



Reducing Tension Time

By Dr Rakesh Chopra

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Dr Rakesh Chopra

www.DrRakeshChopra.com

drchopra1954@gmail.com

Preface

While mentoring ambitious leaders as a Visionary Strategist, I have seen over and over that what gets in the way of the leaders achieving what they set out to in their businesses, is their worrying habit.

Many people have the habit to remain tense so are unable to give their best to their projects or the situation at hand. If they have a tough goal to achieve they start worrying from the very beginning. Every problem during this journey gives them worries and thus the tension. The fact is, the moment they arrive at a decision on how to get the solution, there is no worry / tension at all. The beauty of this is that the solution may possibly happen after six months but they are feeling relaxed and not tense. The need is to reduce the tension time so that your precious energy is not wasted.

Further, many people treat every responsibility as a worry. “I am worried about the success of this project” “I am worried about the marriage of my daughter” and so on. These practically are the responsibilities (something positive) and not worries (something negative)”. So focus to understanding your worry situations and develop the strategic planning on how not to worry.

Dr Rakesh Chopra
Visionary Strategist

Explore Yourself

1. Whenever you have some physical problem everybody around you cares for you but when you have some problem in the mind, perhaps nobody cares. Why?
2. People normally tell you not to worry but perhaps nobody tells how not to worry. What should you do?
3. A room is full of smoke which is gradually increasing. You want to get rid of the suffocating smoke. What should be your strategy?
4. Many people, in a mood to manage tension and strain, end up feeling frustrated. Why?
5. One must be carefree but responsible too. Many people claim to be carefree but the fact is they behave carelessly. Give your opinion.
6. How far is it possible for you to avoid stress?
7. How do you feel when you are compelled to look after an unwanted guest?
8. In perfection you feel happy only at the end and that too if you have achieved as per the set standards, while in excellence you are automatically geared up to gain success and happiness every moment. Do you still want to attain perfection?



Learning Objectives

Through these pages, you will be able to :

- * Plan for yourself on how to escape from worry.
- * Identify that in problem situations releasing tension is no permanent solution.
- * Know how to reduce tension time.
- * Understand the practical difference between aiming at perfection and striving for excellence.
- * Convert a complaint into a problem.

TENSION is a silent killer. This statement appears to be a little difficult to digest. When a person is physically sick, all members of his family are disturbed. The spouse remains awake throughout the night, the son goes to each and every place to get the medicines, all the relatives keep on enquiring about his health, or even make courtesy visits. Every body understands his physical condition and extends full care accordingly.

But when one has any problem in the mind, normally, nobody seems to be concerned. People tend to ignore it completely. There is a general feeling that it is all psychological. As if a psychological problem is no problem at all. Even when one goes to the family physician, he tells the relatives not to worry because it is all psychological or, in medical language, he says it is functional. Surprisingly, the

people who claim to love the person, automatically start feeling and behaving in a carefree manner. Perhaps they are right. The doctor has confirmed him to be a normal person physically and even mentally. He has no pathological abnormality. The person is confused why the people, who normally care, are not caring now. Even the relatives are confused: if he has been declared normal why doesn't he behave normally. There is a feeling of an increasing distance.

Lack Of Understanding

There is no focus on understanding the ailing person. It is a simple fact that the word problem is attached to the word psychological. Every problem definitely has a solution. Of course, it needs a totally different kind of management from the management of any physical problem. The solution will only be initiated when we accept his condition as a problem.

Both the parties are confused and keep on blaming each other. When we are not aware of the solution, we normally prefer to admit that it is not our problem. It is an easy escape. When we don't own the problem how can we own the linked responsibility? But, by claiming not to own the problem, do we mean to say that it does not belong to us? Whom are we befooling? Is it wise to befool oneself?

In fact, by not owning, we are simply delaying the solution. Delay always complicates confusing situations. The visible circumstances have changed further. What we had planned earlier has become totally invalid. It now needs a new level of assessment. Decision to avoid the problem for the time being is different from ignoring it. Once ignored, we completely lose track and control of that problematic situation, and it becomes more and more complicated.

As we know escape is simply not possible. We can't afford to ignore the problem situation. We have limited resources. The delay will further reduce them. When resources are diminishing, the present uncomfortable situation looks more magnified. In fact, it has increased in its intensity.

With lack of understanding, the focus has entirely been shifted from the person and his problem. They behave like invisible enemies. No doubt love in the relationship still exists but care has disappeared. Any intention to care does not match the performance to care. Why and how should anybody care? There is no visible problem.

As per their understanding the person is absolutely normal. Physically fit, yes. But mentally he is highly disturbed. Who has the competence to judge? At the most, the feeling is, "He has gone mad." The only possible care they can even dream of is sympathy. The poor chap! He was a dynamic person earlier. Maybe God is not kind to him.

Under these circumstances the relatives tend to disown him and his problem; thus, they own no responsibility towards the solution. A simple approach is to attack. "All your investigations are within normal range. Why don't you stop worrying, even the doctor has said so", is the normal statement. They want to look intelligent and great. The person is highly confused. His stress is further building up. Earlier, he had the problem not very clear to him and now he has got one more problem: he has also developed the established disease of worrying. Everybody only says " Don't Worry " But.....

Nobody Tells

How Not To Worry

The tragedy is that people, by and large, don't know "How Not To Worry". It is as if, as long as they are alive, the worries are to be lived along. Similarly, if a subordinate or the life partner is not compatible at the desired level of understanding, they will have to accept to live in hell.

There is rarely a focus on understanding, accepting, and developing the self and the other person towards a happy and peaceful life. Is tension a must to be lived along? Is there no way out? Because almost everybody in this world is living a life full of tension, so we also must adopt the same style! Is it a compulsory courtesy? If we plan to live a happy and peaceful life, others might feel hurt because we are not following in their footsteps!

Tension — No Direct Existence

Tension which is a silent killer has no independent existence of its own. It is linked with stress. Only stress creates tension. If there is no stress, or if it has already been effectively managed, then tension is simply not possible. How can we manage "that something" which does not have its own independent existence? To manage the quality of any fruit,

nothing can be done with the fruit itself. Specific mixed breeding is planned for the seed.

Many people as per the depth of their knowledge plan to manage tension and strain. Unknowingly they only attempt to manage the impossible. If a person is asked to increase his height by two inches within the next five minutes it is not possible. If still one keeps on trying he will get no results. Of course he can wear a heel of two inches but that is not what was meant. Similarly, in the attempt to manage tension they work very hard because they have been educated and trained on the concept that a life full of tension is no life. As per their understanding tension has to be managed. But, while managing tension, they end up feeling confused and frustrated. In spite of their best efforts, happiness is far from being achieved. In fact the more efforts they put in, the more frustrated they feel.

At the most Tension can be easily released through various techniques of relaxation. Some people take alcohol, play some game, or go to some dance party while others prefer to go to a temple for offering prayers and still others, even without understanding the true meaning and depth, follow various widely preached methods of meditation.

No doubt all methods of relaxation give temporary relief. But do we need a temporary solution? Perhaps not. Then what to do? Is there no importance of relaxation? Should we ignore relaxation altogether? Relaxation can, at the most, release tension but the stress remains.

A room is full of smoke which is gradually increasing. We want to get rid of this suffocating smoke. One method some people may adopt is to open all doors and windows. Will it serve the purpose?

Can we have a smokeless room? Yes, temporarily we do have a false feeling. But surprisingly the smoke keeps on increasing in intensity. Quite alarming. Isn't it? What to do?

One method is to start worrying, remain tense and blame luck or any body else. The other approach is very simple. Focus must be on identifying the cause and dealing with it. Wherever smoke is visible, fire must be around. Focus on identifying the location of fire and extinguish it; now the smoke will automatically disappear through the windows: a good doctor doesn't manage the symptoms but the cause.

In real life, we keep on opening windows and rarely focus on the site of fire. We feel that by releasing tension, we are managing tension. Still we remained confused as to why the desired level of peace and happiness is not being achieved.

Many people at this stage tend to go to astrologers to mend their stars. Astrology is a recognised and established forecasting technique. Forecasting is only meant for better understanding and acceptance of our future situations.

Many students don't study and still expect good results. Without studying how can one expect good performance in an examination? Can any amount of simple or highly complicated worship lead to good performance and results? Certainly not.

If we don't start the journey, how can we reach the destination. While planning a journey people keep this thing in mind. But in life they simply can't co-relate the two. They just expect miracles. Perhaps they don't know that behind every miracle, there is a lot of planning and effort.

People never focus on why a particular person is missing from gossip sessions but when his results become visible they are pleasantly shocked.

Releasing Tension Is No Permanent Solution

Once an infant, after the morning bath, was dressed up by his mother. Surprisingly, immediately after that he felt restless and started crying. She caressed him, even sung a lullaby but to no use. Her mother-in-law was also not at home. Restlessly she waited for more than two hours. Neither her mother-in-law came nor was the child comfortable. She took the child to the doctor who gave him some tranquillisers. Till the effect of the medicine the child kept on sleeping but again started crying. The other doctor gave him pain killers but to no purpose.

The child kept on crying and the mother was getting more and more confused. It appeared to her that there was no choice except to keep on changing the doctors. One week passed but the infant was unimproved. She was even afraid of changing his clothes because the moment she touched him, he would start crying. Only under the influence of the medicine he had undisturbed sleep. Out of confusion and panic, she took the child to the Medical Institute. The doctor asked the mother to undress the child.

When she was taking off his clothes both the doctor and the mother were deeply shocked..... One week ago while dressing up the child, the safety pin along the frock had pierced through the skin. How could the child be comfortable with the pin inside his skin? Can any number of medicines give him any permanent relief? Any method of relaxation can only be a temporary solution. Out of ignorance, many a time, the real cause is ignored. More delay in a permanent solution can make the situation more complicated.

The moment the pin was removed, the infant heaved a sigh of relief and his actual recovery started. Only at this stage the medicines were also effective as part of the healing process.

Releasing tension gives only a false feeling of a solution. The person is feeling confused because, to the best of his understanding, the maximum has been done. If that best has not worked at all that means something must be wrong somewhere, but what could it be? That is not at all clear to him. The focus must be on stress and not on tension. As long as stress remains one can't feel relaxed and balanced; so, stress must be managed first.

Be Carefree But Responsible Too

One must be carefree but responsible too. Many people feel surprised " Carefree and responsible at the same time? How is it possible?". Though some people claim to be carefree, they are actually careless. Relaxation does not always mean that we will become carefree. Without managing stress, if you plan to relax yourself, you ultimately tend to develop a totally careless attitude towards your responsibilities.

When the daughter-in-law joins the family after marriage, the proud mother-in-law is initially very happy. Gradually, she is afraid to accept and face the new responsibility. Her, more than two decades old, authority is being silently challenged. There is a rising atmosphere of conflicts. She finds it difficult to understand her daughter-in-law, and she also feels that her daughter-in-law also does not understand her. There is an uncomfortable exchange of blames from both the sides.

As a dignified escape she devotes her time to religion. She declares, "Now I formally hand over all my responsibilities and the authority to my daughter-in-law." She forgets one crucial point that the daughter-in-law also needs training to accept and justify this new responsibility. She claims that she has become carefree but the fact is she has become careless.

Result Can Only Be Felt

Tension and Strain are the result of stress only. We can only feel the result but we can't manage it. Performance or the cause is in the present but the result will take us to the future. When we focus on the result it is an unrealised plan to live in the future. It is not possible to live in the future. When we attempt to do something which is impossible, we will only invite frustration as an unwanted guest.

Our wisdom tells us the difference between what is possible and what is impossible. Once we decide something that is impossible, we should not waste our precious energy in trying to do that. This is again a very simple concept and we know that the simple is always powerful. The fact remains that we don't want an uncomfortable result.

Whatever the result we can only feel that. So, the deeds must be planned and performed either with cause or performance. Stress creates tension and strain; so, our focus must be on managing the situation. If unmanageable, wisdom says accept it as it is.

When the situation is unmanageable, first ACCEPT IT as it is.

Stress is an inevitable part of life. Because we are in a continuous state of development, there will always be many situations which we can't manage with ease. It means that every unmanageable situation causes stress. We simply can't avoid it.

Delay Breeds Corruption

The need to tackle symptoms of stress is the moment we feel them. "Delay breeds corruption" is a widely accepted dictum. The problematic situation at hand is surrounded by many irrelevant ideas. If an outsider is present during discussion of a delicate family situation, nobody in the group feels comfortable. That person may be very intelligent, even a proven consultant. But he is the odd person out in that group; thus, he becomes totally irrelevant. These irrelevant persons or ideas make us more and more unspecific in our approach. Automatically the solution gets delayed.

A simple way to manage situations is gradually moving on to a complex track. Because we have not trained ourselves in the art of managing irrelevant persons or ideas, we feel

trapped in a situation. In spite of our best efforts we are unable to live in peace and happiness. Delay means we are inviting unwanted complications. Inviting somebody as a guest means we are accepting the responsibility of looking after him properly. Our need is to manage and avoid that unwanted situation, but now we are feeling compelled to give our best of energy and resources by unwillingly living it. We are feeling disturbed and can't blame anybody else.

Managing a simple situation needs less energy while to deal with a complicated situation requires more energy. With a limited stock of energy, we are, gradually, becoming hollow from within. A lot of our energy has unnecessarily been wasted in undesirable destructive efforts. With less energy we can't even manage the next very simple situation.

The longer we ignore the stress situation, the harder it is to adjust to a state of relaxed well being. In fact we are straying from that desired state of comfort. Moreover, if we ignore it, then we are inviting anxiety. Every next moment is leading towards more and more discomfort. When we take a decision that we can't do anything, at least in that case, we won't be wasting our precious energy on an unacceptable track of performance.

Reducing Tension Time

Tension Time is that time during which we normally remain tense. Suppose our need is promotion. If we don't get promotion for the next one year, we would remain tense for one year. If we get promotion after one month, our tension time is reduced to one month. And if it comes after one week tension time is reduced to one week. Similarly, if the promotion comes to you after one day, one hour, one minute

or even one moment, the tension time is accordingly reduced. If we get a letter from the boss mentioning, "As per the company's new policy you will be promoted after one year", your tension disappears even though the promotion will come after one year. So

To Reduce Tension Time Develop The Habit Of Taking Correct And Quick DECISIONS

Should we just start practising to take correct and quick decisions without feeling the practical depth of how to take a decision? We have all read since our school days " Practice Makes Perfect ". Is it true? Perfection itself is a very confusing concept. Perfection normally means we have attained the ultimate. An Olympic champion is taken as perfect in his field. The person could become a champion only after more than a decade's devoted practice. But what happens the next time? Somebody else will come and break the record. Now, where is perfection?

Towards Excellence

Life is in a constant state of development. Whatever we accomplish today will leave more scope for further improvement. Perfection is possible only under very selective and specific conditions. Perfection can't be general. We need to set a specific target with well defined criteria. Achieving the same can be taken as one level of perfection. If we are keen to attain perfection as a working belief, we must keep on setting and achieving short term specific goals.

We must plan to move towards excellence. Perfection can be taken as a destination which also has a beginning. Attaining perfection is the end of a specific effort. Once a goal is achieved, there is the need to plan the next goal or there is an overlapping of many goals. It leads to a situation of fluctuating and jerky moments. For further growth we need to plan again and then again. We live in an undefined fear of becoming blank again.

While striving for excellence there is no visible end. It is a continuous journey. Staying on the path excellence is smooth sailing. The mind is never blank. Because the track of performance is very clear, the mind remains very fresh and energetic. This way we are mentally prepared to grow every moment.

Normally, the word perfection is used in a positive sense. Excellence is always a positive term while perfection can also be sometimes negative, depending on the track we have chosen. In perfection we feel happy only at the end and that too if we have achieved as per the set standards. In excellence, we are automatically geared up to gain success and happiness every moment.

Practice May Not Make A Person Perfect

Practice is only a mechanical action and, by itself, lacks wisdom. Wisdom has a role to play only before we start practice. Sometimes, without a clear concept of what we wish to develop, we start practice. When we practice wrong methods in a wrong direction how can we attain the positive aspect of perfection? The unfelt reality is that we are straying away from positivity. At this stage if we realise the mistake, correcting it, needs double the energy. First, we have to come back to the base level from where we started. And second, to restart towards the correct and the desired positive track. Imagine the amount of energy being wasted. It is important for us to realise the fact that.....

Practice Generates PERMANENCE Not Perfection

In fact, by practising on wrong lines, we will develop unacceptable habits. Habits once developed can't be changed overnight. The tragedy is that only people with whom we have dealings, make us realise that we have developed wrong habits. With our established unacceptable habits, they

don't feel comfortable with us. We wish people to love and come close to us, but we feel they are gradually deserting us. It is not very easy to accept such a situation.

Before we start practice it becomes a must to develop a very clear concept of the correct method and the right direction.

This way, on the desired track of positivity, we will gradually generate permanence. It becomes our responsibility to not allow tension to become a silent killer.

Instead of trying to manage tension and ultimately developing a negative habit of attempting the impossible, we must first know that it is stress which creates tension.

Our focus must be on stress.

Diagnosing a negative situation is the initial step towards Stress Management. When the diagnosis is correct the desired management by itself becomes very easy and within reach. But, if the problem itself has not been identified, no solution is possible. We must understand and follow simple powerful concepts.

Convert Complaint Into A Problem

People normally complain and say they have a problem. The complaint is non-specific. It is only a feeling, an attitude and can't have a solution. "I am feeling bored" is only a complaint for which no solution is possible. Being nonspecific in nature, the complaint will only confuse the person and build up unnecessary stress.

Every complaint must be converted into a problem first. The problem is always specific, it can be observed, it can be measured. "I am feeling bored because I need a break from the routine or I don't have a VCR or I am not getting my salary or my car has run out of petrol", are some expressions

of problems. These problems are specific in presentation and are equally specific in solution. In fact a solution is always hidden in the problem.

Once we have converted our complaint into a problem, we have automatically been diverted from the path leading to tension. It is the beginning of our journey towards peace and happiness.

UNDERSTANDING WORRY SITUATIONS

Explore Yourself

1. Many people feel that worry is an integral part of life and you can't find the escape till the last breath. What is your opinion?
2. Past is dead which means you can't live in the past. What possible benefits you can derive from your past experience?
3. As a good human being you wish to help others but sometimes they might take your help as interference. What should be your criteria in such a situation?
4. Your close friend is facing some negative situation. He is extremely worried. What possible could be achieved by worrying?
5. Of course, anybody can feel confused and disturbed about some real or imaginary disease. What should be the approach during such a situation?
6. All problem situations in the mind may not be real. How to differentiate the problem situations which need concern and the others which must be ignored?



Learning Objectives

Through these pages, you will be able to understand that out of all worry situations :

- * 40 % belong to future and never happen.
- * 30 % are in the past which can't be helped.
- * 12 % concern others, none of your business.
- * 10 % are because of real or imaginary sickness.
- * And 8 % are the real situations which are worth concern and must never be ignored.

ALL of us can conduct a worry survey of situations around us and even about others in our circle. These are not normal life situations but are those situations where we normally tend to worry. Many people feel that worry is a part of life but they forget that many of our life situations need not cause us any worry or even concern.

40% Never Happen

Out of all the so called worry situations, surprisingly 40% are the ones which we never face in reality. We are normally mentally prepared for these situations as we are afraid that these would happen. In the process we remain totally occupied in the imaginary negative consequences and indeed spoil our beautiful present. Thus the present is full of anxiety, fear and all similar negative feelings. While performing in the present, we continue to be uncomfortable as if we would be caught red handed to face some unacceptable embarrassing situations or heavy punishment. This way our precious energy just goes down the drain. We remain fully unaware of the fact that only because of this

folly of ours, we can sometimes actually get caught. Without anybody's asking any question we start replying. Even the other person feels confused and suspicious.

One idealistic father, on his son's admission to a professional college, gave him strict instructions "Now you are staying in the hostel, so concentrate fully on studies and never go to see any movie in a theatre." The son promised. But there was a lot of difference in staying with the family and staying in the hostel. At times he felt home sick. He was feeling bored. All his friends were enjoying life: for them there were no restrictions. He was feeling as the odd person out. There is a limit of suppression of desires. For two years he didn't go to see any movie. Ultimately, the volcano was to burst.

One fine day he took a decision to study well and enjoy his life too. Since he had developed an image of a very reserved kind of person who is not interested in movies, he went alone to see a movie. He was feeling weak and nervous: he was afraid somebody might see him and complain to his father.

Any how he purchased the ticket and entered the hall. All the time he kept on feeling that his father was about to enter the hall from one gate or the other. In spite of his best efforts to enjoy the movie he could not concentrate. Throughout he was developing a strong feeling, if his father couldn't come here he must be waiting for him in the hostel. The poor chap!

After the show it was with great difficulty that he reached hostel. His pulse was very fast and his breathing heavy. Even while opening the lock he had a vague feeling that his father might be sitting inside.

He had gone to see the movie for enjoyment. He wanted to relax so that he could feel more energetic to study. He was

worried about a situation in his imagination, which he didn't face at all. What did he get by worrying? He was experiencing the fear and mental balance was completely disturbed. It took him a lot of time and energy to revert back to his normal working level. Worrying could only give him heavy losses. It is very important to get clarity and plan precautions.

At the branch office of a multinational company, the manager was in a very cheerful mood when he received a telephonic message that the auditors were coming for inspection. Being a sensitive person, he felt panic. Immediately, he started going through all his records. He remained under heavy stress for three days till the auditors visited the office. He could neither sleep nor concentrate. Out of a total of twenty five, he could not prepare well on one project. For the last six months, this project had been bothering him.

During their visit, the auditors had a superficial inspection of the branch and asked him certain general questions. The focus of the chief audit officer was not on finding faults but on encouraging the concerned officials by guiding them towards excellence for future performance. The poor manager remained disturbed till the team left. It took him literally two days to come out of his imaginary shock.

Here again the manager was worried about a situation which he never had to face. There is no relevance to plan, implement or even worry on those situations which we will never face in our life.

30 % In Past, Can't Be Helped

The next 30% are those situations which belong to the past. Today we are living in the present which by itself has no performance dependence over past situations. If in the past

we had made blunders, that does not mean that today also only blunders will be committed. Similarly, if we have excelled in the past it does not guarantee our success today. We have seen people who did nothing for the last twenty years and now they are heroes. We have also seen those who were heroes earlier but are nothing more than a zero today.

The past has no direct link with the present. Some worthwhile support received during past performances may not be available in the present. Life is a non stop flow of time through various situations and events. No doubt the present is a part of this continuous flow from the past to the future but, at the same time, present is totally independent. Any desire to get a repeat of the past may not be fulfilled. Our desire or need may not be fulfilled on the expectation of, and false dependence on past strength. At the most dependence is possible only on present resources and that too those around us at the time. If our best resource is not available with us in the present moment, it is of no use.

The past is dead and it can't be revived. Even if we want something urgently from a dead person, it is simply not possible to get it. Still people keep on expecting from the dead. In the past they were dependent on that dead person. They want same old state of affairs to continue but the person concerned is no more available. In their mind, they want to give repeated calls to that person as if more effort is required to make a dead person alive and active. Of course a person in deep sleep certainly needs more effort to be awakened. Further, there is a difference between a dead person and a person in coma. A person in coma looks like a dead person but he is really not. That person needs medical treatment and not repeated and loud calls.

For majority of people, unconscious (hidden) past experiences cause worry in the present : their present decisions are governed by some past experience. Can the past rule any body? The past can never repeat itself. Then how can any decision purely based on the past be relevant? The past is no more. "Is it worth worrying over the past?" is a million dollar question. Because if it is beneficial then every person must be motivated to worry and if it is not, we must train self to stop worrying altogether. Even if we want to get something out of the past happenings, nothing is possible. It can't be helped.

Let us accept that past is of no use to us in the present. Any effort to revive past is not going to succeed and will only lead to frustration. Under these circumstances we can very comfortably take a decision not to link the past with our present situation.

12 % Concerns Others None Of Our Business

70% of our worry situations have already been identified and the next 12% concerns other people. Are they really none of our business? We do love others. We depend upon them for so many of our needs. We don't know when we might need the help of even strangers. Many a times, just to maintain or build up our relations, we extend our helping hand without even establishing our intention and competence to help. We simply presume that they will never seek our help.

Do others need our concern in their personal problems? At the same time, do we want others to interfere in our personal affairs? Do we really appreciate their show of concern? Of course we do want their help in our hour of need but we

never feel comfortable if they start obliging us. We want them to help us only when we take a decision to seek their help and never as their decision to help us. We feel threatened if they take a decision to help us without being asked for.

No body in this world wants to be ruled by others. People prefer to suffer in silence rather than to expose their personal problems to others. Even in close relations people don't feel very comfortable to expose hundred percent of themselves. We don't want others to come forward and help us unless we are feeling completely handicapped. We want to manage everything ourselves because we can't live under pressure of obligation. The fact is that we need only a tip in the direction of help.

A lady had a sudden attack of high blood pressure. The doctor was called. What was the reason? When asked, she broke out, " Some students came in a group and mercilessly beat a professor staying in the next lane. " She didn't know that professor personally. Without even assessing the situation she took it to heart and started worrying as if by doing so something positive would happen.

Like her, many of us have the habit of worrying about so many unconcerned and irrelevant issues. Without having any applying authority to solve a particular problem we start putting our delicate mind on the problem. The fact is we don't even have slightest idea of relevant information. It is none of our business.

The same lady fully remembered how she felt alone in this world when her husband was in hospital. It was very difficult for her to arrange money for his open heart surgery. Facing problems at the

home, calling a doctor, taking a second opinion, getting admission to the hospital, going through all the investigations and at the same time looking after her job and small children. Even today she trembles to feel those deadly moments. Nobody came forward for real help. Many people, without assessing their intentions, had just offered help but when requested they silently disappeared. She had faith in many people in her circle but none came to her rescue.

The tragedy of our system is that people also shirk helping others. In their imagination they live the fear of total help required which they can't afford mentally and physically. What should we do when the problem belongs to the other person?

Establish Competence And Offer Help if Accepted Then Do It

First of all we must assess at our own level, " Do we have the competence to help?" If yes, then just offer help. We have the intention to help and if the other person feels the need of our help he will come forward. If we just start help without his consent, the other person who is already facing a problem, may feel highly embarrassed. People even say, " Why do you interfere in our affairs?"

10 % Is Sickness Real Or Imagined

Next ten percent are those situations which are caused by some sickness. If somebody has developed some problem in their circle, they start feeling as if they also have same symptoms.

One boy studying in medical college was feeling highly confused about the state of his health. Whatsoever was taught to him in the class, he felt as if he has same symptoms. This way he became very depressed. Naturally before joining medical college he was hale and hearty but now he imagined he was suffering from so many deadly diseases. One day in the class he was taught about pregnancy. That was the height of it. He sent WhatsApp message to his parents, " Help me, I think I am pregnant."

Of course, anybody can feel confused about some or the other imaginary disease. A person having a constant headache might start feeling as if he has a brain tumour; a person having pain and burning in the chest might think he has a heart problem and so on. Whether sickness is real or imaginary doctors of all specialities are now a days easily available.

On the expert advice we must get all the investigations done and start treatment. Many people don't go in for investigation out of an irrational fear. Their perception is that they will have diabetes if the report says, " Blood sugar is higher than the normal range." Does that mean if they don't go in for investigation, they won't have diabetes? For all our health problems, real or imaginary, specialised treatment is available; therefore, there is nothing to worry about.

Only 8 % Is Worth Concern

Now we are left with only eight percent of those worry situations which keep us disturbed. These must never be ignored; otherwise, life will literally become a hell. These are real situations which we are really facing in the present. Every such situation needs a very deep and thorough understanding.

If some student scores more than 75 % marks in an examination, he is said to have got distinction. Now, after all the calculations we have realised that 92% percent are those situations where no management is required. Thus we say that out of all our so called worry situations, we have scored 92% marks. It is something to celebrate. Now only 8% are left. Imagine the burden which has gone off our minds. With all the energy and resources at our disposal this 8% IS NO PROBLEM.

This 8 % is our logical problem, which we need to manage. The method to identify this eight percent, is very simple. Any problem which belongs to the present falls under the category of 8%. The present, as we all know is not one year, one month, one week, one day, one hour, one minute or even one second. PRESENT IS JUST ONE MOMENT. Our focus must be only on managing the present moment.

Many people claim to live in the present still they remain disturbed. Their concept of the present is much beyond one moment. They feel that the present is either the whole life, or at least as long as this project is going to be completed.

The project can be : marriage of their children, treatment of the parents, next promotion, completion of their house under construction or any other similar project. They do accept the present but also accept the future linked consequences. That's a blunder.

Once we identify present problems, our focus must be on gaining hundred percent understanding of that. When we develop certain skills in managing those difficult life situations, even this 8 % can also be easily managed, thus helping us lead a TENSION FREE life.

HOW NOT TO WORRY? TUG OF WAR

Explore Yourself

1. People normally tend to worry in most of the life situations. Does worry give you a positive or a negative feeling?
2. Most people confuse responsibility with worry. Do you feel disturbed with each and every responsibility you come across? Do you feel that worry is unavoidable when there is responsibility?
3. As a rule you don't waste any thing in life, particularly when you are aware of it. Then why people waste their much needed precious energy in worrying?
4. Many parents often feel responsible in warning their children, "I don't understand what you are doing? Your examination are at hand; at least now start worrying." What should be your approach as a parent?
5. For a peaceful and happy living you must take a decision to practice not to worry. Where to find the opportunities for such a practice?

6. In their day to day expressions people are normally not clear about the use of the positive and the negative words. In your opinion what could be the possible benefit of using positive words.



Learning Objectives

Through these pages, you will be able to :

- * Feel that worry is not a part of responsibility.
- * Realise as to how to invest your precious energy in justifying your responsibilities.
- * Undo the damage and move on to the track of becoming an expert on not worrying at all.
- * Identify the positive alternate expressions on the track of living a life free from worries.

IT was the fourth consecutive meeting of all the board members in one month. The agenda was to re-discuss the new multi-billion oil project with the group president.

"I feel nobody is worried how things are progressing. If the board members don't feel the stress of this new project, then how can the consultants, engineers and technicians would?" said the worried group president in a disappointing voice.

"This clearly portrays that nobody around here is feeling the responsibility. Aren't you worried if the prestigious project is not completed in time. In that case we would be no where", he displayed more of his emotions in an endeavour to generate motivation. Like other three meetings this one also ended with an emotional lecture from the worried group president who completely forget his responsibility to discuss the constructive and essential details concerned with the project.

Most people confuse responsibility with worry. Do they really go together? Is worry unavoidable when there is responsibility? Do we feel disturbed with each and every responsibility we come across? Are we trained to worry from the very beginning? Has the journey of life and the journey of worry a common goal? Is there no escape from worry, or is it that we are not aware of such an escape? If a responsible person remains worried, can he carry out his responsibilities? Has worry no role while carrying out responsibilities or is worry an integral part of responsibility?

The answer to these questions may further confuse us if we don't have the clarity. It is very important for us to know whether worry and responsibility go in opposite directions or they go parallel. If, we feel, they go parallel then worry seems to be equally important and should never be ignored. But if they go in opposite directions then living with worry is a dangerous situation.

Does worry give us a positive or a negative feeling? When we examine all such situations, it becomes very clear that whenever we have worried, we have definitely felt negative only.

When we look back on all the responsibility situations, we have received only a positive feeling. If we avoid worry, our feelings about responsibility are always constructively positive. It fills in us a deep feeling of motivation and confidence. Mind is free totally from disturbances. We do have a sound sleep. We get up fresh in the morning. Our team members love to work with us. Accordingly, the results are also positive.

Investment or Speculation

Investment means we place money or energy in some activity so that it will increase in value. Only a person who is responsible will have a focus on investing. He knows very clearly what his needs are and what he can afford. If there is a losing proposition, he is fully aware of it. He will label that project as his research and development.

The word responsible itself reflects the meaning, "It is the ability to respond to any given situation to its desired level of management." Accordingly, every step has been well understood, assessed, and planned thus, we have full control over all operations.

Whenever we spend money or energy in hope of getting the profits it is called speculation. In speculation we may get profits, but there are equal chances of loss also. In the event of loss, probably the project at hand was not felt in depth. The effort was made without proper planning. Needs and desires alone don't ensure profits. Unless they are backed by effective goal setting, proper understanding, planning, organising and well guided performance, they are not very helpful.

Our aim must be very clear to us. The moment we have a clear cut focus on our well directed aim, we perform on the responsible track. And when the aim is not in focus, we invite worries. Responsibility always gives us comfortable positive feelings while worry only gives us uncomfortable negative feelings. The fact is.....

Worry & Responsibility

Go In Opposite Directions

When worry and responsibility go only in opposite directions their being together is dangerous for our health and peace of mind.

Limited Source Of Energy

Let us not forget that we have a limited source of energy. Performance needs energy. Without energy nothing can move in this world. Whether we work in office or at home, whether we walk or talk, energy is required. Without energy we can't even listen or think.

Worry is indeed a mental process, so it also needs energy. On worrying, our energy is diverted towards worry and is wasted. We do need our precious energy to carry out our responsibilities. Worry is negative while responsibility is positive. This lands us into a tug of war like situation where

two groups of people pull a rope in opposite directions. In this game, the winner is declared only when the energy of one side is outbalanced by the other. Similarly both worry and responsibility are pulling against each other. In the process the precious energy meant to carry out the responsibility is just being wasted in this tug of war.

For developing a clear understanding, let us consider a hypothetical situation. If 20% of our energy has been diverted to the worry side, then, as a simple mathematical equation 80%, is left on the responsibility side. But it does not happen like that. So here also, to balance the situation, worry will snatch away 20% more energy from the responsibility side. Thus, we will be left with only 60% of our energy and not 80% as perceived earlier.

When we are investing only 60% of our energy the results will be proportionately lower. Normally, the person is not aware of this invisible loss and keeps on blaming luck or other factors for his poor performance. The fact remains that, in this case, 40% of our precious energy has been wasted, only because of worry.

If, by chance, 50% of our energy has gone to the worry side, then it will snatch away 50% energy from the responsibility side. As a result, we will be left with no energy to perform. Without energy even the best of electronic equipments can't function. So here also our mind which, in the past, has been proved to be very sharp and intelligent, cannot function. We have all faced this kind of situation sometime or the other in life. We do say to ourselves, "What has happened to me! I cannot find a solution even for this very simple problem." We are feeling highly embarrassed within ourselves.

Are We Intelligent?

The fact is yes, we are all intelligent. Our past record proves it. We don't need a certificate from a consultant. We already know that, as a rule, we don't waste anything in life, particularly when we are aware of it. We have never torn away a five rupee note. Then, why are we wasting our much needed precious energy?

The tragedy of the system is that there is no external source of energy: it must come from within. There is a false feeling that we can buy energy from external sources e.g. through material comforts, by appointing consultants, or hard working & intelligent subordinates. To manage them effectively we again need energy. Otherwise, the moment others feel that we are in the habit of wasting our energy in worry, they will lose respect for our authority. Their focus will shift from our work to extracting the maximum from our resources for their benefits. Gradually, we will be shocked to see them flourishing in some other job or their own business as our competitors.

Formally Trained To Worry

By now we know our energy is wasted in worry; so, our wisdom says, " It is precious, don't waste it, instead invest it in responsibility. " Simply by knowing that worry will squeeze away our energy is not enough. Over the years and, even for generations, we have been formally trained to worry.

Even during early school days our parents warned us a number of times , " I don't understand what you are doing. Your examination is at hand; at least now start worrying. "

Similarly, in performing any family or business responsibility, we have been forced to learn the damaging art of worrying.

YOUR WISDOM SAYS
NEVER WASTE YOUR
PRECIOUS ENERGY IN
WORRY, INSTEAD
INVEST IT IN
RESPONSIBILITY

Today we feel independent and free to take our own decisions. But are we really independent? Aren't we trapped from all sides by our deep rooted worrying habits? Can anybody change within a moment? Again, our desire alone is not enough. It must be backed by proper understanding and planning.

We know that practice has made us experts in the art of worrying. Now we need to undo the damage and move on to the track of becoming an expert on not worrying at all. Let us plan to reverse the process. As simple is always powerful

while the complicated is bound to be weak, focus on a simple method to become an expert.

Practice Not To Worry

As practice generates permanence we must take a decision and practice not to worry. For any kind of practice, we need opportunities made available to us. Where to find these opportunities? God is very kind to us. We are lucky. Every day we face so many worry situations. In the morning when we get up there is no water in the tap, the child has missed his school bus, the wife is sick, the car is punctured, in the office maximum staff is on leave, we are not prepared for an important business meeting, and so on.

We can take a decision to practice not to worry in all such situations. Life is full of problems leading to worries. So, every day we have so many worrying situations or, let us say, the opportunities to practice not to worry. While facing such a situation just remind yourself, "I must not waste my precious energy in worry but instead invest it in responsibility."

For example, if 80% of our energy is normally wasted in worry then, this time, it will be at least 1% less. If, on the average, we practice ten times a day then in a year it is 3,650 times. Maybe after about a year we will have developed a Non-Worrying Personality.

Now the question is, if we don't worry how should we respond to the situation? What is the positive alternative to this negative and dangerous word worry?

As The First Practical Step Use Positive Word CONCERN Instead Of Worry

The moment we use a positive word to express our feelings, we start feeling positive from within. " I am worried about my results " is replaced by, " I am concerned about my results." Similarly, " I am worried about my daughter's marriage " is replaced by, " I am concerned about my daughter's marriage " and so on.

In addition, let us take a decision to identify all the negative words we use in our daily life and identify the positive alternatives. "I have to reach my office by ten". What is the compulsion? It can be easily replaced by a simple and positive expression, " I must reach my office by ten or I should reach my office by ten or even I need to reach my office by ten". All these simply give us positive expressions and protect us from all the negativity of life.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Dr Rakesh Chopra is a visionary strategist focused to mentor ambitious leaders. He brings more than thirty years of experience in the fields of medicine, business management and spirituality to his work while mentoring ambitious leaders.

Why build up stress first and then manage it when it can be eradicated in the first place itself. This gives him an in-depth understanding of human nature (including relationship compatibility) combined with the ability to visualise innovative strategies that can be applied in your life and business to accelerate growth.

People at the senior / top management normally have the ability to manage most of the situations but are stuck in a few. Their friends don't have the understanding and the relevant wisdom on the subject and they can't discuss their problems or the visionary projects with their subordinates, so feel lonely at times. Dr Chopra very well fits in this role.