

Beating stress may be seven steps away

Lawrence resident writes book to help manage daily pressures

By Jeff Lipton

Writing a 240-page book on stress management in just about two months may seem like a difficult chore, but not if you are longtime Lawrence resident Debbie Mandel, who has become an expert on the topic.

Mandel, a 20-year resident of Lawrence, wrote a book entitled, "Addicted to Stress: A Woman's 7-Step Program to Reclaim Joy and Spontaneity in Life." She authored the book to help men, as well as women, cope with the everyday pressures of life and to not allow stress to rule their life.

"It comes with 10 years of experience and research," she said. "I read medical research [on the topic] every day."

"It's very exciting," said Mandel of her third book, which hit the bookstands in early September. "Addicted to stress" has gotten such phenomenal endorsements."

Her main theme that she underlines throughout the book is that people simply have to learn to relax. But for many, that may be much easier said than done. That's why Mandel has produced a seven-step program guaranteed to beat stress.

"People are uncomfortable with quiet time and they don't realize it. They are running on empty," said Mandel, adding that it's hurting

their health, vitality and productivity. "It's a problem if we lose a sense of our identity.

"We're so busy being over-doers at home and at work. We view all relationships as accomplishments."

Mandel has become an expert on the topic of stress management over the past 10 years, hosting a radio talk show and running workshops. "This book encompasses all my work over the decade," Mandel said. "The book is a culmination of all my workshops."

She also contends that stress is contagious. "If the woman of the house is stressed, then everyone around her is stressed," Mandel said. "Her husband and children are stressed. Sometimes we don't realize that we are stress junkies, uncomfortable with quiet time.

"Stress will always land on your doorstep, but you don't have to open the door. My program will show you how to do that," added Mandel, who is a stress management lecturer and works out of her Lawrence home.

Mandel said the main triggers for stress include environmental factors such as pollutants and chemicals, terrorism in the wake of 9/11, physiological stress such as those caused by bacteria and viruses, and internally-driven stress such as perfectionism.

"There are three words that can change



DEBBIE MANDEL

Local author

your life: Lower your expectations," she said.

"This is more than stress that we're talking about, this is addicted to stress," she said. "Everybody is so busy that they're not sleeping. We are on constant high-alert. We have to learn to relax.

"Some people need the drama to get going," she said. "They can't live in quiet."

She said she provides several suggestions in the book on how to counter the effects of stress, such as eating complex carbohydrates or instant pick-me-ups.

Exercise is another stress-beater, said Mandel, adding that "activity alleviates anxiety. My seven steps will lead you to a way to navigate your life."

She guaranteed that her seven-step program she outlines in her book will make a big difference in terms of stress for those who follow it.

In the two months she took to write the book, she spent eight to 10 hours a day working on it. "It was a work of passion," she said. "I was focused and energy-driven by the creative process."

Her hardcover, which costs \$22.95, is available at Barnes and Noble or Amazon.com.

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