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Stress Management Made Simple: Effective Ways to Beat Stress for Better Health

Jay Winner
Blue Fountain Press (Apr 15, 2004)
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Prehistoric humans experienced several simultaneous physiological changes when threatened. These constituted a "fight or flight," or stress, response to predator attacks or similar situations. The author notes: "However, in the modern world, the stress response more often occurs when, for example, our bosses yell at us or when we are stuck in traffic. In most of these situations, it is not appropriate to run or fight. Therefore, the stress, in effect, remains in our bodies, and may contribute to illness."

Winner has compiled a multi-media package to assist readers in coping with both the everyday and extraordinary stresses people face. He understands that stress is a major challenge for many, and shares his stress management strategies and methods.

A physician, Winner maintains a family practice and has conducted stress management courses since 1992. This book provides problem definition, discussion, suggestions on behavior changes, and techniques and therapies for dealing with stress. These range from meditation and exercise to attitude adjustment and prescription medications. The chapter called "Change Your Thoughts" offers suggestions on altering one's reactions to thoughts that may occur during stressful situations. A boss's harsh words may precipitate feelings of sadness, anger, or frustration, causing an employee's internal reaction to be "I can't do anything right." Winner suggests that a better reaction is, "I did something wrong, but I've done a lot right."

The text is written in a simple, easily accessible style. Each chapter contains references to further reading, many of which also appear in an appendix. Case studies within chapters illustrate the topic being discussed. There are also quotations from notable persons, including Horace ("He who begun has half done. Dare to be wise, begin"), Benjamin Franklin ("He that won't be counseled can't be helped"), and Marge Piercy ("If you want to be listened to, you should put in time listening").

A major component of the book is a two-CD set featuring meditation exercises. The author cautions that the CDs should not be listened to while driving or operating machinery-they cover subjects like meditating for relaxation, a meditating with stretching, and meditating while eating. Separate audio contents are listed in an appendix.

Winner has succeeded in providing a set of tools that will be useful to many readers who experience that "fight or flight" feeling.

LEONARD F. CHARLA (March / April 2004)

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