the less stress you will have from being out of control.

Set Boundaries

Speaking of saying yes and no, have you ever said “yes” to something when you really wanted to say “no”? Be honest. I think we all have. We need to learn to say what we mean and mean what we say. Period.

Say what you mean

and mean what you say

A book that has dramatically changed my life is *Boundaries* by Drs. Cloud and Townsend. The premise is that we need to set boundaries in our relationships: work, spouses, kids, family and friends. In a nutshell, when do you say yes and when do you say no? It is different for each person, and every situation is different. We must be actively involved in the process in order to prevent getting stepped on or hurt.

When we say yes when we really wanted to say no, we aren't being authentic and true to ourselves. I know saying “no” can be hard, but we can soften the blow by changing how we say it. For example, if you are called by your child's teacher at 8:00 p.m. and asked to bake and bring in 12 dozen cookies tomorrow, you could say something like, “I could help out with a dozen or two.” That doesn't sound like a no, but it is being realistic. If baking any cookie is completely out of the questions because you still have homework to do with your child, then try this on for size, “I would love to help

next time if you could give me a little more notice.” Again, this isn’t a no but a “not right now.” Wording our answer can be key to helping everyone feel okay.

Don’t Forget to Say Yes

On the extreme opposite from those who can’t say no are some people who never say yes. In fact, we can all fall into this trap when stress is high. We say no to lunch with a friend, no to a massage that we desperately need, no to a nap...no to things that make us happy. I know you can feel guilty sometimes when you do things for yourself but remember Karla...she wasn’t good for anyone when she burned out. Don’t forget to say yes to the right things that will energize you, renew you and help you manage your stress better.

*“Great things are not done by impulse,
but by a series of small things brought together.”*

-Vincent van Gogh-



Take Responsibility

Saying “yes” is really taking responsibility for *you* instead of pointing the finger at someone. If we are miserable, we really have no one to blame but ourselves. Don’t get me wrong, I know people have hurt you; I have been there. But we still have the choice as to how we will handle it. Being angry or withholding forgiveness hurts no one but us. It may feel good at the beginning, but it becomes a cancer in your body and will eat you alive.

Acknowledge what you need and go after it. No one will think less of you or consider you selfish for caring for your own health. It is the responsible thing to do! Guess what happens when you are vibrant, healthy, strong and positive? You have much more to give the world!

Shoot Straight

For those who are married, have you learned that your husband can't read your mind yet? Most people can't. It is up to us to tell them what we need...in very specific terms. How unfair is it to get upset at your mate for not doing something you need if they don't even know you need it? Don't expect your friends to come running to your aid if they don't even know you are in need. Be assertive with your needs in the sense that you speak up, in love, about what is going on and what you need.

During my abusive marriage, I didn't tell a soul what I was going through. When I announced my divorce, friends were shocked; no, they were angry. How could they be loving friends and support me when they didn't know? I got read the riot act from a few, and I learned that I have to let some people in. With your trusted family and friends, don't beat around the bush or drop hints, tell them straight up what is going on and what you need.

Be Authentic

Putting on acts doesn't do anyone any good. God made you who you are; don't be ashamed of it...flaunt it! Besides, trying to be someone else takes a lot of energy. The more you try to cover things up or be a different person, the more valuable energy you are losing. I don't know about you, but I need every bit of energy I can get my hands on!

Be true to yourself. That may mean you need to reflect on who you really are, what matters to and what you stand for, and that is okay. We can all get lost along the way, especially if you have had children. You've been a wife, a mother, a sister, a friend (back to all the hats we can wear) ...who are you for YOU?

Know Your Mission

What is your purpose? Why are you here? If you haven't asked these questions yet, you need to. God has put each of us on this planet for a purpose. This isn't your job; this is the contribution to the world that you make, no matter what your role and what you are doing. I encourage you to write up a personal mission statement that states who you are in Christ, what your purpose is and why you are here. Keep it somewhere handy. I have mine in my planner and review it often to remind myself that God has plans for me! When we are aligned with God and our mission, we become energized.

"When you discover your mission, you will feel its demand.

It will fill you with enthusiasm and a burning desire to get to work on it."

-W. Clement Stone-



Be All You Can Be!

You don't have to join the Army to be your best. Living out every day to the fullest is our gift back to God, I believe. He gives us life...what are we doing with it? Don't hold back. If you want to be silly, be silly. If you want to try something new for the sake of trying something new, go for it! We don't get any "do overs" in life. Make the most of it and experience all you can.

Breathe

All the while, though, don't forget to breathe. When things are hectic and busy, we begin to shorten our breaths and breathe shallower. This doesn't give us enough oxygen and results in fatigue. This creates a vicious cycle and can lead to sickness. Take time to breathe deep every day.

Here's a great way to practice breathing that will take your stress level down immediately (Don't try this while you are driving):

- ❑ Sit up nice and tall, shoulders back and head forward.
- ❑ Take a deep breath from all the way down in your lungs and lift your arms up to your side while you do it until they are over your head and you have counted to 10.
- ❑ Hold your breath and arms at the top for 5 seconds.
- ❑ Then, let your breath out as you lower your arms very slowly, counting to 20.
- ❑ This gives you a chance to get all the bad/stale air out and the opportunity to fill your lungs back up with clean oxygen.
- ❑ Repeat these 5 times.

How do you feel? I can almost bet that you feel better and that your tension was brought down. If you try this in bed (you can omit the arms if you are lying down), you will probably fall asleep. This beats counting sheep every time!

Rest and Recharge

Resting is vital to stress management. Our brains work hard all day long. The only time they actually get to rest is when we sleep. Even then, we can find it difficult to turn them off, can't we? Remember to breathe. A cup of Chamomile tea works great for

me right before bedtime. If you have a hot tub, try that as well. Whatever works for helping you to calm down and rest, do it before you hit the hay.

Research has found that those who sleep at least 7 to 8 hours at night are thinner than those who sleep less than 7 hours. When you don't get enough sleep, your body craves energy, and the way most people provide energy is through caffeine or sugar. The problem with these "quick fixes" is just that...they are fast to help but come crashing down just as fast. Good rest will provide your mind the strength it needs to function throughout the day without the junk!

We'll look at getting your health back in Chapter Four but give your body some time to recharge. Unlike our minds, however, our bodies can recover with a break. Stretching is an excellent way of helping the body after it has been taxed.

Renew

Don't forget your spirit through all of this. If your life has been out of control for a while, chances are that your spirit took a hit. Spend time with God...quiet, uninterrupted time just being with Him. Have a heart of gratitude for all you have and pray for those who are less fortunate.

Listen

Don't forget to listen, though. How easy it is to do all the talking. Then we wonder why God hasn't answered us. Well, He was waiting for us to shut up! Listen to His small voice. God often times isn't in the noise and activity but in a whisper.

*"Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart
and shattered the rocks before the Lord. But, the Lord was not in the wind.
After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake.*

After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire.

And after the fire came a gentle whisper.”

-1 Kings 19:12, NIV-



Reflect

In order for us to really listen, we must clear our minds. That is easier said than done with all those hats we wear! But meditation can help. Meditation is simply preparing yourself to receive from God and reflect on what He has for you. Use your breathing technique and sit somewhere warm and cozy. Be sure to allow yourself 20 to 30 minutes of uninterrupted time. Don't pray, don't talk, don't sing hymns in your head...just be.

Now I'll be honest with you, I find this extremely difficult! It takes practice, but we get points for trying. The more open and receptive we are, the less stress we will have inside of us, and the more of Him! I find that instrumental music that doesn't normally have words to it helps. Some meditate while doing yoga. Well when I do yoga, I'm busy trying not to fall over! You do what works best for you.

Be a Good Friend

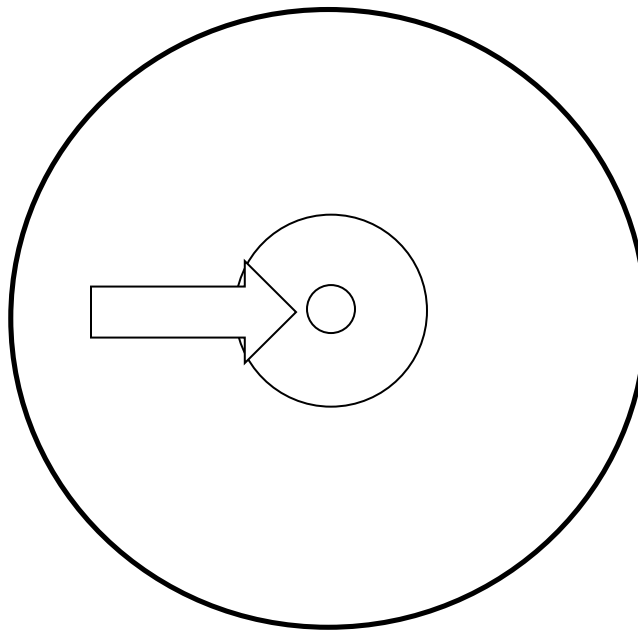
In the midst of your harried life, don't forget your friends. As I mentioned earlier, when our lives are out of control, we can say "no" to the wrong things. Be careful not to exclude your friends and *being* a friend to them. As a society, I think we are all becoming too self-centered. When I say that, I don't mean it as a cut down but as a way of living life...that we have so much going on with our life that we just don't have time

for anyone else. We can have good intentions, but we never seem to do anything about them.

Make time for people. They are what matters. Pick up the phone to cheer up a discouraged friend; go to lunch to celebrate another friend's birthday; send a funny card just to say hello to a long-distance friend--do something. Stay connected within your circle. Again, you will be blessed for it.

Circle of Influence

And lastly, I want to talk about your circle. Everyone has one. We have many things going on in our life and begin to worry and fret about them all. I want to suggest a better way to spend your energy. Take a look at the circle below. The large circle represents your Circle of Concern. It includes EVERYTHING you are concerned about: world peace, the war, starving people in Africa, Aids, killer bees, the drought, distant relatives, etc. Everything. But, you don't have any control over these.



Maybe your job is more powerful than mine. Maybe you even have top-secret clearance. But still, you can only do so much. The things in our Circle of Concerns are in God's hands, and we are called to pray about them, not be Him.

The second circle represents your Circle of Influence. These are actually things and people you do have some control over...like your family, neighborhood, community and job. You can volunteer at the local shelter serving up meals to local folks who are starving. You can vote and stay up to date on political issues. You can ensure your kids have all their shots. You can do something about your Circle of Influence, so why not spend more energy here? Spending energy worrying about what you cannot change is insane. All you will get is tired, frustrated, stressed and sick. Concentrate on what you *can* do.

Now let me ask you this: can you make your husband, kids and coworkers do exactly what you want? Not really. You can *influence* them. Because they respect, admire and love you, they will consider it. But ultimately, the decision is theirs, isn't it? Do we really have control? Trying to control the world and the people in it will wear you out. Instead, try working on the only person you have complete control over: you.

The smallest circle is saved for us. It's called: My Attitude. Work on having a positive attitude no matter what, and you can be a change agent. Just like smiles and laughs, positive attitudes are contagious.

"Attitude is the speaker of our present;

It is the prophet of our future."

-John C. Maxwell-



Kick the Stress Habit

Anything new will take a little getting used to, but I encourage you to get out of your stressed-out rut! We can get used to things being the way they are, even when we aren't happy about it. You deserve so much better, and I want you to have your life back! Start with something easy and build from there. But start. Okay?

*“You gain strength, courage and confidence by every
experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face.
You are able to say to yourself, ‘I lived through this horror;
I can take the next thing that comes along.’
You must do the thing you think you cannot do.”*

-Eleanor Roosevelt-





Lorraine Bossé-Smith is the Founder of the FIT Leader Formula™, where leadership meets wellness and equates to success! She has a unique combination of corporate experience in high-level management positions along with a wellness and fitness industry background. Coupled with her expertise as a certified human behavior, motivators/driving forces, and emotional intelligence consultant, she is a powerhouse of energy, ideas, inspiration, and solutions whether she is speaking, training, consulting, coaching, or authoring books.

Personally, Lorraine has not only overcome but conquered two incurable diseases. She knows firsthand the importance of balancing the four pillars of wellness: mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual health. It is these pillars that are the foundation of her FIT Leader Formula™. Her desire is simply to improve the quality of people's lives!

By helping individuals understand, embrace, and live a healthier life style, she increases employee retention, reduces company's healthcare costs, boosts productivity, decreases absenteeism, and solidifies a strong bottom line.

Lorraine is the author of eight published books, (*Leveraging Your Leadership Style with Study Guide*, *I Want My Life Back*, *Leveraging Your Communication Style*, *Leveraging Your Leadership Style* (and workbook), *Fit Over 50*, *Finally FIT* and *A Healthier, Happier You*). Lorraine writes on assignments for numerous print and online magazines and has had countless articles appear in national magazines and newspapers. She has shared her heart with radio listeners across the country and has been on live television shows.

Lorraine is a Certified Professional Behavior Analyst (CPBA) and Certified Professional Motivators Analyst (CPMA). She is an advanced personal trainer, and listed in the 2000 *Who's Who of Entrepreneurs* and the 2005 *Who's Who Among Female Executives*. She holds a B.S. in Business Administration with minors in Marketing and Communications.

Let her transform your life today! www.lorrainebossesmith.com

DISCLAIMER

This sample chapter is not designed to diagnose or treat any ailments, syndromes or diseases. Readers are advised to seek professional medical care. Neither the author nor publisher assumes responsibility for incidents that arise from following the advice provided.

COPYRIGHT INFORMATION

This sample chapter or parts thereof may not be reproduced in any form, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording or otherwise—without prior written permission of the author and publisher as provided by United States of America copyright law.

Copyright © 2017 Lorraine Bossé-Smith/The Total You.
All rights reserved.

Lorraine Bossé-Smith



www.lorrainebosse-smith.com

Books by Lorraine Bossé-Smith

Customize your fitness program to your unique personality and finally get the results you seek! This book is Fast, Fun, Friendly and Factual!

<https://www.lorrainebosse-smith.com/store/#!/Finally-Fit/p/8193020/category=1894665>

Learn the truth about the aging process and how you can maximize your health at any age. It's NEVER too late to get in shape, and this book will get you there.

<https://www.lorrainebosse-smith.com/store/#!/Fit-Over-50/p/8193018/category=1894665>

Manage your stress and create more balance.

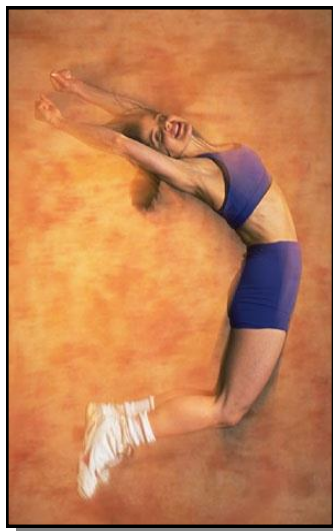
<https://www.lorrainebosse-smith.com/store/#!/A-Healthier-Happier-You/p/8193024/category=1894672>

This is not a typical leadership book. You will discover your specific leadership approach and learn how to influence others.

<https://www.lorrainebosse-smith.com/store/#!/Leveraging-Your-Leadership-Style-with-Study-Guide/p/54943101/category=1894667>

Build bridges, not walls, by leveraging your communication style. Reduce conflict, stress, and improve ALL relationships.

<https://www.lorrainebosse-smith.com/store/#!/Leveraging-Your-Communication-Style/p/8193016/category=1894667>



I Want My Life Back

**Sample Chapter
FREE**

Lorraine Bossé-Smith

Transforming Lives Since 1996



3120 West Carefree Highway
Suite #1-617
Phoenix, AZ 85086
(623) 582-1578

www.lorrainebosse-smith.com