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Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!

STRESS MANAGEMENT

By Prem Nirmal

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The fast pace of life is taking toll on every city dweller, right from students to home makers and workers to managers, every body is hit by the bug of the stress. Modern technological development and communication aids are adding to the stress because of their high speed. Traveling, exams, admissions etc. at times are too stressful for students as well as parents living hectic lifestyle. Stressed individuals are paying heavy toll in terms of health and well being as they are more prone to stress induced diseases such as headaches, upset stomach, rashes, insomnia, ulcers, high blood pressure, heart disease, and stroke. Most people get trapped into the vicious circle of stress induced diseases and find it difficult to tackle it at later stage. Hence it is very important for us to learn to manage the stress.

So what is stress?

Stress is an individual's perception and assessment of the environment. It depends on how one perceives the situation. The positive perception is called eustress while negative perception will lead to distress. The amount of stress at which each individual functions most effectively is unique to each individual and it is known as optimum stress level (OSL). Any response, mental or physical, which adversely affects performance, is called negative stress response.

That which creates stress is called stressor. There are different types of lifestyle stressors:

Performance Stressors: These are situations where one is stressed to perform, viz. Driving a car, public speaking, performance appraisal, big events in one's life viz. Exams, marriage etc. **Threat Stressors:** These are situations perceived as dangerous, viz.: Riots, War, High risk sport, accidents etc. **Boredom Stressors:** These are situations which are perceived and assessed as lacking in physical or mental stimulation, Viz. Household chores, Routine factory work etc. **Frustration Stressors:** These are situations which are perceived and assessed as being undesirable but beyond one's power to control, Viz. Govt. Taxation. **Bereavement Stressors:** Loss of relationship, Death of loved one, losing a Job, possession or Reputation, dignity etc. **Physical Stressors:** Actual physical damage viz. breaking

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limbs, suffering from disease or infection, working in conditions where extreme temperature and pollution exists which can not be avoided.

Effect of Positive Stress:

As we have seen, positive stress adds anticipation and excitement to life, and we all thrive under a certain amount of stress. Deadlines, competitions, confrontations, and even our frustrations and sorrows add depth and enrichment to our lives. Our goal is not to eliminate stress but to learn how to manage it and how to use it to help us. Insufficient stress acts as a depressant and may leave us feeling bored or dejected; on the other hand, excessive stress may leave us feeling "tied up in knots." What we need to do is find the optimal level of stress which will individually motivate but not overwhelm each of us. If you are experiencing stress symptoms, you have gone beyond your optimal stress level; you need to reduce the stress in your life and improve your ability to manage it.

So, how do we manage stress?

As there are many sources of stress, there are many possibilities for its management. However, all require work towards change. As stress is an individual's perception and assessment of the environment, one needs to look into the possibility of changing one's perception and the reaction to it. In fact, the ideal change will be to convert our reaction to response. So what is the difference between reaction and response? Reaction is habitual, uncontrolled, and impulsive while response is well thought, contemplated act with awareness. A responsible person responds and never reacts. Responsibility is one's ability to respond.

How do we proceed?

1. Awareness of Stressors: Become aware of your stressors. Watch your physical and emotional reactions to stressors. Do you become nervous or physically upset? Notice the situations and events that create high levels of stress. Understand how your body responds to the stress.

2. Breath awareness: Bring your attention to your breath. Breath awareness will make you more aware to notice various aspects of stress, situation and its effects on your body-brain system. Breath awareness will bring the understanding of the dominant nostril. At any given time, we have one dominant nostril and one blocked nostril. The dominance and the blockage can be of varied degrees.

3. Change the dominant nostril: This is one of the oldest secret of "Shiv Swarodaya" or Swar Yoga. As you become aware of stress and the dominant nostril, simplest thing to do now is to block the dominant nostril by pressing thumb on that nostril and breathe through the other nostril for twenty one times. Normally this is sufficient to change the nostril and stop the setting in of the stress. This simple method works in a miraculous manner to manage stress!

4. Practice "Nirmal Kriya": Nirmal Kriya is one of the most powerful methods to eliminate stress instantly. It takes only half a minute to practice it. Here is how you go about it=85 Start with a couple of deep breaths. Now start with four short breaths and end with a long breath. During the long breath exhalation, create friction in the throat region. (This is known as Ujjayi Pranayam). This makes the train

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of five connected breaths. Repeat such train five times and you have completed 25 connected breaths Nirmal Kriya. You can do it standing, sitting or sleeping positions. You can repeat it every hour or anytime you feel you are drifting into the stressful situation.

5. Change your Attitudes: Become more positive towards stress management. Look at every situation in a positive manner, including the stressful situations. In fact we learn our best lessons of life from the worst situations!

6. Set your Goals right: Practice SMART Goal setting. Let each of your goal be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time bound. Pursue realistic goals which are meaningful to you, rather than goals others have for you that you do not share.

7. Manage your Time: Practice Time management techniques and manage your life accordingly. Prepare the list of things to do every day morning. Set your priorities right. Follow your own system to the extent possible and also be flexible to change your system to suit your new environment.

8. Improve your EQ: Emotional quotient is based on Emotional Intelligence. Reduce the intensity of your emotional reactions to stress. The stress reaction is triggered by your perception of emotional

danger. Are you viewing your stressors in exaggerated terms? Are you over-reacting and viewing things as absolutely critical and urgent? Work at adopting more moderate views; try to see the stress as something you can cope with rather than something that overpowers you. Put the situation in perspective.

9. Take care of your body: Exercise for cardiovascular fitness three to four times a week Moderate, prolonged rhythmic exercise is best, such as walking, swimming, cycling, or jogging. Practice Yoga regularly. Eat well-balanced, nutritious meals. Maintain your ideal weight. Avoid nicotine, excessive caffeine, and other stimulants. Get enough sleep. Be as consistent with your sleep schedule as possible.

10. Take it easy: Mix leisure with work. Take breaks and get away whenever you can. Develop some mutually supportive friendships and relationships. Frustrations, failures, and sorrows are part of our life, for learning lessons. Always be kind and gentle with yourself — be a friend to yourself. For more information please visit

www.premnirmal.com/stress_management.htm

Mr. Prem Nirmal teaches "Stress Management" at various B-Schools and also conducts Stress Management programs regularly at TAO, 209, Krishna, Laxmi Ind. Complex, Vartak Nagar, Pokhran Road-1, Thane (W).Mumbai. India. For more information, log on to

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Stress Management Is A Learned Technique!

By Ashish Jain

Here I will begin with something that happened many many years ago. It was when I attended my college in 1994 in Princeton.

When I saw him for the first time in the Class Room, I was a bit surprised. How could this sort of a human being who is typical of his Eastern reigns, be our "Stress Management" Professor? His stiff face seemed incapable of generating any smile! Lines appeared on his forehead, even before he was making efforts to start his career in our College with his first lecture on "Stress Management." I was a bit anxious and eager to enjoy his maiden performance!

I thought he would start with a big platitude on the subject of stress and how to manage it and all that! By quoting definitions and mentioning the names of famous psychologists.

He didn't do that.

It was very interesting how he propagated the subject of stress management for 21 century youth. I am reproducing his one-shot lecture on stress management. It helped me and it might help you as well.

"First off, I will give you example of my grandma— how she manages the stress! Curry for the night is her worry for the morning...and look, how nicely she carries the burden of stress and its management. She manages stress in her typical style, every day! You go by her words, think that she is stressed! But how crafty she is, in the domestic front!"

Stress management is a technique. It is winning over any tough situation, with the charm of your personality and deft handling of the situation. It is about meeting the challenges. Convert defeat into a victory!

Causes of stress may be many; for its management, no hard and fast rules can be prescribed. You have to deal with the stress, as per the demands of time and situation.

The reasons for stress may be:

1. Danger 2. Threat 3. Good or bad news 4. Illness 5. Perceptible changes in one's identification with the self 6. Any other strong external or internal stimuli

How to manage the stress? Before you think about managing the stress, you need to understand the bottom line of your stress. Its root cause! Its real cause! Only then you can think about the management of stress. For public consumption, you can project any cause, but you know what is really

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wrong with you. There are several ancillary tools to assist you in stress management.

These hints can help you in stress management:

1. Organize yourself in a methodical manner. 2. Develop a confidence, that you possess grit for conflict resolution. 3. Let your approach be positive. 4. Auto-suggestion- Talk to yourself. 5. Do pranayama (breathing exercises) and meditation. 6. Do light exercises regularly. 7. Do not over-exert.

8. Keep a diet control. What you eat and how you eat is important!

In the end, what matters in stress management, is your strong will power. Have a will to outgrow the stress, and grow your will!

Ashish Jain writes about a number of different topics. For more information on stress management visit

<http://www.aboutstressmanagement.com>

and also visit the articles page:

<http://www.www.aboutstressmanagement.com/index.html>

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