

Mon, 3 May 1999, Michelle Lee wrote:

Stress

Dr. Shapiro,

> be stress-reducing. For example, a hobby like building a wooden shelf is
> something you can do and be in control of what happens and when it
happens. EXACTLY. IT'S A MATTER OF FINDING AN AREA WHERE YOU CAN EFFECT
SOME POSITIVE CONTROL.

> On the other hand, at work, you may take orders all day. THERE ARE A LOT
OF WAYS INDIVIDUALS MIGHT REACT TO TAKING ORDERS; SOME MIGHT LIKE THE
STRUCTURE OF NOT HAVING TO MAKE DECISIONS, AND SO IT WOULDN'T BE STRESS
PRODUCING; FOR OTHERS, WHO LIKE TO MAKE THEIR OWN DECISIONS, IT DEFINITELY
WOULD BE. THIS LATTER GROUP COULD FIND UNHEALTHY WAYS TO RELIEVE STRESS:
I.E., FIND SOMEONE TO ORDER AT HOME, KICK THE DOG, ETC; OR HEALTHY WAYS, AS
A HOBBY, BREATH RELAXATION, --OR EVEN TAKING CHARGE OF THE CHANNEL
CHANGER! Can you explain a

> little about your thoughts on feeling in control? THERE ARE TWO WAYS, AS
NOTED IN LAST EMAIL, ASSERTIVE, TAKE CHARGE CONTROL WHERE YOU MAKE
SOMETHING HAPPEN. HERE, THERE IS MORE AROUSAL, EXCITEMENT, SENSE OF
ACCOMPLISHMENT; SECOND IS ACCEPTING, YIELDING MODE; HERE THERE IS MORE
SENSE OF CONTROL THROUGH EQUANIMITY, PEACE. What occurs in the body or

> brain when someone feels in control? THE FEELING OF SENSE OF CONTROL
WILL BE DIFFERENT DEPENDING UPON WHICH MODE THE PERSON USES. Does it
reduce stress hormones? AS YOU ARE PROBABLY AWARE, YOU CAN INCREASE
STRESS HORMONES, BUT THAT NOT BE A PROBLEM, IF YOU FEEL YOU ARE IN
CONTROL OF THEM: IE., EXCITEMENT BEFORE A RACE, ; SO TAKE CHARGE MODE
CAN INCREASE STRESS, BUT POSITIVE STRESS ; ACCEPTING MODE REDUCES
STRESS. PEOPLE SHOULD HAVE BOTH MODES AT THEIR DISPOSAL FOR OPTIMUM
HEALTH. If you

> simply change your perception from feeling out of control to feeling in
> control, can you reduce the stress response? GOOD QUESTION. THE ANSWER
IS A QUALIFIED YES! IF YOU BELIEVE YOU ARE IN CONTROL (SELF-EFFICACY, I
CAN DO THIS; THINGS ARE GOING TO BE OK, THAT WILL REDUCE STRESS. IT IS AN
EXCELLENT STRATEGY; THE ONLY QUALIFICATION IS PEOPLE WHO ARE CALLED
"DENIERS OR STRESS REPRESSORS. THESE PEOPLE SAY THEY DO NOT FEEL ANY
STRESS, THINGS ARE FINE, EVERYTHING IS OK, BUT IN FACT PHYSIOLOGICALLY
THEY HAVE
HIGH STRESS; SO THAT GROUP DOESN'T FIT THE MODEL. HOPE THIS HELPS. DR. S

> > Thanks again! > > Michelle Lee >

Date: Tue, 4 May 1999 08:56:36 -0700 (PDT)
From: Deane H. SHAPIRO (dhshapir@uci.edu)
To: Michelle Lee (mkleee@mindspring.com)
Cc: dhshapir@uci.edu
Subject: Re: stress

Hi Michelle,

I got a good stress relief from your questions! I really have only one
arrow in my quiver: I look at how individuals gain a sense of control in
their life, and we have developed a "control profile" of different
individuals: looking at their overall sense of control, desire for
control, agency of control (i.e., whether they get sense of control from
themselves or from others: e.g., friends, family, spiritual beliefs), and
finally, and most importantly the two positive modes of control: an
assertive change mode of control (to change what you can or should--we
call it Prometheus' Way of Change); and a
yielding, accepting mode (Lao-tzu's way of harmony) for what you cannot or
should not try to change. (Each mode has a negative side: assertive
control can become overcontrol; yielding and accepting can become "giving
up".