

‘A Life Less Stressed is your ultimate go-to guide to health and wellbeing. Grab this book with both hands, read it, keep it close, and lean on it as you would your best mate. It won’t let you down!’

Deborah Hutton

SCRIBE

(SYNOPSIS)

A Life Less Stressed

*The five pillars of
health and wellness*



Dr Ron Ehrlich

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SYNOPSIS

A LIFE LESS STRESSED **the 5 pillars of health and wellness**

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When I tell people I have written a book called *A Life Less Stressed* almost everyone sighs knowingly and says, “I need to read a book like that”. I hope they do. I wish I could say the book is autobiographical, it’s not. It’s aspirational, now more than ever. During the writing of the book I got a diagnosis of prostate cancer. There’s a strong family history and, given what I have learnt over the years, it was hardly a surprise, but I’ll admit I was disappointed.

So, by identifying the problems we face in health, and outlining the simple steps to better health, the book became very personal and, in a way, autobiographical. It’s an exploration of the my own interest in health, professionally and personally, after almost 40 years of clinical practice as a holistic dentist and a health advocate for personal empowerment.

Stress and Inflammation - in health and disease

If there were two words to summarise the health challenges we face in our modern world, they would be “stress” and “inflammation”. Ironically, both have played a critical role in keeping us alive and healthy for hundreds of thousands of years.

Stress has always been our first response to danger, diverting energy from our digestive system to our muscles, shutting down our immune system to further conserve energy for the “fight or flight” response, and causing us to think more with our reflexes than our higher, more logical and considered parts of the brain.

Inflammation is also our body's first response to a physical trauma or an infection as our bloodstream immediately starts a process of defence and healing.

The problem is that today we are chronically stressed, and chronic inflammation is the common denominator in all chronic degenerative diseases. Chronic stresses help perpetuate chronic inflammation so something must change.

But first, how are we doing?

Our health system is in crisis. While we congratulate ourselves on living longer, the incidence of chronic disease is rising, and it is not just amongst the elderly. Far from it. Children today are suffering from record levels of allergies, asthma, ADHD and autism. The incidence of childhood cancer, diabetes, obesity and depression has more than doubled in the last 20 years. Children are the “canaries in the coalmine”.

How are we doing as adults? Heart disease is still our number one killer, with cancer coming in a close second. Even allowing for the increase in life expectancy, the incidence of cancer has increased by almost 30% since the “war on cancer” was declared in 1975. One in 2 men and 1 in 3 women will contract cancer by age 60. I'd be surprised if anyone reading this book didn't have at least one close relative or friend who has not had such a diagnosis.

Autoimmune disease, in which the body attacks itself, has become an ever-increasing problem. Depending on genetic disposition, it can affect the gut, thyroid, nervous system and joints. Type 2 diabetes and obesity are also at epidemic proportions and predicted to rise.

The health system is overwhelmed as it struggles to manage chronic disease. There has never been a more important time to take control of your own health.

Over the last 40 years, public health messages have been confusing and contradictory, making it difficult for someone who wants to take care of their health to navigate. these

messages. We are bombarded by advertising campaigns masquerading as public health messages and it is difficult to discern one from the other.

Health has become a commodity generating billions of dollars for global food and pharmaceutical companies. The marketing of “health” has co-opted professional health organisations, university research scientific publishing, regulatory bodies and government policy that seek to influence well-meaning practitioners seeking “evidence-based” treatments.

If you have to confront a health crisis, western medicine offers superior care. Yet the healthcare system lurches between crisis and chronic disease management. There are constant warnings that the financial costs are unsustainable. This is quite separate to the human cost and the impact on realising our potential as individuals and as a community.

Chronic disease management may be an excellent economic model, but it falls well short on measures of health and wellness. We need a model of health that makes sense of the many stresses we are exposed to in modern life, and that also offers a framework on which to build health and wellness into life.

A Life Less Stressed – the 5 pillars to health and wellness is a call to action to take control of your health and to be the best you can be. The book distils my expertise from over 35 years of clinical experience in holistic healthcare from a unique oral health perspective. It incorporates current research with over 300 references, key findings from interviews and discussions with some of the world’s leading key opinion leaders in health and wellness, as well as my own personal health journey.

Part 1 - Understanding Public Health Messages

- **Defining an integrative holistic approach** that acknowledges while the best of western medicine is just what you want in a crisis situation, when it comes to chronic diseases we have a problem. Rather than a symptom-based chronic disease/pharmacological management model, an integrative approach understands the complexity of our modern world and focuses on the causes of chronic disease and the steps required to restore balance, harness the body's amazing recuperative powers and go on to achieve and maintain good health. This is a patient-centred approach to healthcare. In order to fix something, we need to know what the problems are. An integrative holistic approach suggests logical, achievable and sustainable steps to recognise what has the potential to stress your health, avoid a crisis, fulfill your potential and be well.
- **The influence of global companies**, specifically the role of food and pharmaceutical industries on governments, regulatory bodies, refereed journals, evidence-based medicine and professional organisations. Health messages have been confusing and often contradictory. Understanding the economics and influencers on those messages is an important first step in taking control of your own health. With the focus on an "evidence-based" approach to healthcare it is worth noting that the vast majority of research is actually funded by the food and pharmaceutical industry. Research shows that industry-funded studies are between 4 and 20 times more positive about their prescription medications than independent studies on the same drug.

Part 2 - Redefining Stress

- **Emotional stress** - While we may not be able to change the world around us, we can certainly change our attitude to the world. This is our most powerful tool. I describe exciting new research that shows our attitude to emotional stress, and how we approach it, has *the* greatest impact on how that stress affects health.
- **Environmental stress** - In hunter-gatherer times, this meant a threat from predators such as lions or bears or the shortage of food and water. Today, environmental stress is from chemicals found in food, clothing, furniture and personal care products. It includes electromagnetic radiation from mobile phones, Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, air travel, x-ray/CAT scans/MRI, along with the human impact on our climate, land and oceans. Building sustainability into our cities and our rural environment is essential. I outline 10 toxic truths of life in our modern world. Ultimately, we should demand a right not to be poisoned, eliminate fossil fuels, encourage clean, renewable, sustainable energy, eliminate toxins from the food chain, test all chemicals for safety, train scientists to “first, do no harm”, reward industry by buying “green”; and practise zero waste. Remember: we are all connected, so we are all affected.
- **Nutritional stress** - From food and fluids we consume. Food has the potential to cause disease but also has the potential to heal. I outline 8 key problems to help you wade through the avalanche of health “advice”, which have the potential to affect our immune system and impact on our physical, mental and emotional health, resulting in the epidemic of chronic degenerative diseases we are experiencing today. These include: our relationship with fat and the demonisation of cholesterol, the use of seed oils and trans fats, too much sugar, high fructose corn syrup and the effect on insulin and leptin, modern yield high gluten grains and the way they are processed, the ethical, environmental and health implications of industrialised meat production, lack of fibre and the gut biome, additives, preservatives, pesticides, the reduction of micronutrients and the demonisation of salt, overconsumption of alcohol.

- **Postural stress** – our human journey over millions of years has involved movement, from four to two legs. As hunters and gathers we moved to survive. The agricultural and industrial revolutions introduced new, more repetitive movements, but again we needed to move in some way to survive. The technological revolution has all but eliminated the need for movement to survive. While balancing our head on our shoulders poses big enough challenges, we seem to be spending even more time today looking down at our phones, challenging our posture even more. I outline how dental factors affect breathing which results in a head posture that impacts our already-strained upright posture. We now find *lack* of movement threatening our ability to survive, and when combined with our head looking down at phones, sitting, the way we walk and stand, the position in which we sleep, and even the way we sit on the toilet, it all amounts to what I will define as “postural stress” which has the ability to compromise your body physically, mentally and emotionally.
- **Dental stress** – The eyes may be the windows to the soul but the mouth is the gateway to the body and very revealing of health. The oral cavity is the beginning of the digestive and respiratory tracts with the shape and health of the mouth directly impacting on eating and breathing. The mouth is the site of two of the most common infections – tooth decay and gum disease. Because of tooth decay, dentists implant more foreign material into people’s bodies than all other health professions combined. It’s also the most sensitive part of the body with 30-40% of the body’s sensory and motor input occurs in the orofacial region. Its interaction with the autonomic nervous system is significant and often overlooked.

Part 3 - The 5 Pillars of Health that have the potential to build us up and maintain us.

- **Sleep** – the most important part of the day, affecting physical, mental and emotional wellbeing. It's the foundation for any wellness journey. It's not just the quantity of sleep that's important but the quality; how well you breathe while you sleep is the key. What defines a good night's sleep? It's both quantity and quality. I outline 12 reasons for poor sleep and the 10 steps to sleeping well: prioritise, routine, light and electromagnetic radiation, noise, food and drink, temperature, sleeping position, environmental toxins, be positive, sex. I outline some sleep problems that can actually be life threatening.
- **Breathing** – is something we give little thought to. What are the implications of breathing through your mouth or breathing through your nose on body chemistry and posture? Breathing well is an important regulator of a healthy body chemistry and central health and wellness. I outline 5 steps to breathing well.
- **Nutrition** – drawing on ancient wisdom, free of commercial interests, this is central to maintaining good health in a sustainable, manageable, ethical and healthy way. I explore 10 guiding principles on how to eat well.
- **Movement** – It's surprising how little you need to do to make a big difference, from changing your working and sleeping positions to incorporating functional movements and weight-bearing exercise into your daily life. This positively impacts on every health indicator and treatment outcome.
- **Thought** – from mindfulness and meditation to exploring the PERMA model: Positive emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning and Acknowledgment; the importance of expressing gratitude. The power of the mind is our greatest tool.

A Life Less Stressed – the 5 pillars to health and wellness is a handbook to explore and understand the many challenges that face us in the modern world and a remarkably simple blueprint for health and wellness, empowering you to take control, build resilience and be the best you can be.

Endorsements

"We all know that to attain good health and longevity we must strive for a more balanced approach to life. Over the years I've taken a deeper interest in all aspects of wellbeing, physical and emotional and can fully appreciate how challenging it can be to achieve that day to day. Its partially why I started my own platform; balancebydeborahhutton.com.au, I wanted to talk to the experts and learn more.

Ron Ehrlich is one of those experts I want to drill-down on and extract as much information as possible, as his knowledge is encyclopaedic! A Life Less Stressed offers a truly comprehensive look into every aspect of our wellbeing. In a world where we have an abundance of external factors impacting our health, this book delivers insightful, holistic understanding about every single aspect of our personal health. It's your ultimate go-to guide!

As a reference point, I believe it extends its knowledge not only to those in the health and wellness profession but importantly, people like me who take a keen interest in living the best life they can, armed with the right information to guide them on their journey.

Grab this book with both hands, READ IT, keep it close and lean on it as you would your best mate. It won't let you down!"

Deborah Hutton - author, television presenter, magazine editor, ambassador, entrepreneur & speaker



"You are to be congratulated, the book is excellent. It is a really thorough walk through the whole of holistic Medicine. And it is very well written and accessible to any intelligent reader.

What I like in particular is how you have covered all of the "Big Areas" such as Evidence BASED MEDICINE, and question matters like "how Independent" an Independent Opinion really is. You also make clear how adopting a simple, chemical free, less profit-driven approach to life would be better for everyone. Better economically, better socially, better for our Health and better for our stress levels.

But this book is no simple opinion piece. Everything that you say is either backed up in the text, or with references that people can look up. There are so many quotable quotes, and so many vital names get a mention. People like Weston A. Price, researchers from the University of Sheffield, and the W.H.O serve as examples.

The section on Dentistry is no less than one would expect from a truly Holistic Dentist, but again this is no mere polemic. It is full of helpful and accessible data about teeth, biting chewing and segues nicely into the discussion on posture. In so doing you are at all times addressing the Underlying issue of how we can become stressed

If there are any doubters, they only have to check the references given in this well written book. Quite a 'tour d'Force' Well done."

Dr Carole Hungerford, author of Good Health in the 21st Century & integrative medical practitioner



"Thoroughly researched and thought provoking... Dr Ehrlich's five pillars are the real key to reducing the ongoing carnage from modern disease that have strained and almost broken our current inappropriately named 'health system'."

Dr Ross Walker - author, cardiologist and host of national radio program Healthy Living