



## GOT STRESS?

*“Reality is the leading cause of stress amongst those in touch with it.”  
- Lily Tomlin*

Jude LaClaire, Ph.D., LCPC • Originally published in *KC Wellness Magazine*

**I GUESS WE COULD SAY THAT LIFE IS THE CAUSE OF STRESS.** Everyday challenges and obstacles can become pressures that overwhelm us. Small amounts of stress are healthy, motivating us to move forward a project, focus on a goal or stay alert as we accomplish a task. However when we are constantly “overchallenged” and our ability to cope diminishes the stress moves into a danger zone. At this point our physical and emotional well being are threatened.

If you imagine the stress scale from 1-10, any stress above a three will put you past the healthy “stress” quotient. Continued stress, at this level, can lead to memory problems, poor decision making, inability to concentrate, confusion, negative thinking, loss of objectivity and a desire to escape. It can also make you feel moody, restless, anxious, angry, irritated, lacking in confidence or apathetic. There’s more! High stress can cause physical problems such as headaches, muscle tension, pain, sleep disturbances, weight issues, high blood pressure, heart problems, immune deficiency disorders and cancer. Many studies have indicated that from 75%-90% of all illness is stress related.

“Well,” you say, “what can I do to reduce stress?” I think you know the usual recommendations that include changing your lifestyle to include rest, relaxation, proper nutrition, sufficient sleep, exercise and a daily spiritual practice. Of course checking out our ability to enjoy healthy interpersonal relationships and diverse social experiences helps, too. But do you want to know how you can relieve stress in the middle of the demanding schedule you may experience everyday?

Dr. John Leonard, one of the current leaders in the quest to reduce stress, has developed another NeuroBiological Program (NBP) tool called the “Mind-Body Health Enhancement Program.” (See January 2007

Wellness article on Pain Reduction and February 2007 article on My True Body) This tool, learned easily in one 90 minute session, enables people to:

- Reduce stress on command
- Eliminate negative emotions
- Boost energy and the joy of movement
- Experience the True Self
- Experience mental balancing for a project
- Peacefully release unpleasant memories
- Make the Mind-Body skills automatic

As I do this work with people, I am amazed by the effective, efficient way the system works. Recently I facilitated a session with a woman who is on disability because of many physical and psychological problems. She suffers from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and has had a long history of going to many health practitioners. She has many skills that she has learned to help her deal with issues of trauma and stress. She made the comment as she was learning the program that she felt more relaxed than she had in years. She was able to reduce her stress, anger and sadness (through some tears) and find a place of comfort and excitement. She was able to release a recent unpleasant memory and separate the facts from the feeling and fade the visual into a friendly image.

Another woman who works in a high-pressure management position shared that as she sat in a meeting when her stress began to build, she quietly told herself, “I want my stress to go to zero.” She was very pleased that her stress went down to zero and she participated in the meeting in her state of “peaceful readiness” accomplishing what she needed in that setting. Harnessing the power of the body-mind so that our energies can be used more productively in our everyday lives is much like



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the discovery of fire, the wheel or other “aha” moments that helped humankind move forward. It is an exciting adventure to be part of the neurobiological discoveries that can enhance our life and enrich us in so many ways.

Dr. Leonard’s programs are one more set of skills to have in our everyday emergency kit. Maybe then reality won’t be a stressor, even if we are in touch with it.

*Jude LaClaire, Ph.D., LCPC is a counselor, educator, and author. For counseling, appointments, seminars, groups, speaking engagements or information on NeuroBehavioral Programs (Pain Reduction, My True Body, Mind-Body Health Enhancement, Trauma Protocol) call 816-509-9277.*