

Quick Fixes: Happiness in a Bottle

By Priya Florence Shah

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This is the age of the Quick Fix - the magic bullets that claim to take away our sorrows, our tiredness, our sadness.

You need look no farther than your mailbox to see the range of remedies - prescription drugs and supplements - being plugged for everything from stress to low energy.

In the age of modern-day stresses, of recessions and depressions, most people find it hard to resist the cure-all promises of "safe and natural" products.

From those that claim to calm a hyperactive child, to those that give you a much-needed energy boost, or revive a sagging love life, quick fixes are everywhere.

And the fact that the people selling them are raking in a fortune shows that there is indeed a great demand for these products.

There's no doubt that supplements provide genuine relief to those who suffer from organic disease. And some may provide a 'safer' alternative for those who cannot tolerate prescriptions.

But with more and more people reaching for a "safe" pill just to get through the day, taking supplements to cope with life is becoming the norm rather than the exception.

Most of us simply don't have the time or the inclination to address the root cause of our stress. Besides it costs considerably more to consult a therapist than to buy a bottle of kava-kava from an online store.

But quick fixes are a short term solution. And by using them as coping strategies, we risk slipping into a never-ending cycle of psychological dependence, while ignoring the root cause of our stress.

Stress - resulting from the way we react to situations, from the emotions, behaviour patterns and habits that are part of our mental makeup.

Changing the attitudes or habits of a lifetime is never easy. We must find coping strategies - support from friends, family, community, religion, spirituality - and our own inner strength.

We need to use whatever works best for us, to avoid slipping back into the cycle of stress and despair.

The solutions are often there right in front of us - if we care enough to look for them. You could find them in a book, a church, a family reunion, a new love.

Often the answers are right there in your mind, but you have to CHOOSE to accept them.

Solving a problem takes three conscious steps: Awareness: Realising that we have a problem
Acceptance: That we have to do something about it, and Action: Taking concrete steps to resolve it

Once you start to eliminate the root cause of your stress, you'll find yourself reaching less and less for that magic pill, that upper, that quick fix.

A pill might give you a few moments of bliss. But when you eliminate the attitudes and behaviour that keep you down, the peace it brings will last you a lifetime.

The inspiration for this article was the book "The Emotion Prism: How To Be Happy, When You'd Rather Be Sad!" by Dr. Mani Sivasubramaniam, a paediatric heart surgeon and internet marketer who shares his simple coping strategies for life's problems. Check it out at:

<http://www.emotionprism.com/>

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