

Stress Management
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Held stress seminars in Salt Lake City, UT.

He feels it's the most exciting door-opening opportunity we have with the community.

Relates to the signs of Jesus' coming: every sign Jesus gave is stress related.

Wars, famines, pestilences, earthquakes, natural disasters, etc.

The most natural way to interface with spiritual principles—hits the bull's eye.

Stressors

1. Expectations for self, conference, members, family
2. Family life
3. Finances (*Margin* is number one book recommended by Skip McCarty)
4. Peer pressure – comparing yourself to other pastors who are successful
5. Time management – not enough time to accomplish everything, agenda never ends
6. Criticism
7. Always more than you can do
8. If you're doing well, don't know if it's enough
9. Conflict

External stress vs. Internal stress

A life-threatening situation

Cortisol and adrenal release of hormonal substances

80% of stress we experience is internally-generated stress (processive stress) rather than external stress (systemic stress)

An argument with wife or child is not immediately life-threatening, but someone holding a gun to your head is a real physical threat.

Only one who has no more food is experiencing a life-threatening situation.

Robert Supulski, *Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers*, tracks the physiology of stress in his book and then tells what we can do about all this with his suggestions.

What can we do about all this? I've got to admit that people who believe in a God who is benign and has discernible rules, and who responds to your entreaties, and when life is

cut short thru disease you can somehow view that in a loving cosmic plan, you have the greatest source of help for stress.

Theme of 11th Congress on Stress in Hawaii, Skip submitted an abstract on the “Bible and Stress.”

Six weeks before the congress he was told he would be the opening speaker.

Reason he was opening speaker, researchers are curious about what about spirituality that helps folks on stress.

Acute vs. chronic

Acute: death or plane accident

Chronic: invalid parent in nursing home

When body prepares for fight or flight, blood pressure will rise, digestive system shuts down, cholesterol rises, etc.

Avoid chronic stress...

Learning to deal with chronic stress is the re-processive track.

Everything we experience in life is filtered before we experience stress.

The filter is our belief system which if not healthy can supercharge the stress.

Skip has read through the Bible with the purpose of evaluating stressful situations.

Lot of good help from the Bible in managing stress.

There's good stress that the Bible speaks to for eternal rewards.

Pioneers made commitment thru stress in martyrdom or cut their lives short.

In the Bible God repeats when He wants to emphasize something.

If my goal in life is to reduce my stress; then, I'm going to miss out on what life is like.

But whoever loses his life for Christ's sake, will save it.

If you get the big picture of your eternal destiny, to serve in My mission here on the planet, then you will find ultimate fulfillment.

If you'll stick with me and keep that goal in mind, life will be exciting with Me.

You will get the greatest experience of life then.

Every stressful situation is an opportunity.

Skip did a two-day program on stress at Willow Creek.

Question to ask yourself: What's the opportunity here?

Asking that question gives you new eyes.

Every stressful situation has the element of danger.

If that biochemically puts me in an emergency health mode, then I'm going to break down somewhere else.

The real culprit with stress is cortisol.

Makes you more susceptible to a flu bug or virus in defeating the immune system.

Research from the University of Chicago...

Lady in class describes her dilemma with her car stopping on the freeway in Chicago.

She got on the phone and got individual to come over and repair the car.

He didn't come into the house for quite a while, but then said, "He didn't fix the car right!"

Then, she looked again for an opportunity.

She described how every stressful situation is an opportunity to her husband from the stress class.

Simple understanding from Chinese for the word crisis: danger and opportunity

Personal moment of testimony: the stress seminar was born at the moment when he experienced divorce in his first marriage.

When you are under stress is it systemic or processive?

If you process it effectively, then you are more successful.

Think of Ravensbruck and Auschwitz concentration camps.

The way they processed stress, helped them to be better survivors.

Many people, according to Victor Frankl, just lost hope.

Stockdale Principle: a prisoner of war in a camp who came up with two principles:

1. You have to be willing to look the brutal facts square in the face.
2. You have to not lose hope.

Some prisoners who were trying to convince themselves that they would be out by Christmas.

How you process things could mean the difference as to whether you would survive or not.

For instance, if my ex-wife walked into the room right now, then the adrenalin would go up.

The lady in Atlanta was drawing on her profound belief system to survive potential rape and/or death by her captor by sharing the book, *The Purpose-Driven Life*

Archibald Hart, *Ten Things I've Learned About How to Be Happy*

Skip was reading this book while getting ready to go to bed in his hotelroom during GC at Toronto.

Called downstairs, to see if the alarm in the next room could be turned off.

Phrase went through Skip's mind, Chinese water torture.

By labeling the experience of the continuing alarm, Skip found things worse.

The alarm was getting louder and louder.

Stress-inducing beliefs need to be reality based.

For Skip he saw this alarm going off as an opportunity...What if God wanted to remind me that He loved me?

What if everytime that buzzer went off God was reminding me that He loved me.

Skip found that buzzer experience starting to be like God's arms going around him with His love.

Re-processed the situation.

Ever have the problem of matching up socks?

He uses a safety pin to keep the socks together.

Debt is also a stressor: have the goal as getting out of debt.

Bill Gothard, never buy on time payments a depreciating value item.

Two ways you can put yourself under stress to better manage stress:

1. Exercise (even the 10-step exercise)
2. Setting goals

How to Gain Control of Your of Your Time and Your Life by Leiken

80% of your life is already scheduled for you, maybe almost 90%

Difference with really achieving things is what you do with the 10% left.

Catch that 10% while waiting at an airport.

Also, schedule some block time.

While Skip was at St. Croix on vacation he determined to do a stress program.

Put down what you'd like to do in your life time.

Put down what you'd like to do in the next 3-5 years.

Then, if you knew if you would die in 6 months, what would you do?

Now, prioritize the things on each list.

Now, take 3-4 of them as you're A-1 goals.

Here's what the real achievers do: work on those goals every single day.

Nine years after 1990 he published the stress-management seminar

He gave up Sunday football to get there.

If you prayerfully set those goals, then you have permission to say No!

Life's Continuum

To put things in perspective, Skip does a scale of 1 – 10 with Auschwitz being 1 and then 10 being the least stressor.

The idea gives release because he can compare his situation in light of what happened at Auschwitz.

In his research thru the Bible Skip has studied stress in Revelation.

He sees infinity on the scale now which describes eternity.

That is our destiny.

The prisoners that survived Auschwitz kept in mind that there was a future—that kept them going.

Growing Through Stress by Kath Donovan

One last concept...the serenity prayer

You could boil down all stress management to this....

“God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,
The courage to change the things I can,
And the wisdom to know the difference.”

People are exhausting their energy on things they can do nothing about.

Make a sheet of things only God can change and a column for things that we can change.

Work one at a time on the right side of the page for those things we can change.