

## STRESS JOURNAL

Based on *The Triple Whammy Cure* by Dr. David Edelberg.  
New York: Free Press, 2006. pp. 198-200.

June 7, 2006

Dr. Edelberg talks about the importance of a holistic approach to health:

To me, the single most interesting principle of holistic medicine is that symptoms, both physical and emotional are frequently messages from the body asking its owner to make changes. Since symptoms-as-messages are only trying to help, they require a good listener (you and, with luck, your doctor) in order to be understood. In this light, symptoms of stress, whether anxiety or headaches, anger or fatigue, are all, in a peculiar way, gifts....(p. 199)

And while we're on this topic of symptoms as messages, here's a good general rule: try to avoid taking medicines for a condition you can cure by making lifestyle changes. The real help for a smoker's cough is not cough syrup but quitting cigarettes. The real solution to heartburn is not the purple pill, but to stop stuffing yourself with lasagna before bedtime. And, yes, the real treatments for stress-induced anxiety or depression are not tranquilizers or antidepressants, but rather to see clearly your sources of stress and lean to cope with them—or walk away from them.

He goes on to recommend that people under stress keep a Stress Journal to help them listen to their symptoms, recognize the sources of stress in their lives, and decide how to deal with the stress—how to cope with it or walk away from it.

Dr. Edelberg's criteria for a Stress Journal are incorporated in the two pages that follow:

- Stress Symptom Survey. These two pages will help you listen to your symptoms. You will need only one copy of these pages.
- Daily Stress Journal. This page will help you connect the daily sources of stress with the symptoms they produce and plan how you will deal with the stress. You will need multiple copies of this page—one for every day you keep the journal.

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3521 Country Estates Drive, Kennesaw, GA 30152-4011  
Telephone: 770-425-5244 Facsimile: 770-426-7095 e-mail: [ruth.house@middleton-house.com](mailto:ruth.house@middleton-house.com)

Stress Symptom Survey

**Mental and Emotional Symptoms**

Circle each one in the list below (p. 198) that you are experiencing. Add any that are not listed.

- Anger
- Anxiety
- Burnout
- Crying Spells
- Depression
- Fearfulness
- Frustration
- Guilt
- Irritability
- Loss of Sense of Humor
- Mind Racing
- Nervous Habits (hair pulling, nail biting, minds eating)
- Pessimism
- Poor Concentration and Memory
- Powerlessness
- Resentment
- Short Temper
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Physical Symptoms**

Circle each one in the list below (p. 198) that you are experiencing. Add any that are not listed.

- Chest Tightness
- Exhaustion/Fatigue
- Frequent Colds
- Headache
- Heart Pounding
- Insomnia
- Teeth Grinding
- Irritable Bowel Syndrome
- Muscle Aches or Tightness
- Sudden Dry Mouth or Bad Taste
- Intuitive Physical Sensation of "Something Not Right"
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Trends and Notes**

If the symptoms suggest any trends at this point, write them down in the space below and add any notes that may help you understand them. For example: you get a headache about 2:30 pm every work day; you have a crying spell after every call from your Cousin Carol.

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	

Daily Stress Journal

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Stressful Event</b> You can include direct quotations of any comment that triggered a symptom. (p. 200)	<b>Emotional/Physical Symptom</b>
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.
6.	6.
7.	7.
8.	8.
9.	9.
10.	10.
<b>Notes (p. 201)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What do these events and symptoms tell you about yourself?</li><li>• How could you respond to stressful events differently?</li><li>• What changes should you make in the future to deal with stress?</li></ul>	