

SPARK 043

(Matrix Code: **SPARK043.00** for StartOver.xyz game.)

DISTINCTION: Stress is the unacknowledged fear that something you already experienced will happen again.

NOTES: There are two kinds of stress: physical stress and mental/emotional Box stress. You experience physical stress when environmental conditions surpass your body's threshold of tolerance. Physical stress can arise gradually, for example, from fluorescent lights humming or flickering, train or plane noise, poor posture, eye strain, inadequate diet, long term pain, insufficient sleep, lack of exercise, and so on. Physical stress can also arise suddenly, for example, from electrical shock, accidental fall, cuts, bruises, loud sharp noises, or bright flashes. Physical stress can never be completely avoided because according to the viewpoint of cosmic acupuncture, sometimes you need a hammering. Still, minimizing unnecessary physical stress is straightforward: either avoid the physical factors causing the stress, or improve stamina to raise your body's natural threshold of tolerance.

Mental/emotional stress on the other hand, is not so simple, and yet, unlike physical stress, mental/emotional stress can be completely avoided because the source of mental/emotional stress is "Human Software" not "Human Hardware." The causes of mental/emotional stress are as varied and as complex as the design of each of our Boxes. The same exact set of circumstances can cause one person stress and another person enjoyment. Think of professional public speakers, for example. For most of us, having to go on stage and speak before an audience of skeptical strangers is worse than having to die. Somehow from the same circumstance professional speakers derive pleasure. Since the experience of stress commonly leads to conflicts and breakdown in organizations, a Possibility Manager needs to be able to track down stress to its source and to create some alternative routes from there.

The source of mental/emotional stress is fear that is being experienced unconsciously. You have fear but you do not know you are feeling it. An interesting facet of fear is that whatever you fear you have experienced before. That is why you know to fear it. Think of a child who acts without prudence around a hot stove because he has never been burnt by one before. After being burned he has an associated fear. Putting these two pieces together you find that mental/emotional stress is the unacknowledged fear that something you already experienced will happen again. This is standard issue Human Software.

From the upgraded Human Software of Possibility Management, whatever is happening right now *never* happened before. This circumstance is absolutely unique, completely new and totally surprising. From this perspective you cannot Is-Glue together a frightening story because you have never experienced a situation exactly like this before. Since each situation is new, you can make no assumptions or have no expectations. You do not already know how it is going to turn out. By perceiving the preciseness of what is happening now you can accept it for exactly what it is rather than assuming it is something you already know. Choosing to accept what is

for what it is opens the possibility that something completely different from what is presently happening could possibly happen in the next moment. Liberated from automatic associations the fear subsides and along with it the stress.

EXPERIMENTS:

SPARK043.01 Read this scenario, and then try it out yourself. Imagine that you feel stress whenever you think about or are around a particular person, for example a boss, a colleague, or a relative, perhaps even one of your kids. This is not physical stress you are feeling. This is mental/emotional Box stress because this stress derives solely from your thoughts, feelings, memories and projections.

Because the stress is not physical it can be completely avoided. The way to avoid mental/emotional stress is to take responsibility for not making the assumption that one moment is the same as the next. This means that even though you may have seen this person only a few hours, minutes or seconds before doing the behavior that stresses you out, the person standing before you *now*, this moment, is without precedent. They are completely original. You do not already know who they are. Even during a conversation or a meeting, from one moment to the next, they could be completely different.

You are not saying that they *will* be different. (Generating the expectation that someone will be different is just as stressful as assuming that they will stay the same.) You are saying that by not making the assumption that you already know who they are and how they will be, you are creating the space of possibility that they *could* be different. Then what is happening now *never* happened before. You gain unlimited possibility, and there is no chance for stress to arise. This totally unique moment presents you with opportunities to create a completely different future for yourself. Instead of being the victim of repeated mental/emotional Box stress you become a creator with extraordinary freedom of movement and expression.