

SPARK 078

(Matrix Code: **SPARK078.00** for StartOver.xyz game.)

DISTINCTION: Wherever you feel stress is precisely where you are being irresponsible.

NOTES: These days it is “cool” to be stressed out because it suggests you are busy with doing important big stuff. Whether Mom or CEO, having others see you as doing a high-powered job compensates for not being in alignment with yourself. Stress arises whenever you are not in alignment with yourself.

Being in alignment with yourself has to do with taking care of yourself. Taking care of yourself does *not* necessarily mean making things comfortable. Taking care of yourself means making sure that your decisions and actions are resonant to your true purposes. Being resonant to your true purposes is not stress free. *The stress that arises through being resonant to your true purposes provides useful nutrients needed for building matrix.* I am not talking about this kind of stress. I am talking about the kind of stress that results from deceiving yourself and trying to look good instead of taking responsible care of yourself. This throws you into a self-perpetuating cycle: try to look good – be out of alignment with yourself – feel stress – try to look good.

When you feel stressed out, overwhelmed, overworked, or exhausted, you tend to blame the circumstances as if circumstances caused the stress. You may find yourself blaming your boss, your partner, your kids, the weather, the government – for being the cause of your stress. You wait until the symptoms of your burnout become so obvious to everybody that they inarguably justify your new life decisions. You use your burnout as the reason for making changes that you do not want to take responsibility for changing for no reason. You make it the fault of the stress that you take a one month cure, that you change job positions, that you scream at the kids, or that you stop making new car payments and move to a different apartment.

Using circumstances as proof that you “have to” make a change is an old unconscious habit. This habit 1) disempowers you and 2) makes your life a lie. It disempowers you because by hiding your decision to change behind a reason (too much stress) you give the reason the power in your decision. Then *you* no longer have power in the decision; the reason does. It makes your life a lie because you start living two lives – one life is acting as if you were a “poor victim” of the stressful circumstances who “has to” make the decision, and another life is the creative person who cleverly arranged the stressful circumstances in the first place.

It does not matter what the stress is: not enough intimacy, not enough time, not enough energy, not enough money, not enough self-respect, too much work, not enough recognition, envy, jealousy, greed, self-doubt, too many conflicting commitments, too many demands on your attention, too rapid change, too much uncertainty, too little rest, too much illness, too much chaos, etc. It all comes down to the fundamental stress: lack of control and therefore lack of security.

It is your Box that thrives on security and control. It is the story that your Box tells you about your circumstances that makes an experience “stressful” rather than, say, “an

exciting, encouraging, liberating or stimulating opportunity.” Part of your stress may come from your commitment to a fantasy world in which you can stay comfortable and ultimately never die. Reality is the opposite and sooner or later reality smacks you in the face. Many of the conditions that lack security and control are actually conditions of creative freedom. Your soul loves the challenge of a blank canvas on which to paint its destiny. The Box finds the same circumstances frightening and stressful.

EXPERIMENTS:

Start using stress as an irresponsibility detector. Instead of denying stress, numbing out to stress, or complaining about stress, recognize and accept your stress with gratitude as useful information. Signs of stress such as crankiness, sleeplessness, over-reacting, nervousness, psychological or physical breakdown are a signal telling you exactly where you are being irresponsible. Follow the signal back to its source. Where you are being irresponsible is where you can start taking care of yourself. Here are three ways to experiment with taking care of yourself around stress.

SPARK078.01 Change the circumstances to alleviate the stress responsibly rather than as a victim. Be proactive. You can feel stress coming. Take action immediately before you are forced to act. Lower your numbness bar so that you become more perceptive of your environment and its impact on your body, mind and soul. Say yes or say no to make decisions and boundaries before the stress gets so high that your nervous system goes into breakdown and makes the decisions for you. For example: Take a nap. Turn off the mobile phone. Take another nap. Drink water. Draw pictures for no purpose. Lay in the sun. Drink carrot juice for lunch. Say no to houseguests. Take a long bath. Get rid of the dog. Walk barefoot in the grass. Do twenty-five pushups. Talk with a trusted friend and ask them to give you a stress interview. They repeatedly ask you what causes stress in your life and you write down the answers. Use the top three on your list with Experiment 2 below.

SPARK078.02 Change the stories you make about the circumstances so that you instead feel excited. Why are you doing it *really* (the positive benefit that this is what you love to do)? Why have you forgotten why you are doing it really (what victim story do you get to tell)? Take a cold hard look at what you have created out of it, because what you have is what you want. Get honest. Get real. Tell the story of why you created it to be stressful, why you want it this way. See the irresponsible value in it for you. Then do the experiment of redesigning the way the energy of the circumstances flows through your body. Use colored markers and draw your body. Draw the old way the energy flows now. Then draw new ways that the energy could flow. Make the new design so that the impact and energy of the circumstances flow in a way that supports and empowers you. Start interacting with circumstances according to the new diagram. Hang your new drawing on the wall to remember and practice.

SPARK078.03 Take on the mental discipline to focus on what is with you right now. Not on what is next or what was already. Focus only on the present activity and let the rest go. Then make decisions to act in resonance to your true purposes. You *know* when you are not getting nurtured and fed on a deep level. Getting fed means to experience energetic impression food, usually from sources that are outside of

your everyday patterns. Take responsibility to get yourself fed on a regular basis. Go to a different art museum. Take classes, workshops or trainings. Meet with “fringe” friends, people outside your normal circle who you think may be wrestling with questions similar to your secret yearnings. Attend talks or conferences on subjects that are near to your heart even if they are far from your profession. Speak out. Engage activities that make sense and truly matter to you even if they do not appear to be consistent with the rest of your life. If you let the “looking good” show fall apart a little, whole new possibilities can arise.