

THE EXCHANGE

This issue's featured subject is "Good Stress."

WHAT STRESS DOES TO YOUR BODY

Your body goes through specific changes when you are under stress.

- Your heart starts beating quickly.
- Nutrient-rich blood courses through your arteries, bringing fatty acids and oxygen to your muscles for enormous strength.
- The tiny blood vessels under the surface of your skin close down.
- Your blood clots more easily so you won't bleed to death in the event you are wounded.
- Your pupils dilate so you can see better.
- Your mucous membranes shrink so you can breathe more easily.
- You perspire heavily to keep from overheating.
- Any unnecessary functions of the body, like digestion and reproduction, shut down.
- Your immune system also shuts down.

All of this alteration can be very helpful if you need to outrun a mugger on the street. If you are experiencing normal positive or negative stress in your job or at home, these same changes can have disastrous effects.

For instance, when your heart starts pounding at two to three times the normal rate, should it surprise you that stress can cause sudden cardiac arrest?

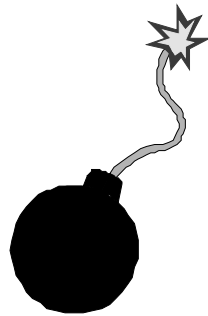
When thousands of tiny blood vessels constrict, leaving less space for more blood, is it any wonder that stress can lead to high blood pressure?

When your blood stream is filled with fatty acids, is there any wonder that your cholesterol levels increase? When your digestive and reproductive systems shut down, can you understand the common occurrence of ulcers and reproductive disorders? And even more prevalent are recurrent colds, allergic flare-ups, stomach problems, headaches, migraine headaches, back pain, neck pain, and rashes, all due to a decreased immune system.

Some very positive stresses can lead you toward poor health. These stresses can include the birth of a child, a wedding, a new job, or acquisition of a huge contract. During these times, remember to:

- Breathe deeply.
- Move your body – motion changes emotion.
- Close your eyes to increase relaxation by 20%.
- Laugh.
- Plan some down time.

Life without stress, especially the good stress, would be boring. Know the symptoms and use the changes in your body to be healthier and happier.



AUGUST 2002

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LOOKING AHEAD:

- ♦ The September issue of *The Exchange* will focus on Meetings.

LOOKING BACK:

- ♦ For previous editions of *The Exchange*, go to our [back issues](#).
- ♦ Re-read the 12/2000 edition: Coping with Stress.

What Our Clients Are Saying

"This program has helped me to understand myself better than I ever have before."

Wilson Harvie, Jefferson GA

"Presented with such great style and clarity, your insights into what constitutes, and the value of effective communications, were most instructive and will, I'm confident, be drawn upon to enhance workplace people skills, job satisfaction, productivity...and profitability."

G.L. Bowen, III, Atlanta GA

The man who doesn't relax and hoot a few hoots voluntarily, now and then, is in great danger of hooting and standing on his head for the edification of the pathologist and trained nurse, a little later on.

Elbert Hubbard



SEE YOUR BEST TO BEAT YOUR STRESS

By Vincent Ivan Phipps, B.S.

Recent medical research reports that our bodies need stress! Some of us have plenty to share.

Too often, we focus on the negative side of stress instead of focusing on the good. Here is a true story to illustrate my point:

Two clients, we will call them Jack and Beth, each had to give a presentation to their department. Both people had two things in common. They knew their material and both were nervous about speaking in public. What made Beth different than Jack was her approach to the stress caused by her fear of public speaking.

Jack called me for tips before his presentation. I suggested reviewing the third chapter of *Talk Is Not Cheap*. This chapter contains the information on the importance of seeing yourself the way that you want to be. Beth called shortly after. Beth was given the same advice.

That afternoon, after their presentations, I spoke with each of them. I said to Jack, "Well today was the day, how did it go?" Jack replied, "Terrible! I applied those visual things but it made it worse!" I asked him specifically what he visualized. He replied he kept seeing himself tripping going up to the stage, losing his place in his speech, sweating in front of everyone, and being unable to effectively answer questions. Out of fear of forgetting his words, he wrote his speech on note cards and saw himself dropping them on the floor of the stage during the middle of his speech. He said he kept thinking of all these things, and that was exactly what happened!

I wanted to give constructive feedback to help Jack. Because of his venting I did not want to interrupt. Fortunately, Beth saw us from across the hall and decided to come over. Overhearing the end of our conversation, she heard Jack say, "So those mind tricks did not work at all! I kept seeing myself fail."

I had my responses all prepared. Just as I was about to fire off my suggestions, Beth was quick on the draw. She said, "Jack, are you talking about the visualization tool of the Private Plan? Remember that you should focus on the good things instead of the bad. The reason you were so nervous is because you kept playing back all that negative stuff over and over. See yourself doing well, and you will."

Jack said to her, "That's easy for you to say. You were interesting, informative, and seemed really natural. Some people even commented that your segment was the best one they heard."

Beth commented, "Thank you. If you remember, I was also very nervous. Just as we were taught by TLC, we will respond and act as we program ourselves. You kept playing negative images and programmed yourself that way. I focused on positive images, despite fear, and everything worked out!"

After pausing for a moment, Jack looked at me. Then he looked back at Beth and said, "So you mean I would have done as well as you did if I had focused my nervousness on the positive?"

Beth replied, "You are what you think. And you will perform as you see yourself." There was little for me to add to Beth's comments. Like a proud father, I looked at Beth and give her a "way to go" wink.

Since Beth did such a great job with the advice to Jack, I did not need to share my tips. So, since you are reading this, I can give them to you. Remember that when you are stressed about anything; to beat your stress, see yourself at your best!



I made some studies, and reality is the leading cause of stress amongst those in touch with it. I can take it in small doses, but as a lifestyle, I find it too confining.

Jane Wagner

Helpful Hints:

- Laugh every day!
- Use your support network while you are working on exciting projects.



To learn more about it, click here!

ASK THE EXPERTS



Dear TLC,

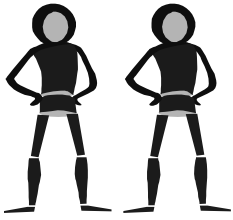
I just can't handle it when women get emotional at work. They cry and I feel like I have ten legs with each foot in my mouth. Help!

Feet in Mouth Male

Dear Feet,

Our culture is more accepting of women crying than men expressing their fears and frustrations in that manner. Most women who cry when they become angry hate it. Break eye contact, tie your shoe, get a glass of water or tissue for her. In other words, give her a few moments to compose herself. Sometimes, rescheduling the meeting can be helpful. Just make sure you reschedule it the same day or she may close up all communication.

(To Be) BESIDE ONESELF



Ever wonder what it means when someone says, "I was so upset that I was beside myself"? This idiom is commonly used in negative stressful situations. If you are relaxed enough to continue reading, let's

look at where it came from and what it really means.

It was an ancient spiritual belief that during extremely stressful conditions, a person's body and soul could separate. During these moments of intense stress, believers were convinced that the soul jumped out of the physical body to prevent experiencing emotional strain. When the body and spirit were separated, the spirit was to remain next to the physical body (or beside you) until the turmoil was over.

A heavy sneeze or a series of violent sneezes was also believed to be very stressful on the body. That is why we say "God Bless You" after a sneeze to keep the body and soul together. But we can save that one for another issue!

Although the thought of the spirit leaving the body when we get too stressed may seem a bit antiquated by today's standards, there is still a lesson to learn from this expression. When you get stressed, whether with your career, loved ones, or personal goals, instead of allowing the stress to eat away at you, take a step back (out of yourself and the problem). Re-evaluate the sense of urgency and the importance of the situation. Instead of focusing on the problems, focus on the solutions. Ask someone who is unemotionally involved in the situation for alternatives that you might not be able to see.

Get a grip on any stressful situation by first getting a hold of yourself. Prevent stress from getting you beside yourself. Stay focused, stay positive, and stay whole!

GOOFUS, GALLANT, & GONZO

By Ben Cairns, M.A.

Some stress is not only beneficial, but also necessary for doing anything important. I know that may sound strange, especially since most of us normally refer to stress in negative terms. Stress is the key element of "distress," but it is also the essential element of productive motivation.

I remember sitting in my pediatrician's office when I was a child reading Highlights Magazine. There were two brothers who were profiled each month, Goofus and Gallant. Goofus was sloppy and did not care much about manners or doing anything right. Gallant was the perfect boy, always mannerly and industrious. Each month there would be a short story about how Goofus continually made the wrong decisions and acted in a multitude of counterproductive and disappointing ways. Gallant was the golden child, always there on time with the right words and deeds. Needless to say, every child wanted to be Gallant.

If you had no stress whatsoever, you would be a blob, just a limp wet noodle. People who are apathetic don't have motivation, and they don't even care that they don't have it. They find it a great challenge to accomplish even minor tasks. Apathy is the greatest danger that management has to counter. If you have a worker who doesn't care, what can ever be accomplished? If you have an apathetic worker, you have a Goofus on your hands.

On the other end of the spectrum is too much stress. I imagine that if Highlights Magazine had wanted to portray a third brother, one who was hyperactive and stressed out, he would have been named "Gonzo." Too much stress degrades rational thought, physical health, and is ultimately counterproductive to the work mission. Sure, if you are Gonzo, you might get a lot done at the last minute, but with what level of quality? And at what price?

Effective stress management does not aim to eradicate stress. Some stress is good, that's why Gallant always strove to satisfy his elders. If you have too little stress, you're a Goofus. Too much simply makes you Gonzo. Just the right amount of stress, and you are the golden child with the proper level of motivation. If you get it right, you are Gallant. Just who every child of any age wants to be!



Remember to...

- Spend time each day visualizing the good stuff.
- Keep balance in your life during the positive stress times.

Tension is who you think you should be.

Relaxation is who you are.

Chinese Proverb

Stress is an ignorant state. It believes that everything is an emergency.

Natalie Goldberg

Care to our coffin adds a nail, no doubt, And every grin so merry draws one out.

John Wolcot



Keep your sense of humor. There's enough stress in the rest of your life to let bad shots ruin a game you're supposed to enjoy.

Amy Strum, US golfer

The happiest people I know are the ones who have learned how to hold everything loosely and have given the worrisome, stress-filled, fearful details of their lives into God's keeping.

Charles R. Swindoll

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CEO CORNER: SWEATIN' THE GOOD STUFF

By Beverly Inman-Ebel, MA CCC-SLP

Eleanor Roosevelt is credited with advising, "Don't sweat the small stuff." I offer, "Don't sweat the good stuff!" Science tells us that positive stress can have the same effects on the body as the negative stress. (See the article, "What Stress Does to Your Body" on page one.)

I have certainly struggled following my own advice. My husband, Ken, has been a steady resource for me over the years. About a month before our wedding, I was so stressed at one point that he gently held me by the shoulders and reminded me that the whole purpose of the ceremony was to enjoy it. He threatened to call it off and go visit the justice of the peace if the planned celebration was going to cause me so much strain. I realized that he meant it, so I relaxed and had a wonderful time.

I was so excited when I started my own business 21 years ago that I was sick as a dog on opening day and spent most of the time hugging the toilet instead of all my friends and family who had come to help me celebrate. When our first son was four days old, Ken came into the room and found mother and child bawling. I remember sobbing, "I love him so much, but I think I want to give him back!"

I am getting better. When this same son graduated from high school last June, I managed to enjoy every minute of planning the party, attending the school events, and walking down memory lane making a scrapbook for him.

The rest of Mrs. Roosevelt's quote is, "And it's all small stuff!" I suppose the conclusion to my quote would be, "Because it's not all good stuff!" Life is accented by pieces of good stuff here and there. What a shame to ruin those precious moments by making ourselves ill or miserable! Don't sweat the good stuff because you need to enjoy and savor those moments.

The good stuff helps us to get through all the mundane tasks. Remember that those moments do not have to be perfect. Increase your flexibility. Laugh at the unexpected. Live your dreams!



FEATURED SERVICE: S.O.S.

The lazy days of summer are almost over! Feeling stressed? TLC has a great program for you entitled, "Success Over Stress" that may be just what you and your team need to handle the pressure of "right-sizing." This half-day program works well in small and large groups and leaves you with tools to manage the positive and negative stress. For S.O.S., call TLC at 1-888-BECAUSE. Why? Because you need **Success Over Stress!**

TLC establishes long-term relationships with our clients. If we have helped you or if you believe our approach to change would work for someone you know, please communicate with us by email [tlc@talklisten.com] or phone [1-888-232-2873]. We work with individuals and groups on the following subject areas: attitude, listening, body language, voice, leadership, compliments and corrections, behavioral style, teamwork, effective meetings, public speaking, accent reduction and much more!

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