



Boxed In

Members of American Legion Post No. 220 stand near the Christmas Cheer boxes which they annually prepare for donation to needy area families. Pictured are committee members Paul Ferguson, George Carson, Luther Berry, Lester Witherspoon, Henry Wilson, Ray Spencer, Joan Bell, Melvin Beaty, Southern Prysock, James McWillis and Andrew Settles (photo by James Parker).

Stress: Negative and positive aspects

By DR. CHARLES FAULKNER
Syndicated Columnist

Stress and its effects upon the body are extremely fascinating but detrimental to bodily functions. Here are a few examples to show you what I mean:

- A young lady preparing to take her college finals was so afraid of failing that on the night before the examinations, she found large black blotches all over her body.
- Another young lady preparing for a job interview became so nervous that her body developed rashes similar to poison ivy.
- A man preparing for his first professional boxing match was so tense that he was unable to lift his right arm because of acute stiffness and annoying soreness.
- A singer who had performed in front of audiences for many years virtually froze during his first television appearance.
- A famous newscaster was reprimanded for mispronouncing a two-syllable word and hasn't been able to pronounce the word correctly since the reprimand.
- A man who spent many hours studying for an important exam suffered a complete loss of memory until the exam was over.
- On the morning of her wedding day, the bride-to-be began

crying uncontrollably for more than 24 hours.

I could go on and on with similar examples of the negative impact of stress. A physician will often find no medical cause for these problems and will normally attribute them to stress.

In most cases, people who have vivid imaginations, are creative, frequently daydream and are considered to be visual tend to experience such difficulties more than other people. It is this capacity to turn thoughts into feelings easily that brings about changes in the body which cause us grief.

And it is these very people who have the capacity and potential to use their creative imaginations to make themselves happy, relaxed and even healthy. In other words, highly suggestible people are prone to deep stress because their minds easily translate thoughts and ideas into feelings. If they think of themselves becoming tense, they actually become tense. If they see a person enjoying a piece of cake, they become hungry. If they see a sad scene, they begin to cry. If they have a disagreement with someone, they feel guilty (even if the other person is at fault). If someone says he does not like them, they become distraught.

But it works in reverse, also.

They are super-affectionate, compassionate, devoted and simply unable to restrain their emotions. These highly suggestible people are among the most truthful and purest people in our society because they are not schemers. They carry their emotions openly, like an exposed nerve.

The negative side of this is the detrimental effects of stress on the heart. The positive aspect is that the same suggestibility that causes stress can also be trained to heal the body and rid it of stress.

Perhaps you have experienced severe physical and mental tiredness, and you felt you had only enough strength to fall into bed. Suddenly, your phone rang. It was your best friend inviting you for a night on the town.

Mysteriously, your energy zoomed upward. You could now run a mile if you had to. All of this occurred because you were happy instead of sad. You forgot your problems and thought about all of the good things that were going to happen when you met your friend.

This proves that your thoughts can determine whether you are sick or well. If you make a cassette tape recording of all of the good things that have happened to you and the happiness you deserve in the future and listen to it often, your life will suddenly improve.

Thirteen degrees among them

By The Associated Press

EAST CHICAGO, Ind. — Maggie Comer Robinson is illiterate. Her husband, Hugh Comer, was a high school dropout. Their five children, however, have a total of 13 college degrees.

Dr. James Comer, 51, is associate dean of the Yale University Medical School. A psychiatrist and child-care specialist, he is referred to as "the black Doctor Spock." Also a prolific writer, he's working on his fourth book and contributes regular columns to *People* magazine.

Norman Comer, 49, is East Chicago's assistant school superintendent. Comer was the first black teacher at his alma mater, Washington High School, where he was an all-state halfback who earned academic, music and football scholarships to Northwestern University.

Dr. Charles Comer, 47, is a local eye doctor who in 1972 was named America's Optometrist of the Year by the National Optometric Association.

Louise Comer, 61, a French teacher at Washington High, is a past winner of the Inland Award as East Chicago's top teacher. The oldest child, she set an early example for her siblings by graduating cum laude (third in her class) at Kentucky State University.

Thelma Comer Morris, 45, the youngest child, is head teacher at Field Elementary School, where she has taught reading for 20 years.

Says Norman of his unlearned parents: "They had a love of education, even though they didn't have much of it. They instilled in their children the desire to get as much education as possible.

"My mother is 81 and a functional illiterate," he said, almost boastfully. "She grew up on a tiny houseboat with 11 people in Mississippi. The only jobs she held in her life were as a domestic and an elevator operator at St. Catherine's (Hospital).

My father was a poor Alabama boy who had an elementary school education. He came to East Chicago to work in the steel mills."

Maggie plays down her influence. Her lesson for life was simple, she said.

"I told my children to pick good role models, and I encouraged them to get the education I missed," she said. "I didn't want my children to grow up like me."

Maggie, who still cooks all the holiday meals in her apartment for her children and seven grandchildren, is "very proud" of her family, "although sometimes I look back and wonder how I

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