

# SUPER STRESS SOLUTIONS NEWSLETTER

Work, Relationships / Health.

February, 2007 volume #1. Article #2

## In this issue:

Personality and Stress

Are you Resilient?

How Resilient is your Family?

## Personality and Stress

What is personality? How does it play a role in our stress levels? What type am I?

You may have wondered why some people seem more stressed than others even though they are experiencing the same level of stress as others around them. Believe it or not your personality plays a central role in all aspects of your life and dealing with stress is no exception.

Really your personality is the sum total of life experiences:

- . Genetics
- . Values
- . Perception
- . Culture and environmental influences.

So you can see how dominant personality is in our lives. It shapes our coping patterns, how we respond to others and how the universe reacts to us.

The stressful personality has been called Type A and here is your chance to see if you have a stressful Type A personality. Please answer yes or no to these 5 questions.

1. I most usually multi task and take pride in doing many things at once even if it is not necessary. Yes or No
2. I have perfectionistic traits, disorder and clutter is extremely stressful for me. Yes or No
3. I am sensitive to disapproval and criticism. I tend to be a giver and generally will give to others before myself. Yes or No
4. I tend to be competitive, I will compare myself to others performance and feel like a failure if I do not always come out on top. Yes or No
5. I hate waiting in line ups. I tend to eat fast; drive fast; talk fast; walk fast even if there isn't any reason to do so. Yes or No

If you said Yes to more than 1 of these questions you most likely have stressful personality traits that impact upon your health, home and work.

However there is good news, just making a couple of small changes in your lifestyle and habits can significantly reduce a stressful type personality. Try these suggestions:

1. Try not to multi task. When you eat don't read the newspaper; if you read no T.V. In other words be completely where you are and try to focus on just one task at a time.
2. Work on slowing down your pace and reaction times to situations around you. Don't run to buildings; they just don't move; Focus on the taste of your food; Practice listening to others without interrupting.
3. You don't always have to win to be accepted and have positive self worth. Realize the world is usually forgiving and accepting and if you make a mistake or come up short its o.k. there's lots to learn in being less than perfect.
4. **Remember you're not a human doing but a human being** with inherent strengths, gifts and talents as well as faults and shortcomings. Look for the law of averages not always the perfect outcome.
5. **Remember this Blessed are the flexible for they don't get bent out of shape.** Be willing to see things from different angles and other points of view. If plan **A always worked out we just wouldn't have an alphabet.** So think Plan B, Plan C all the way to Z.

Try practicing these ideas to shape your personality towards a more accepting, flexible approach in coping with life's challenges and you will experience less stress in your personal and professional life.

## Are you Resilient?

Resilience is the ability to cope effectively with change, challenges, uncertainty and chaos. Have you ever been around people that just don't seem to be negatively

affected by stressful situations and events? This is not the same as indifference, or ignorance, or denial. Resilient people acknowledge and accept their reality but do not seem to succumb to the ravages of the stressors. They seem to maintain that one degree of separation so they are not consumed by the onslaught of stress in their lives. In fact resilient people can rise above and use stressful experiences as a way to learn and redefine their universe in a more positive way. Are you Resilient?

Take this test. Please answer Yes or No to these Questions:

1. I tend to see a stressful event as a process rather than a specific outcome. Yes or No
2. I regularly enjoy fun and healthy hobbies that provide a buffer from stressful events and allow me a sense of satisfaction and fulfillment. Yes or No
3. I have an overriding faith that can usually work out for the better and life challenges are just a part of normal growth. Yes or No
4. I seek positive supports systems and I am able to express and share concerns and ideas with others that are trusting and compassionate. Yes or No
5. I have an overriding sense of self care that I matter and am a priority in the grand scheme of things and when situations are down I step up and take extra care of myself. Yes or No

If you answered yes to more than one of these questions, chances are you have resilient characteristics and probably cope with stress more effectively than the average person. If not just implement the questions criteria as guidelines for developing a more resilient personality and you will eventually become a resilient copier.

## How Resilient is your Family?

You probably know family dynamics have a huge impact on a psychological and emotional well being of each person involved. Although individuals make up the family, a family unit can have its own systems and patterns of coping effectively with stress. We do tend to learn by modeling the behaviors and expectations and values of our parents consequently these dynamics play a huge role in our ability to cope effectively with stress in our own individual lives. A resilient family comes down to how well it A.D.A.P.T.S.

Resilient families utilize these concepts within the family dynamics.

**A - Acceptance of individual differences.** Parents who are tolerant, flexible and embrace differences in their children seem to cope more effectively with stressful situations.

**D - Direction, Discipline and Commitment.** Families which have good leadership, established guidelines and consequences and/or unconditional

commitment to the family always provides the security necessary to cope with unforeseen change and trauma.

**A - Active Family Participation.** Really a family that plays together stays together. Developing family rituals around play, fun and social activities i.e. camping, pizza and movie night, etc. can provide a huge reprieve from daily hassles and challenges. What play may lack for in depth it certainly makes up for in height.

**P - Positive Empowerment and Appreciation.** Families that acknowledge and show appreciation for other members in the family is empowering and a bench mark for building good self esteem. Recognition for good efforts and daily participating in the family has a huge impact upon the atmosphere and spirit of the family and provides resilience against daily challenges and stressors.

**T - Toughness and Tenacity.** Families that work and pull together when in a state of crisis tend to overcome life's difficulties. When there is a determination and desire to work through difficulties this provides assurance and certainty for all members of the family.

**S - Spiritual Guidance, Ethics and Principles.** Families that promote sharing, love and compassion for others, tend to be more resilient against stress. For some families, spiritual expression is in the form of an allegiance to an organized religious body, but for others it's a compassionate concern for those around them or adherence to a moral code. Nevertheless spiritual guidance and ethical principles provide a positive guideline for family members to cope with uncertainty and unpredictable events in the world around them.

So to have family resilience against stress, please refer to this box.

**A - Acceptance of Individual Differences**

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