Breaking Point

In small doses, stress can help you stay focused, energetic and alert. But too much of it can harm your health and life.

August 27, 2013 By Kate Ferguson

We are stressed out. Results of the American Psychological Association's 2012 annual stress survey show that the number of people reporting extreme stress remains high. Eighty percent said that their stress level has actually increased or stayed the same in the past year.

"Stress is the epidemic of the 21st century," says Kathleen Hall, PhD, MDiv. Nicknamed "the Stress Queen," Hall is an internationally recognized lifestyle expert on this subject as well as on work-life balance aided by "mindful living." She's also the founder of the Atlanta-based Stress Institute.

"Stress can be a catalyst for living a life of success or destruction," Hall says. "Some people become presidents or Nobel Peace Prize winners or discover cures for diseases when stressed, while others, when stressed, may get a disease or spiral into destructive behaviors like alcoholism, anger problems, anxiety disorders or even depression."

To beat the pressures of stress, Hall suggests that people take time for S-E-L-F care: Choose to be serene, to exercise, to surround yourself with love and to eat nourishing foods.

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http://beta.docker.realhealthmag.com/article/extreme-stress-24445-4165