

To your mental health

by Richard Ross

Stress is an individual's physiological response to events or situations which are perceived as exciting, frustrating, confusing or frightening. Hans Selye, a noted physician and author on the subject of stress, defines "stress" as "the rate of wear and tear within the body." Stress is the body's "flight or fight" response. This response prepares the body for action; it involves increased heart rate and blood flow, release of adrenaline and increased muscular tension. This state of physiological arousal is maintained until the stress inducing situation has been responded to or has passed. The body then returns to a "normal" state, which allows the body to recuperate. If, however, the body remains in a heightened state of physiological arousal for long periods of time, the body begins to wear down. Although the term "stress" has come to imply a "negative" or unpleasant experience, this is not necessarily true. Most people would find a life without the challenge which induces stress to be mundane and boring.

Stress is an inevitable aspect of contemporary western society. We are all experiencing some degree of stress, regardless of what we are doing. Holmes and Rahe, two researchers and authors, have generated a list of over forty events which they have found to induce stress. Losing one's job, arguing with one's spouse, taking care of a sick child, getting a promotion, going on vacation or running a race are all situations which create stress by imposing a change to which the individual must adjust. Selye refers to such pleasant and unpleasant events as "stressors." He states that the physiological response to all stressors is the same. Change and rapid adaptation are common characteristics of all stressors, or events which result in stress.

Most individuals can deal effectively with 98 per cent of the stressors in their lives. However, the remain-

ing 2 per cent of the stressors can lead to difficulty, detracting from the quality of their lives and, potentially, being deleterious to their health. This is especially true when stress is prolonged due to multiple "stressors" confronting an individual simultaneously or because stressors are ambiguous and difficult to define.

Individuals respond to stress in different ways. Some people experience stress as an increased heart-beat, others may feel "butterflies" in their stomach or feel nauseated and still others may experience muscle tension, backaches or headaches. Some individuals become so conditioned to the stress in their lives that they do not experience any subjective discomfort, but the internal "wear and tear" continues nonetheless. The effects of stress are cumulative, that is, they add up over time. It is prolonged and unabated stress which results in physical and emotional difficulty.

The majority of traditional medical textbooks suggest that approximately 70 per cent of all diseases are, to varying degrees, associated with prolonged stress. Even the most conservative authorities consider illnesses such as hypertension, peptic ulcers, colitis, bronchial asthma, hay fever, atopic dermatitis, arthritis, migraine headaches, impotence, sleep onset insomnia and a wide range of neurotic disorders, including depression and anxiety, to be stress related. When stressors are identifiable and can be dealt with in effective and creative ways the harmful effects of stress are minimized and self-esteem is enhanced.

To prevent the deleterious effects of stress individuals must learn to "manage" their stress. Effective stress management involves, whenever possible, modifying or changing the stressor, and learning new and different responses to stress. That is, you can learn ways to change stress producing situations and develop non-injurious responses to them. Here are some guidelines that one may use in learning to

manage one's stress.

Fundamental to modifying stressors in your life is learning to recognize what your personal stressors are. Take the time to evaluate the circumstances of your life and identify stressors which are confronting you. You may do this independently or with someone you trust and respect. This may be a friend, a family member or a qualified counselor. Keep in mind that the common denominator in all situations which create stress is change and rapid adaptation. Do not attempt to modify all the stressors in your life at once. Tackle one situation at a time. Decide which situation is most pressing and concentrate on modifying that one.

Recognize when you cannot change a situation and attempt to accept it until such time as you are able to effect a change. Until you can change a situation, find productive alternatives for dealing with your stress. Talk out your problems with someone. It is helpful to share your concerns with someone who cares and can understand. In doing this, you may find a solution or new perspective that had not previously occurred to you. Professional counselors in your community may be especially helpful when you feel "stressed" and troubled by a situation in your life.

Find creative and healthy outlets for your stress. Many individuals find physical activity to be particularly helpful when they are feeling tense or upset. Running or jogging, playing basketball or gardening are healthy ways to deal with stress. It is vitally important for effective stress management to schedule recreational time into your life.

Modifying stressors and restructuring one's personal schedule are proven methods for minimizing the amount of injurious stress. They skill of relaxation is another very effective technique for managing stress. The next article in this series will address relaxation—its benefits and how this important skill is developed.

Make your own solar fuel

by Omay Kenyotta, Ph.D.

Our nation has become shockingly dependent on foreign oil. Political chaos in the Mid-East threatens to curtail or cut off vitally needed supplies. With oil becoming more scarce and costly by the hour, our cars may soon roll to a stop...our homes grow cold under bleak winter skies.

It's time for Americans to demonstrate their traditional spirit of independence and become energy independent. There is a way. As with many major challenges, the solution is remarkably simple.

Your car and furnace can function perfectly—on 10-30 per cent water!

This is fact. Right now, many Americans are making their own fuel for pennies per gallon, with a simple "Backyard Energy Plant." Why can't you? You can build it in just a few hours with ordinary household tools. You need little or no mechanical ability. The cost? Around \$40 for components available at any building supply outlet!

We're talking about a new, recently designed product of American ingenuity; a small but astonishingly effective Solar Still that costs nothing to operate; that produces "Aquahol"—a mixture of 70-90 per cent (140-180 proof) ethanol (grain alcohol), 10-30 per cent water. You use it "as-is," direct from the still, in your car, truck, boat, tractor, or oil-burning furnace.

The water content vaporizes and acts as an "extender," increasing mileage and power. In furnaces, it actually adds BTUs!

The word is spreading fast! Last year, over 35,000 Americans applied for the easy-to-get federal permit necessary to distill fuel at home. Let us show you, step-by-step, how to have your own "Family Fuel Factory!"

In many respects, Aquahol is more efficient than gasoline or furnace oil. It burns cooler and cleaner with no carbon build-up, for longer engine life. There's no lead or addi-

tives to foul our air, to make necessary, costly catalytic converters. Only minor mechanical adjustments are needed for your vehicle or furnace to operate perfectly.

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Many respected scientists and engineers agree that fields of green and gold, stretching as far as the eye can see, are the answer to our nation's economic and energy problems. Not new oil fuels or "syn" fuels.

CROSSWORD

ACROSS

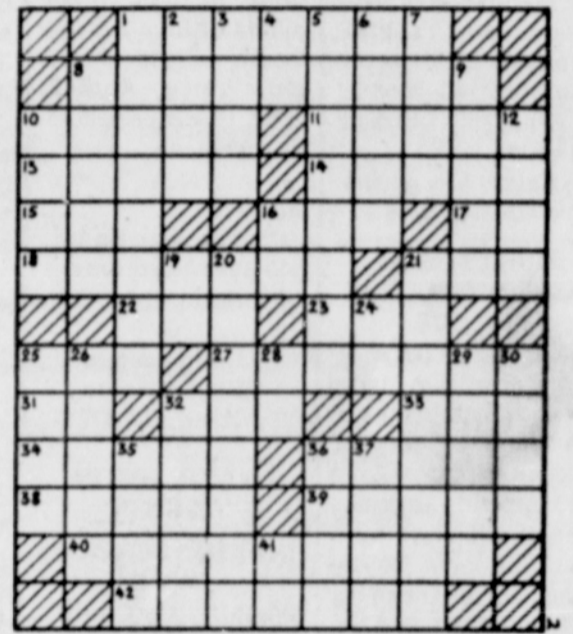
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8. Naval title
10. Potato (dial.)
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13. Decorate
14. Wood-shaping machine
15. Fortify
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18. Folder
21. Skill upon
22. Hint
23. Pole
25. Beast of burden
27. Qualification tests
31. French article
32. Pigeon
33. Insolent talk (slang)
34. Harangue
36. Lizard
38. More sagacious
39. Tardier
40. Portends
42. Compensation

DOWN

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4. Behold!
5. Excessive veneration

6. A wanderer
7. Pluck
8. Unit nucleus (mil.)
9. Anesthetic
10. South African Dutch
12. Dispatched
16. Pronoun
19. Chinese perfection
20. Literate
21. Fawns upon
24. Hawaiian bird
25. Below (naut.)
26. Fine line of a letter
28. Railway (abbr.)
29. Pre-vailing conditions
30. Mast
32. Cubic meter
35. Hebrew stringed instrument

Answers: Page 11



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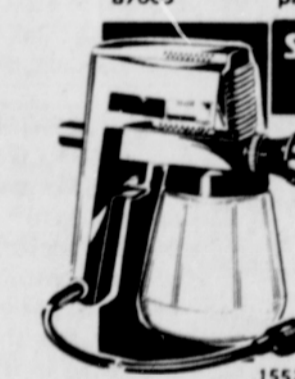
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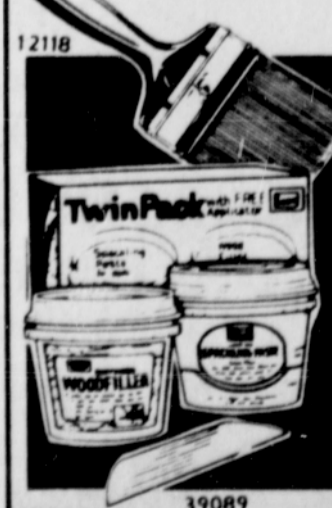
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