



Eustress vs. Distress

The word Stress has become so common today, everyone complains about being stressed. Be it an adult, a teenager or a small child everyone is undergoing some or the other form of stress. For an adult it could be- stress related to job, family, property, finance etc. For a teenager it could be- academics, peer pressure, Career decisions etc. and for a small child it could be - going to school, sibling rivalry and pressure from parents for performances be it academic or in other creative fields etc.

The moment we think about the word **STRESS**, we have all the negative feelings. Actually stress is not all that bad. It is just your body's reaction to the state in which you are. There are two types of stresses **EUSTRESS** and **DISTRESS**. **EUSTRESS** is the positive stress and **DISTRESS** is the negative stress. **Eu** -is a Greek prefix for healthy. But in our day to day life we use the word **STRESS** to speak about **DISTRESS** and we don't ever think about the positive stress. We know the positive one too, but probably have never considered it a stress... It's the feeling you get when you've done a good workout and your adrenaline is rushing through your veins. It's the feelings you get when you're learning to drive or that feeling or anxiety right before your wedding ceremony.

EUSTRESS, or the positive stress, has the following characteristics:

- Motivates
- Energizes
- Is short-term
- Is within our coping abilities i.e. we can bear
- Brings excitement
- Improves performance

Examples of Eustress-marriage, having a child, transfer, promotion, planning a vacation, starting a new job/business, pursuing a course/hobby after a long gap...

In contrast, **DISTRESS**, or the negative stress, has the following characteristics:

- Causes anxiety or concern
- Can be short- or long-term
- Is outside our coping abilities i.e. hard to bear
- Feels unpleasant
- Decreases performance
- Can lead to mental and physical problems

Examples of DISTRESS –losing a loved one/job, financial crisis, illness, children’s poor performance at school, relationship issues, legal problems, unable to say no, over expectations from others and self, lack of proper time management...

Our efforts should be to convert all the stresses into EUSTRESS. This can be achieved by proper stress management plan.

Stress Management Plan –Make little changes in your day to day activities, learn to prioritize, learn to enjoy without having the feeling of guilt, learn to say “no”, have a nutritious diet plan, exercise regularly, practice time management, don’t always try to be a perfectionist, have a set of true friends with whom you can share your feelings, have positive attitude in life, don’t blame yourself for every negative situation and above all... Learn to bear little bit of pressure as well, as it’s rightly

said **“The only difference between a diamond and a lump of coal is that the diamond had a little more pressure put on it.”**

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