



February 2018

EMPOWERING TIMES



THINKING ALOUD

Living with Stress
Jay



PODIUM

Sushil Eapen
Founder & CEO
Silver Oak Heath



WE RECOMMEND

Santro: The Car that Built a Company
B V R Subbu



WONDER WOMEN

Alpa Parmar
Founder & Director
Parmar's OurStories Media and
Entertainment Pvt Ltd, Pune



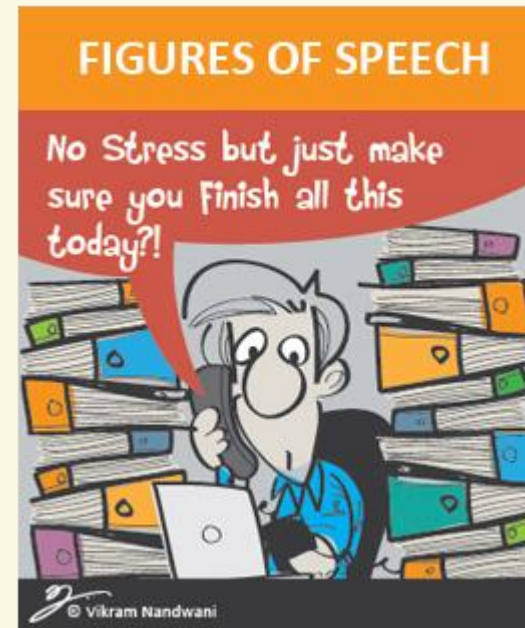
Dear Reader,

Amongst professionals today, the word 'stress' is a term that pops up every now and then. Stress is immediately associated with negativity and panic. Blame it on the fast track life, technology perhaps, or even the need to do whatever it takes to be ahead of the competition.

It is a fact that life is going to be full of those stressful moments. The International Labour Organization has also reported that workers, both in developed and in developing nations are facing increasing stress levels at the workplace on account of global challenges, climate change, political concerns, personal and professional challenges such as health issues, job changes and organizational restructuring.

So how does one cope with increasing stress levels? A recent Harvard Review article emphasized the importance to reframe how one thinks about stress. The same energy wasted by feeling stressed can be used to handle or better prepare for the task at hand. The article also pointed out that managing stress over a long-term requires cultivating resilience skills before seeking external solutions. Living in a fast-paced, digitally focused world often means sacrificing the ability to step back. While there are many options available to cope with stress, it's best to go back to basics! Allow time to connect outside your work place, may be even 'log out' from technology for a while, eat healthy, exercise, or even take up a hobby to de-stress!

This month in ET, we throw light on **Coping with Stress** - a topic that we are familiar with and yet are unable to inculcate in our daily lives. On the **Podium**, **Sushil Eapen**, Founder & CEO of Silver Oak Health, addresses the challenges of the growing mental health concerns amongst professionals. In the **Thinking Aloud** section, **Jay** gives his opinion on coping with stress. In the **We Recommend** segment, we review **B. V. R. Subbu's** book, **Santro: The Car that Built a Company**, an insightful read of the journey behind what made Santro, a car that stood out among the Indian masses. In the **Wonder Women** segment, we ask **Alpa Parmar**, owner of Pune based, Parmar's OurStories Media and Entertainment Pvt Ltd, about her quest in the world of entrepreneurship.



In **Figures of Speech**, **Vikram's** toon tries to cope with his stress levels!

As always, we value your opinion, so do let us know how you liked this issue. To visit our previous issues you can visit the Resources section on the website or simply [Click Here](#). You can also follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#) & [Google+](#) - where you can join our community to continue the dialogue with us!

THINKING ALOUD

Living with Stress

- Jay

Is stress a twentieth century phenomenon? One may argue that the post-Second World War industrial world has given rise to this urban phenomenon. However, biologically the fight or flight challenge has been an element of man's existence from the early days. Arguably, this has been one of the reasons why we have survived from our caveman days to the multiple tumults of history.

So, what is it about the twentieth century (and this century too for that matter) that has suddenly made this a matter of concern? Rapid urbanization is a key phenomenon of modern times, accompanied by the industrial boom. Surviving in this new 'jungle' requires major adjustment in lifestyle, and not everyone has the ability to do so. Added to this is the frenetic pace of life that inexorably seems to be accelerating every year. No surprise then, that we know that many echo the sentiment of the old song, 'Stop the world & get me off'!

Who is increasing the pace? Who is at the controls of this runaway vehicle? No one really knows but perhaps it is in the competitive nature of mankind that we will continue to press the pedal, and nowhere is this more visible than at the modern workplace. While manufacturing units are no longer hell-holes of days past (not that sweatshops are totally absent in some parts of the globe), conventions of the International Labour Organizations

(ILO) are largely respected and implemented in letter & spirit in most places.

Yet the pace of change is more intense than ever with technology being the primary driver. This double-edged sword has made life pleasurable but the presence of machines and gadgets around us has also been a bane to those of us who have lost control of these tools. Take the ubiquitous cellphone as the simplest example. At one level that device has brought all of us closer by destroying geographical distance than ever before in history. And yet, many of us have become lonely creatures lost in the virtual labyrinth of the Appworld that is more appealing than direct human interaction.

The truth is we have done it to ourselves. Psychologists tell us that depression is more pervasive than we care to admit. And, the pursuit of happiness has become synonymous with the pursuit of materialism - and deep regret at the end of life's journey. Families have been redefined - with parenting a difficult optional chore that those who choose, often regret doing so.

Stress has also created some new industries! Apart from the pharmaceutical businesses who offer pills for all mental and physical ailments, there is the religion business which is thriving in all continents. Self-styled solace peddlers of every religious hue market spiritual solutions to relieve the yawning gap in people's lives, in a manner that would put multi-level marketers to shame.

While there is no panacea available, a review of popular literature seems to offer some standard tips to cope with stressful living in today's world. Here are the top three that I would prescribe:

- Enjoy the outdoors: Rather than being cooped in an urban apartment and grinding out your existence in a cubicle at work, choose to go outdoors periodically (if not daily) not just for exercise but also to be rejuvenated & uplifted by nature;
- Set goals carefully: Build in stretch but do not let greed be your driver. There is much to be said for balance in life!
- Diet: Get a handle of what you consume - as you will be defined by it. Why lose control and then seek medical help?

Not easy to do all the above, I daresay. So, my final thought takes me to the lines from a John Lennon song where he reminds us that 'Life is what happens to you when you are busy making other plans'.

Forget stress - live today!

[back to top ^](#)

PODIUM

Interview with Sushil Eapen Founder & CEO, Silver Oak Health



Sushil Eapen is the Founder and CEO of Silver Oak Health. Formerly, he was the Country Manager (India) of Pearson Clinical and Talent Assessment, a global publisher of psychological assessments and interventions. He was instrumental in establishing Pearson's Clinical Assessment business in India. At Pearson, Sushil led a team of Sales, Marketing, Product Development, Information Technology and Customer Relationship Managers. He is passionate about the delivery of mental health services using digital technology. He is networked with a large number of mental health professionals in India and abroad. Sushil is also the Founder and Managing Director of Vega, an assessment solutions firm in Bangalore. He earned an MS from Kansas State University and received an MBA in Marketing from Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University, USA.

ET: What is the current state of mental health services in India versus those available in other developed countries?

SE: According to the National Mental Health Survey conducted in 2015-2016, every sixth Indian needs mental health assistance. Mental health problems are more in the age group of people between 30 and 49 years and particularly acute in urban areas of the country. In a country where suicides have just been decriminalised recently, we have a long way to go in bringing about awareness of the importance of mental health, the different modalities of support available to take adequate steps in preventing stress and learning to offer adequate support to people with stress related challenges.

ET: What are the challenges in addressing the growing mental health concerns amongst professionals today?

SE: The challenge with working with professionals is that their work life is so hectic that they are unable to set aside time for themselves. This is also coupled with a lack of understanding about the importance of mental health and the role it plays in living more meaningful and purposeful lives. The stigma on people who seek help of a psychologist to deal with such issues, the dearth of trained psychologists, the travel time and cost of seeing a therapist in his/her clinic are also challenges that need to be considered before a program of mental health is introduced to professionals.

ET: Technology has been one of the major reasons for increasing stress levels. How have therapists leveraged technology/internet/social media to address stress?

SE: Most therapy traditionally happens face to face and in India most people believe that this is the only way it should be done. However with the advent of the internet, therapists now find video sessions over Skype to be equally effective as face to face. The dearth of mental health services around the country makes online counselling the only option for some parts of the country. Several online courses are available today to develop coping skills, learn psychological concepts and focus on personal growth giving people many avenues to access support from.

ET: What are the various opportunities or steps that stakeholders in the healthcare sector can undertake to address stress related concerns in India?

SE: The major players in the health sector aim to make people aware of mental health and the importance of it by educating them through global campaigns on social media. They also aim at making psychotherapeutic services available in areas that are not traditionally associated with mental health like corporate offices and

schools. They play a major role in increasing awareness of mental health, de-stigmatising and empowering a whole population of people affected by mental health issues.

ET: Can you please tell us about your company, Silver Oak Health, in particular, the online Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) solution?

SE: Silver Oak Health is based in Bangalore and uses intellectual property from best known Clinical Psychologists and research institutions around the world to develop digital solutions in India, and provides affordable solutions to customers worldwide. In August 2016, the company launched its first online solution for solving stress related challenges among people using cognitive behavioural therapy. The product is launched under the brand name Stress Control Online (www.Stresscontrolonline.com) The company also launched an online Health related Quality of Life assessment to collect physical functioning, emotional wellness and social functioning scores of people in India through the site www.silveroakqol.org. Over 6,000 people from across India have since taken this assessment, and the company is developing algorithms to predict stress in people's lives. Chronic stress leads to health and behavioural problems, and early detection will help people make lifestyle changes, as well as reduce healthcare costs.

In 2017, Silver Oak Health launched a comprehensive Employee Wellbeing and Assistance Program (EWAP) for helping corporate customers. This round the year program offers employees phone counselling, Stress Control Online, and mindfulness workshops. Several large corporations are using various Silver Oak's EWAP services for their employees in India. Silver Oak Health is also working with Insurance companies to offer its solutions to corporate customers.

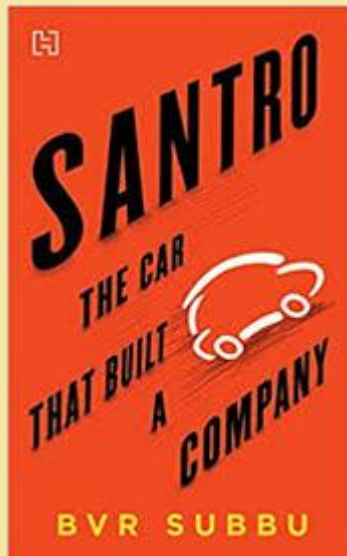
In August 2017, Silver Oak Health launched a Mindfulness App called Tranquil, India's first Mindfulness App to help people all over the world practice Mindfulness and manage stress in their lives. Mindfulness is a popular stress management strategy around the world and there is scientific evidence to indicate its efficacy as a strategy for improving coping skills.

The company is marketing its Resilience and Mindfulness based employee wellbeing and assistance programs to corporate customers. Most companies are reporting higher employee engagement with these programs thus making better return for investment.

WE RECOMMEND

Santro: The Car that Built a Company

- B. V. R. Subbu



"Manufacturing a car is a simple business, really. You take some metal, add three parts of engineering, one part of artistry, stir in a lot of passion, and proceed to craft it with care. You pour in the requisite magic with some deft word-smithy, and for garnish you add a little bit of luck."

As simple and as enticing as it sounds, the car business is not as simple as you think and yet there is no business like car business! B. V. R. Subbu, who started his career at Tata Motors and slowly climbed the corporate ladder to become the President at Hyundai Motor India (HMI), takes us through a journey of how this small car, the Santro, made a large impact on the Indian population.

Through the book, the author, who was responsible for much of Santro's success, discusses the conceptualisation of the car, its design and eventually its development and manufacturing in India to battle out the then competitor, Maruti Suzuki. He also pens a riveting account of how the Sunshine car was able to gain a foothold in the Indian car market while overcoming the many challenges of

introducing a new product in a new market at a time when the sector was heavily dominated by the government owned Maruti.

From the beginning, HMI got its act right. What HMI lacked in, it made up through deft decision-making and 'common sense'. The author points to the consultant-driven approach of foreign brands and unlike other foreign automotive players, the company decided to locally procure components rather than importing them which gave them an edge in terms of costing. HMI also got its strategy right when it came to competing against Maruti Udyog Limited (MUL); while HMI imitated several aspects of MUL's strategy, they did it better and more efficiently than MUL itself. The result: HMI sold a million units of its Sunshine car in its segment, and became profitable from the very first year of full operations! A year after its launch, it faced strong headwinds from Tata Motors' brand Indica, but it managed to grow its customer base, as Indica found favour mostly in the taxi market.

The book recounts how Hyundai with its leadership in technology and combative communication overtook competitive automotive brands. Subbu recalls how tough HMI found to raise funds with its Korean background and the challenges he faced including the marketing campaign that featured Santro's brand ambassador, Shah Rukh Khan.

Readers are given an insight of various aspects of the business - pricing, brand positioning, dealer selection, vendor development, media relations and how a car model can help shape up corporate identity. Can one 'do a Santro' all over again? The author is convinced that while the methods of yesterday may not be relevant tomorrow, the building blocks of success remain unaltered: An organization with the humility to listen; the commitment to treat Indian consumers on par with consumers in terms of product technology and quality; the long range vision to invest in creating true capability in India; a strong emphasis on ethical conduct and transparency towards all stakeholders, and of course, a little bit of luck!

B. V. R. Subbu leaves no stone unturned when it comes to highlighting some of the dubious practices in the industry and several missed opportunities for the introduction of world-class automotive technology in the country. Automotive enthusiasts would simply love this book, while for those of you who would like to know how Santro left its mark, just hop on and take a ride!

[back to top ^](#)

WONDER WOMEN

Alpa Parmar

Founder & Director - Parmar's OurStories Media and Entertainment, Pune



Parmar's OurStories Media and Entertainment is a Pune based registered media firm which began as a heartbeat, a growing urge, a burning desire of Alpa Parmar to make sure women had a voice that they could call their own.

Her media company acts as a platform to not only showcase women entrepreneurs' success stories, but make these stories happen. Parmar's OurStories Media and Entertainment is an eco-system that brings together women entrepreneurs in a sweeping embrace to help each other, network and grow. The company puts forth ground-breaking ideas of women entrepreneurs and start-ups by conducting innovative events and disruptive media that will offer women entrepreneurs a platform to discuss, network, talk, do and grow their businesses. In a span of 6 months, her company with its brand name 'Women's Connect' has hosted 4 successful mass marketing events and introduced approximately 70+ women entrepreneurs to the world!

It was always Alpa's dream to empower women which in turn motivated her to start her own venture. Alpa also focusses on the need to make women financially independent. She did face failures and disappointments along the way and it was certainly difficult to 'think big'. Her major challenge is with dealing with male vendors who think that women empowerment is not important. She defines success as something as simple as being satisfied with your own work and the feeling of comfort that comes from spreading knowledge to others.

Her media company is in the process of expanding in to new areas of marketing and branding that could provide cost-effective solutions, marketing and PR services to women owned early stage start-ups. Alpa's advice to readers and women entrepreneurs is that challenges and failures are a part of entrepreneurship, so do not be afraid to keep walking and pressing ahead!

For more information on Alpa's venture, please visit her Facebook link:
<https://www.facebook.com/womensconnectpune/>

We wish Alpa the very best for the future!

[back to top ^](#)

THROUGH THE LENS



Rupesh Balsara turned to the sky and captured the *Super Blue Blood Moon* which was visible to stargazers across India on 31 January 2018. The phenomenon, which is a combination of a *Super Moon* (full moon coincides with its perigee, the closest point of the moon's orbit with Earth), *Blood Moon* (a phenomenon whereby the moon in total eclipse appears reddish in colour as it is illuminated by sunlight filtered and refracted by the Earth's atmosphere) and lunar eclipse, is a celestial event which hasn't been witnessed for more than 150 years.

Empowered Learning Systems Pvt. Ltd.

www.empoweredindia.com

101, Lords Manor, 49, Sahaney Sujan Park, Lullanagar, Pune – 411040, Maharashtra, India

[FEEDBACK](#) [ARCHIVES](#) [UNSUBSCRIBE](#)

®The ELS Lotus logo is trademark of Empowered Learning Systems Pvt. Ltd.

©2018 Copyright Empowered Learning Systems Pvt. Ltd. (ELS). For private circulation to clients and well-wishers of ELS. While ELS endeavors to ensure accuracy of information, we do not accept any responsibility for any loss or damage to any person resulting from it.