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"Helping others help themselves in mind, body, spirit, and emotion."

Stress Management

You Can Increase Effectiveness, Avoid Burnout

This brochure is presented for the information of the general public to discuss the applications of hypnosis for dealing with such matters as habit control, stress, excessive eating, smoking, fears, motivation, self-confidence, concentration, learning enhancement, sleeplessness, goal-setting, relationships and other areas which lead to unhappiness, dysfunction or difficulty in achieving personal goals.

The human brain receives messages from several sources, each dealing with separate types of information. Input dealing with everyday matters such as news, music, jobs, relationships, weather, etc., comes from the external environment. Our own bodies provide data concerning movement, digestion, tension, pain, etc., all in the form of messages, sent to the brain.

The conscious mind deals with reasoning and logic, decisions, goals planning and conscious activity. The unconscious mind, which includes both the subconscious and the superconscious, wields the greatest influence. It receives all the messages from our social, spiritual and genetic backgrounds and all the conflicts and disturbances which enter our consciousness each day. The unconscious mind receives and holds its information, neither accepting nor rejecting the messages. It does not evaluate. That procedure is reserved for the conscious mind.

From primitive times the human animal has possessed an escape mechanism that even today, under severely threatening conditions, can cause regression to primitive behavior. The fight/flight syndrome, always a means of dealing with fears, threats, attacks and other disturbances, has gained tolerance through evolution with the addition of reaction vs. action and repression vs. sadness. Without these, when the message input volume reached overload conditions, the escape would be toward the denial of reality. However, the desire for social acceptance provides motivation to cope with and adapt to reality.

Nevertheless, when the conscious mind can no longer handle the message units overloading the brain, the subconscious prepares us for fight or flight—the heart pumps harder, blood pressure rises, super-strength can be generated. But sometimes there is nothing to fight. We can't fight the environment. We can't fight a job, an accident, a bad decision. What now?

ENTER STRESS/WORRY

Unable to fight, the reaction turns to the alternative of flight, which in present day life can prove impossible. Often a state of apathy, sadness and/or hypersuggestibility ensues. Negative input finds acceptance. Futility and melancholy develop and an overreaction to the senses develops together with a loss of tolerance. The road turns downhill.

Imagine a group of musicians playing together. Imagine the trumpet player getting a measure or two ahead of the rest. Imagine the saxophone player, trying to figure out what the trumpeter is doing, dropping a measure behind. Imagine the drummer, becoming confused, missing his beats so that the whole group gets off beat. Imagine the conductor waving his arms desperately trying to orient the players. Imagine the cacophony as the musicians collapse, give up and quit playing.

A person experiencing continuing stress may well become subject to such a frenzy, in the process developing any or several forms of stress-related illness. While certain types of stress are even desirable (romantic stress, job promotions, winning a lottery), stresses that produce debilitation, sadness, excessive smoking, overeating, anger, grief, and

similar reactions need attention and usually professional help.

The first recognition of a hypnotist dealing with stress is likely to be that while the world, or the past if it is a factor in the condition, cannot be changed, it is possible to alter the client's perception of and reaction to them.

Again, causal factors need to be investigated. And not infrequently regression can be helpful in this process. Stress may be a reaction to people, places, events, or things. The threats may be real or imagined. Remember, the subconscious mind does not analyze, and usually by the time sadness appears the conscious mind has lost its ability to do so. However, there are several common basic causes of stress which can be recognized, defined and often eliminated.

WHAT'S BEHIND IT ALL

Why me? Stress victims ask the question quite often. Many factors enter into the picture of possibilities. Overachievers, typical Type A personalities, are hyper-competitive. They can be addicted to stress. They can enjoy it, until it gets out of control. Victims can learn stress early in life from parents, teachers, relatives and others. Through early experience they simply consider stress a normal part of life; they see it all the time.

Fears, valid or otherwise, can lead to the development of symptoms of stress. They can expand into full grown fears and psychiatric disorders. Unrelenting pain or worries over health situations are factors, as are repressed emotions such as hurt, anger, grief, etc. Specific incidents are frequently involved, such as the necessity to speak to a group in the course of job performance when such activity is uncomfortable.

Medical conditions, including dietary deficiencies, can lead to stress, as can such female experiences as PMS. External factors, such as continuous or intermittent bothersome noise levels, can create or add to stress levels.

Every individual is different in tolerance levels, coping abilities, reactions and needs. Dealing with stress is best accomplished through a trained, experienced and sensitive professional who can determine causes and evaluate reactions. Sheer willpower is not the remedy in stress cases. Effective and permanent relief responds to desensitization, which can be brought about through hypnotism.

It is important to analyze the stress stimuli and the physical and/or emotional responses which they bring about. Through hypnosis positive new response can be created to replace the devastating reactions of the past. Buried feelings can be brought to the surface and released. Outside pressures can be relieved. And finally, new responses to old disturbances can be induced with major changes in attitudes and reactions.



Member

The National Guild of Hypnotists was founded in 1951 and is the oldest and largest organization of its kind. Professional membership in the NGH signifies that an individual possesses specific qualifications, agrees to abide by a strict code of ethics, and will pursue continuing-education studies for annual recertification. Medical or psychological referrals may be required for certain conditions.

This brochure was researched by the NGH educational faculty and is distributed as a public information service by its members.