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Poem Therapy to Reduce Stress

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Abstract:

Invariably of age, gender, occupation, religion and country people face stress in one form or other. But only few managed to face and overcome stress in a right way. The way people express and overcome stress varies from one person to another. Hence teaching the child to manage stress in the right way is vital. Poem therapy is one of the best ways to manage stress without any side effects and fosters creativity and imagination.

Keywords: Poem, stress, stress management, creativity, imagination

1. Description of Stress

Without stress, life would be dull and unexciting. Stress adds flavor, challenge and opportunity to life. Too much stress, however, can seriously affect physical and mental well-being. A major challenge in today's stress-filled world is to make the stress in our life work for us instead of against us.

Stress is with us all the time. It comes from mental or motional activity, as well as physical activity. It is unique and personal to each of us. So personal, in fact, that what may be relaxing to one person may be stressful to another. It was gradually realized that such concepts as anxiety, antagonism, exhaustion, frustration, distress, despair, overwork, over focusing, confusion, mourning and fear could all come together in a general broad term, stress.

2. Creativity in Stress Management

George Lois rightly states "*Creativity can solve almost any problem. The creative act, the defeat of habit by originality, overcomes everything*"

Writing can help to relieve stress, Clarify choice, Give voice to difficult, interpersonal issues, Reminisce through life review, Hear yourself think,

Bear witness to what you feel and see, Express strong emotions in a supported way, Develop alternatives to self-defeating behaviours, Boost self esteem and psychological integration, Become more spontaneous and creative, Generate original material for personal projects, Celebrate the dance of life with renewed hope, Restore emotional equilibrium, Affirm and validate your individuality, Alter moods and release pain, Complete some of life's unfinished business, Find more joy and satisfaction in life and Experience inner peace. Creative activity is a life-affirming process that combats anxiety and inspires a sense of hope. Writing is one such creative act that can be very therapeutic.

3. Word

Word can open our hearts and bring the inner mystery of life to real expression. Words can transform. Word can heal. Word can touch us to the core. Some words can make us feel as though we've been turned inside out and poured into a larger wholeness, like a river washing into sea. Such words can calm us and awaken us to new understanding, new perceptions and new way of being in the world. Writing therapy invites this kind of transformative interplay of creativity and spiritual renewal, this reconnection of self and soul with the world. Writing provides an opening into the layers between the known and unknown in our inner core where imagination resides.

4. Imagination

Imagination is a potent method of stress reduction. The principle behind the use of imagery in stress reduction is that we can use our imagination to recreate and enjoy a situation that is very relaxing. One common use of imagery in relaxation is to imagine a scene, place or event that we remember as safe, peaceful, restful, beautiful and happy. We can bring all our senses into the image. Other uses of imagery in relaxation involve creating mental pictures of stress flowing out of our body, or of stress, distraction and everyday concerns being folded away and locked into a padlocked chest.

5. Poem Composing

A poem is also the art of expressing and sharing, feelings, thoughts, ideas and experiences in a passionate style. People who are emotional will enjoy the art of poetry and writing. It is a very good stress reliever and mentally stimulating for somebody who is going through anxiety or depression. When we have difficulties, the best thing is to put it down on paper. This will relieve stress and anxiety.

6. How to Compose a Poem?

- Subject: Take your mood as the subject of the poem. Example: loneliness, sorrow, frustration, joy etc.
- Word: Recollect all the words which are expressing your feeling.

6.1. Sensory experiences

- See: Write how you are looking and imagining the colour, texture etc of the situation.
- Hear: Write how the situation sounds in your heart and mind.
- Taste: Write how it tastes.
- Feel: Write how it feels.
- Smell: Write how it smells.
- Time and space context: Write how you feel in various times and places what time and place you want to be relaxed.
- Example: Frustrate, anxious, painful, trembling, tangled, hopeless, helpless, fearful, tensed, crisis, turmoil, scoff, dark, lonely, dim, pale, dull, cold, cry, dead, crushed, discouraged, empty, energy less, shame, rejected
- Solution: write the possible solutions you know for the problem you are facing.

Here is the composed poem on '**Loneliness**'.

Oh there is no one in this distant desert
It's me all alone hopeless and helpless
Feeling fearful, furious and frustrated
Searching for a single soul even a stick
There is nothing in my right, nothing in my left,
Nothing in my front, nothing in my back not even my shadow
Let the air be stopped so that I will die and find some rest
Am tangled with tension no one to rescue me
Am empty and energy less, crushed and crying no one to comfort me
Full of turmoil and crisis no way to get out
Stinking like a rotten cabbage, bitter and sour
Hard, hallow, heavy and horrible, pale and painful
Mourning and muttering, grumbling and growling
Noon in the desert with unquenched thirst
All I need is a shoulder to cry, arms to hold
Fingers to wipe my tears, feet to walk with me
Voice to comfort me, eyes to visit me
Where can I find? How can I find? Whom shall I find?
I can't. There is no one for me. No one, not....
Death? Is this the way to out from loneliness? Oh no
Why should I die? Why should I cry?
God has a purpose and plans for me
He'll give me the strength to struggle with courage I will catch victory
He'll provide and protect, care and comfort me
He'll remove my shame and give me strength
I'll walk with confident and courage there is someone to love me
He makes my life beautiful bouquet of blossoms

7. Conclusion

Hopefully this will lift up our spirits, build up our self-esteem and strengthen us from severe depression. We don't have to be a creative writer or a poet; just writing our thought and feelings or any sort of emotion down on paper will help ease stress and anxiety, when writing about the stressful situation, explain what we were thinking and how we were feeling about the situation. This way the habit of expression of one's thinking, emotions, feelings should be fostered during childhood itself by which the incidents of stress may not be a phenomenon at all in the child's later life and career.

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