



Decrease Stress through Balance

Does Stress Cause Disease?

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Does stress cause disease?

Yes, it does. I am often asked a number of questions regarding this statement. People seem to have an inherent knowledge that stress is not good for you and that people who have a 'stressful' life have more 'sickness'. Let's scratch the surface on this to reveal how wide ranging the effect of stress is.

First, ask anybody who is 'stressed' out and they will also tell you that they feel 'edgy', prone to being short tempered, and that they are low on energy because they are having trouble sleeping. It is well understood that having a fast paced lifestyle and/or a type A personality puts you at higher risk for heart disease with increased risk for cancer. There is no doubt that beyond feeling 'on edge'; stress leads to an overall weakening and degradation of the body, resulting in disease.

There are three categories of stress: Physical (exercise, moving the body at work and at home), Toxic (food, drugs and air quality we take in) and Mental (the emotions we feel, guilt and fear).

The most powerful of the three categories is the mental category of stress. Your nerve system runs every cell and function in your body. The brain sends all the messages you need to be healthy along the spinal cord and nerves to the body. Mental stress is the most damaging component because emotional stress changes the signals going along the nerves. In this manner, a constant worry can cause your stomach to create an ulcer, your bowels to slow down or your skin to give off too much oil and cause acne. A long time heartache can lead to actual heart problems and stored anger often causes liver and gall bladder problems. Because what happens in your brain/mind happens to the rest of your body, your thoughts and emotions are an extremely important part of keeping healthy, vibrant and looking young!

To sum up:

1. Mental stress translates to disease.
2. Locate what the source of stress is: "What specifically is bothering you?" Continue to ask "Why?" until you get a clearer picture. For example, if you are worried about poor job performance, maybe it is because it is your dream to be promoted, or maybe you are afraid of being embarrassed and

letting others in the office down. In either case, don't expect to be able to get over your stress until you know the 'why' behind your stress. Keep in mind, situations are only defined as 'stressful' according to YOUR reactions to them. What stresses one person does not cause a stress reaction in another. 3. When you have a worry, ask yourself what the benefit would be if the 'worry happened'? Continue until you have at least 25 benefits if the worst was to happen. For example, if you lost your chance at a promotion, that may mean more time to spend with you family, less pressure at work, deciding on a common plan with your spouse to earn more or having more time to get in shape.

Often, there comes a time when the stress just seems insurmountable. You can't get to the bottom of the problem and it's running you. Consider some coaching. The Transformation Seminar is a life changing day that will not only help you over any stress you are having but also will give you a tool to overcome any future stress.

The 7 Areas of Life

- Mental
- Spiritual
- Vocational
- Family
- Physical
- Financial
- Social

All of our lives are unique.

We all have order in certain areas of life and chaos in others.

What do I mean by order?

Any area of life you are 'pleased' with and you don't wish you could 'fix'. For example: perhaps you love your job (vocational order), or maybe you have a circle of wonderful, supportive friends (social order).

What do I mean by chaos?

Any area of life that you wish you could 'fix' and it therefore causes you stress. For example: Maybe you have many unresolved issues with your parents or children and therefore a strained relationship (family chaos), maybe you struggle with your weight (physical chaos).

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We all create our own lives according to what is going on in our thoughts. We all have stress that runs us, and this stress is in different areas.

Think of your life as if it were a tree. What happens in your life is like the fruit of the tree, the product you can see. Some of the fruit you will like, and some you wish you could make even sweeter, or more juicy. If you want to improve the output of the tree you cannot do so by focusing on the fruits...you must look to the roots!!! The same goes for our lives. If you want to change what happens on the outside, (or how you react to it), you can only do so by changing what is happening on the inside!!!

A change in our thoughts will yield different results. We have all seen this happen in our lives many times. When we change the way we look at something, we get a different outcome.

An Attitude of Gratitude

In a previous issue, I discussed that stress is the feeling that you are missing out on something. For example, this could mean thinking you should have more friends, more money, more leisure time. When you begin to think that you should have it better - it's important to ask some very simple yet extremely potent question.

If you are feeling stressed it's because you are comparing your 'world' to some other way you think you would prefer it to be i.e. more time off, more time with family, bigger muscles or a different body shape etc. You think somewhere or someone else is better than here. Your body prefers balance. Balanced muscles balanced spine, balanced power over your nerve system, balanced diet. Balance means that the goods and bads are balanced-which means equal in number.

Balance means there are an equal number of pros and cons, goods and bads, ups and downs etc.

When you think a certain person, place, thing or event is better than the one you have or the way you have it begin to ask questions to find out what that really would be like:

1. What would be the drawbacks? Consider having more money; you may no longer be motivated to work and grow, which leads to a decline in health. Charities may constantly hound you...(especially family). You may not relate to your friends because your interests and stresses are no longer in

common and you'll have to make new friends. What if you looked like a supermodel? Do you really want people to be infatuated with your physical presence so that it is the level they relate to you on? Continue to ask until you can see what drawbacks come along with being beautiful or rich and famous, for example. Ever heard a celebrity interviewed? - no private life, people stalking them etc. The point is not to become complacent but to realize that there is no better than here, only different pros and cons.

2. There are always two sides to every coin or story. If you find yourself with envy for someone else's lifestyle, fair enough, but also ask where do they have just as many challenges to go along with the great things you see. Joe Banker may have great wealth and lots of possessions, but he also has health problems because he works 60 hours per week. Ms. Beauty Queen may have perfect skin, but that requires an hour in the morning with expensive beauty products only sold in Toronto. Would you like to have that type of maintenance?

3. Also ask, "Where do I have things just the way I like them?" Look in all the areas of your life i.e. family, social contacts, physical health and possessions, money, job, spiritual and learning.

'The quality of your life is based on the quality of your questions!' This statement by Henry James, the founder of modern psychology, altered the way we looked at life because he understood and taught that we can alter our lifestyle by changing the way we think.

Take a look at your life. See all that you have to be grateful for. And remember that until you appreciate all you have, you probably won't get more to be grateful for.

The most successful and healthy people are those people that are able to have more moments of gratitude.

Tap Into Your Willpower

'It is not that I don't have willpower, it's 'time' that I lack.....really?'

If I gave you an extra hour a day, would you spend it working out? Would you go to the store and buy healthy food? Would you relax and do a hobby?

OK, it isn't time, it's money. I don't have enough to join a gym so I can't workout. Really? So if you get a raise of \$100 a month you would spend it on a gym membership?

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I am not being sarcastic. How you answer this question can give you a lot of insight. I would just like everyone to honestly ask themselves these questions. If your answer is 'no' understand that that is not a 'wrong' answer. There is no such thing as a wrong answer to this question.

Whatever you would do with this extra time or money, that is something that is very valuable to you. It is valuable enough, in fact, to spend time and money on.

What's my point?

Many of us think we don't do certain things because we don't have enough time or money, the truth is that they just aren't things that we choose to do with the time and money we've got. We all have different things that are important to us. You do not need willpower to make sure you do the things you love to do. Willpower is something you need when you are trying to get yourself to do something that you haven't truly seen the value of. You may think you know the value of these things, but somehow in your mind, not doing them is giving you more pleasure than doing them.

Now what?

Learning to love something so it becomes automatic is simply a mind game. There are very effective techniques that you can use in order to change your thinking patterns, and therefore change your actions.

In order to learn further techniques, join Dr. Shulman for her upcoming seminar:

'Tap Into your Willpower'

Sleep soundly

In life these days there's more to do in less time. Often this leaves us with a lot to do in very little time. One of the worst things that happens is that our sleep gets sacrificed. Remember, good sleep is one that is long enough (6-8 hours) and also deep enough: quantity and quality. Lack of sleep prevents us from restoring our health by purging the day's stresses. Over time, this above all other factors, can be the difference between sickness and health – plus a good night's sleep just feels good!

The following are some things to keep in mind, particularly

now, to ensure great healthy sleep.

- Decide what time you are going to bed and establish a routine. If you know you need 7 hours sleep, figure out what time you need to start counting sheep. Your body likes routine.
- Don't fall asleep after watching TV. Ideally, a quiet time before bed gives your body a chance to slow down before sleep. You don't stop your car from highway speed by slamming on the breaks, so don't take your body from a hectic momentum to zero in your bed.
- Stop eating at least 3 hours before you go to bed. This includes those little 'aw, it's only a bite' moments. If you do eat late, it should be a small, low carb/ low sugar meal. Going to sleep with a full stomach, particularly a rich sugar filled meal, requires extra energy to process and instead of restoring health and energy your body gets bogged down digesting food.
- If you have things on your mind, write down your 'To do' list and relax. Better a short pencil than a long memory. If you know you have everything ready for the next day, your mind can be clear and relaxed for sleep. If you notice certain worries or concerns keep your mind spinning and unable to sleep well, contact Dr. Neely for a consultation or attend the next Transformation Experience.
- While falling asleep concentrate on your breath going in and out. Listen to it, notice how far in the air goes and watch it go out. Notice how it feels to breathe. Ensure that your inhale is equal in depth and time as the exhale. If this doesn't work...there's always those blasted sheep!

Do Your Daily Habits Have an Effect On Your Health?

At Pure-Health we strive to help our patients achieve maximum health. First and foremost we are concerned with the health of your spine. A common question we are often asked is: 'Do my daily habits have an effect on how well my body holds my adjustments, how quickly I heal and how often I need to be adjusted?' The answer is a resounding yes! Ask yourself these questions:

1. Do you sleep primarily on your side, your back or on your belly?
2. Do you sleep on a conventional box spring and mattress, a waterbed or a futon?
3. How many pillows do you place under your head while sleeping?
4. How many hours per day do you sit or stand?

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5. Do you use a telephone at work? If so, do you use a headset?
6. Do you participate in any specific exercise program? If yes, what exactly do you do?
7. Do you play any sport?
8. Do you have a regular stretching program?
9. How long is your drive to work each day? Do you drive as part of your workday? If yes, how many hours per day?
10. Do you smoke?
11. Do you eat and drink things you shouldn't regularly?
12. Are you under an excessive amount of stress?
13. Are you taking any medications?

Some common patient habits that may negatively impact your spinal health are:

1. Reading or watching television in bed.
2. Recliners, especially when coupled with television watching.
3. Ill positioned computer monitors.
4. Bifocal glasses that cause you to bend your neck.
5. Improper use of cardio machines like the Stairmaster or treadmill.
6. Unbalanced weight training such as emphasizing chest and biceps avoiding the back and legs.
7. Improper form when exercising.

Declutter - Less is More

It is said that you should never try to sleep in a messy room because the clutter will irritate your mind. However, the clutter in our lives can show up in many different forms, robbing us of the ability to focus our time and energy on what is most important to us.

Removing clutter from your life involves more than just tidying up and organizing your living space. As you begin to organize your surroundings, take the time to remove the unnecessary components that clutter your social, family and professional life as well.

Trim the fat:

Social Clutter

Is your social circle so diverse that you find yourself stretched to the limit with parties and informal get-togethers, feeling as though you have no time for yourself? Give yourself permission to say no. True friends understand when you tell them that you want to have a 'family night'. If you want to

keep in touch with a large social circle, plan a group get-together a few times per year. Visit with your friends while you are doing something else that is important to you. Go for walks together, that way you can fit your exercise and visit in the same hour.

Work Clutter

Do you take on too many responsibilities at work and find yourself frustrated and buried under a pile of papers? Do you waste precious hours looking for that piece of paper that you 'filed in a special spot'? If you are stuck in this cycle, it is time to take control, as it is most likely adding unhealthy stress to your days.

Prioritize and organize your time. Every morning take 5 minutes to create a 'to-do' list. Beside each item on the list write the date or time when you are going to focus on that particular task. Look through your list and decide what you can delegate to others. The process of getting your 'list' out of your head and on paper allows you to focus on the task at hand.

Home free

Yes, it is important to remove the physical clutter as well. A cluttered home robs people of precious time and often contributes to unwanted disagreements with loved ones. We have all had the experience of being late and frustrated because we can't put our fingers on that piece of paper that we know is 'somewhere around here.' My son is not impressed when we are late for a soccer game because I can't find his team schedule, again.

Begin to see your way through the clutter by giving away, throwing away and putting away. Discard broken items and unfinished projects. Get rid of the clothes that you don't wear anymore. Follow the one-year rule; if you haven't worn it in the past year, give it away. Give your old blankets, towels and socks to a local homeless shelter.

How do we end up with so much stuff?

There are many reasons why people find it hard to let things go. Some people hoard things due to a sense of financial insecurity. Deep down they feel that if they let something go, they may never have the resources to purchase it again, so they end up with cupboards full of old magazines and mismatched containers. It is important to remember that in order to attract new, useful things into your life, you must

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create the right space and energy for them.

People often attach sentimental value to certain items. It may remind them of a time in the past they want to hold onto. Sentimental items are important to all of us. Remember to be selective; you'll never find the special items if you keep too many. Be certain that you are not holding onto a time in your life that is keeping you from appreciating the present and growing into the future.

De-cluttering your schedule and surroundings allows you to be present when you do the things you enjoy most. Imagine the peace you will feel surrounded by only the things you love...and being able to find all of them!

The Quiz

Take a few moments to go through the following quiz and see what thoughts you have.

1. Name the 5 wealthiest people in the world.
2. Name the last 5 Heisman trophy winners.
3. Name the last 5 winners of the Miss America pageant.
4. Name 10 people who have won the Nobel or Pulitzer prize.
5. Name the last 6 Academy Award winners for Best Actor or Actress.
6. Name the last 6 World Series winners.

How did you do? The point is that none of us remember all of the headliners of yesterday. These are no second best achievers. They are the best in their field. Eventually though, the applause fades, awards tarnish and accolades stop.

Here is another quiz. See how you do on this one.

1. List a few teachers who aided your journey through school.
2. Name 3 friends who have helped you through a difficult time.
3. Name 5 people who have taught you something worthwhile.
4. Think of a few people who made you feel appreciated and special.
5. Think of 5 people you enjoy spending time with.
6. Name 5 personal heroes whose stories have inspired you.

Which quiz did you find more enjoyable to take? Just thinking of all of the positive people in our lives is such a joy. The lesson in all of this is that the people who make a difference in your life (and you in theirs) are not always the ones with the most credentials, the most money or the most awards. They are the ones that care.