

27.Stress

Despite decades of studies on stress management, tension and burnout are still major problems for modern urban dwellers, both mentally and physically. Though there is wide consensus among professionals that stress causes illness, it is much less clear how much damage it does us. Part of the problem is that stress levels affect people differently. A few have learned how to shrug off stress with little thought-or perhaps they merely think so, perhaps it is bothering them much more than they realize-but for others even minor frustrations cause them to go to pieces. Nevertheless, some aspects of the illness seem clear. As with most health-related issues, a good diet and low alcohol and tobacco intake make it easier to manage stress; intense exercise is particularly helpful. Being able to concentrate on some project, perhaps a hobby such as painting or playing a musical instrument is also very useful, if it is unrelated to the stress-causing activity. But, most valuable of all is developing the ability to step outside oneself, put everything in proper perspective and have a good hearty laugh!

Comprehension

1. Why is it so hard to treat stress properly?
2. What do doctors know about stress?
3. What are the best ways to deal with the problem?

Your opinion

1. Who suffers from the most stress, in your opinion?
2. Who handles stress better, in general, men or women?
3. Can we be stress-free? How?
4. How do you deal with stressful situations?
5. Do you think living in a complex society is more or less stress creating than in a simpler society, or is there no difference?

