



The human person as a bundle of interconnectivity: the outward signs of an inward rumpus

This piece as an attempt to explore the wisdom behind the Latin adage which says “mens sana in corpore sano i.e. a healthy mind in a healthy body”.

It is more important to know what kind of patient has the disease than what kind of disease the patient has.

Since at least half of those who seek medical aid suffer from physical illness directly related to stress. Human person as a compendium of many different make up has shown considerably that sound mind begets a sound body showing that greater part of the physical illness is a reflection of what were suffering inside of us. Such reflection of an internal war is psychologically viewed as psychosomatic disorders. But such revelation of the internal wars accrues from different body organs. Though these varies according to sexes, Like stomach ulcer is common with men while rheumatoid arthritis in prevalent with women. Putting into consideration the causal law of nature, life stress plays a causal role in great number of health disturbances but worthy of note is the fact that thorough medical examination has to rule out any organic factor as a *primium causam* (primary cause) there exist such incessant upsurge of the symptoms which goes on the wane or finally disappears. It is evident in such cases that the rate at which it deteriorates are equally proportionate to the amount of stress prevalent in an individual's life at that moment in his or her life.

However there are aberrations of characters where some cases are purely organic factor, emotional stress is the primary cause of such outward reactional development. For instance peptic ulcer has got a place in such chronic emotional stress. Studies have proven that chronic hypertension may be triggered by emotional stress and that it could occur among young people. What can we say about the corollary of Hypertension which is the current century syndrome called Heart attack. Recent studies shows that life change is a common denominator as there comes in a life time of one when things tend to go on the wane like cases of divorce, loneliness, childlessness, excessive working hours, sleep disturbances, nervousness, anxiety and depression, dissatisfaction with the achievement of life goals. Also in this group of illness which is a reflection of the inner rumbling is acute back ache and Eczema: which is a superficial inflammation of the skin resulting to redness, itching, pimples and formation of crusts.

In this case it is a highly sensitive indicator of emotional stress because the skin is well supplied with blood vessels. Rashes are one of the symptoms showing the severe emotional stress. Eczema which results from emotional stress goes with the end of the stress. “... D. G. Brown (1972) reported that the Eczema patients tended to describe themselves as “bottling up” their



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emotional problems and reported to a significant degree more often 'feeling frustrated & unable to do anything about it ' and more often "getting really angry." [1] The effect of life stress which is chronic emotional tension can cause profound changes in physiological functioning of the human body .This manifestation of the inner rumbustiousness entails the arousal of negative emotions in response to stress situations - the degree of arousal is dependent not only on the nature of the stress situation but more importantly the perception of this situation by the person and her/his level of absorbing or managing stress (tolerance) , Worthy of notice is that failure for appropriate expression shows a damaging effects of chronic arousal surfacing in a particular organ system. Factors contributing to such adverse manifestation on the organ system are traced to be genetic factors, differences in automatic reaction, somatic illness, and alterations in corticovisceral control mechanisms. Research by Gregory & Rosen(1965) has demonstrated that the brothers of ulcer and bronchial asthma patients are about twice as like to have ulcers as comparable members of the general population. It is very true that the world of image is the source of power in physical word. Thinking of a situation in your life, something you would like an answer to and ask for a healing image from God. E.g. if you have a husband who always tongue lashes you change the words with a healing symbols perhaps imagining these words as a loving expression.

The final bus stop to subject at hand, of which I know that if left unattended to, justice have not been done to this work. Your guess is as good as mine as I mention the almighty hypertension. Worthy of note is that, of all the various organ systems the heart probably is the most sensitive as regards emotional stress. In a calm state of mind all is well but with the inception of emotional stress, the vessels of the visceral organs are constricted, blood is directed in large quantity to the muscles of the trunk and limbs. This tightening or restricting of the tiny vessels to visceral organs forces the heart to work harder. As the breath increases it is beating and exerts greater force, the pulse rate quickens and at this juncture blood pressure mounts. Under chronic emotional strain, high blood pressure may become chronic otherwise everything will return to normalcy. This is the cause of about 60,000 deaths each year. Hypertension is like a primary cause on its own because it's a risk factor in kidney failure, blindness, and other physical ailments. The dangerous aspect of it unlike other disorders there are no symptoms to signal it.

The person experiences no personal distress but in severe cases people complain of headaches, tiredness, and insomnia, occasional dizzy. Environment as today contemporary civilized world such that 1 in any 10 Americans will at certain point in their life suffer peptic ulcer. What then is



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ulcer? It is an excessive insurgence of the stomach's acid - containing digestive juices HCL which in the absence of food crops away the lining of the stomach or duodenum as such creating a crater like wound, such causes of release of excessive HCL as worry, repressed anger, resentment, anxiety and other tensed or nervous situation that brings about excessive insurgence of HCL beyond normalcy, this situation is when worried, e.g. increase in HCL production, engorging the stomach with blood and rhythmic contraction follows, and the digestive functions resumed, though some people manages the situation of anger, resentment etc. But failure to manage it and one is upset for a long period with proper expression of feeling there comes a point where there is incessant excessive insurgence of HCL responsible for digestion that may eat into the gastric lining culminating into ulceration. Following from this explained general nervous tensions and other sorts of emotional stress amounts to excessive production of HCL leading to ulcers if not managed or giving proper expression. Another illness of interest is headaches of which statistics have shown that about 9 out of 10 are connected to emotional tension and is more prevalent in the women folk. Of special interest is migraine headache an intensely painful headache that is recurrent between intervals. It is characterized with its involving only one side of the head or can shift from side to side, migraine among all other thing else emanates from stress, frustrations, excessive performance demands and threatening interviews - cause vascular dilation.

THE LONG WALK TO HEALING AND LIBERATION

Loving "the who you are": "I am the only one like me.... In that you are always special"[2] it is certain that no two people are the same so we remain unique in our own person. "you have your own special wrapping, your own size, color, features, sex, age, background, experiences, thoughts, feelings and approaches to things..."[3] loving your real self also implies living in the present which is the gateway towards personal power. You must know who you are now and avoiding living in the shadow of the future. Ask yourself if what I want to be really appropriate to who I am or is it something I was told I should be? The earlier you abandon the picture of what people want you to be, the more powerful you become and less tensed you are. Because those expectations are unrealistic and inappropriate given to you by others failure to meet up results to tensions which affects an organ be it stomach lining or pulse rate. They are beliefs of others that you try to fit onto yourself.

A close look on most expectations that causes your major internal rumpus are others



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expectations. The feeling of pain at the gap between who you want to be and who you are, the feeling of heaviness, fear or deadliness only exist because you are trying to “wear” energy that is not yours. “the self is a sacred gift from the creator. It is the core of our being, the foundation of our identity and the centre point of communication with God and with our fellow beings, the manner in which we relate to the self will exactly be the manner with which we relate to God and our neighbors...self-awareness implies a presence to oneself.

It is a sense of gratitude for ones life, for ones being, ones personality, ones potentials, gifts and limitations...wholeness of personality is possible only when the individual is fully aware and present to self.”[4]. Self - healing as a key: “One of the signs of truly great people is that... the are healed people. the are not stuck in a rut as most of us are.they react to situations according to need. Such were Gandhi, Lincoln, Jesus Christ...research study of people who survived extremely difficult situations has shown that...the enjoyed a great flexibility of character that helped them to adjust themselves to varying situations.”[5] healing of your self is almost like a cliché in the mouth of counselors, spiritual director, Psychologists and psychotherapist nowadays.” healing is a satisfactory response to a crisis made by a group of people, both as individuals and collectively.”[6] You have in possession the greatest power of all, the ability to heal yourself. When one undergoes a self- healing everything around you that represented your inner struggle dissolves. This is a process that demands a deeper level of self truth. Finding your deepest truth means looking inward, this is looking at a situation in your life not blaming others, not playing the victim or brooding in self-pity, this is about looking deep into the situation and set it up for your growth The role the past plays:According to Liljefors and Rahe (1970) in their research in studying life stress in relation to coronary heart disease as regard genetics, those who had this were more work oriented, took less leisure time, had more home problems, and experienced greater dissatisfaction in their lives.

Even very little children show their own reactions by developing fewer digestive upset, sleeplessness. There are stomach, pulse, & nose reactors.History they say is never fading, at this point ones prior trauma also plays a role as one who has developed a weak stomach presumably will be prone to gastrointestinal upset during anger or anxiety. Personality characteristics like rigidity, high sensitivity to threat, and proneness to chronic underlying hostility among those having hypertension. Also the hypertensive prone personalities are those who strive diligently to achieve, are too conscious, tensed, unable to relax and active. Studies have come to show that “to live well is to observe in today’s apparent order the tiny anomalies that are the seeds of change, the harbingers of the order of tomorrow”[7] Stress traceable to



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interpersonal relationships including marital unhappiness, divorce, and bereavement may influence physiological functioning; “hurtful memories of unpleasant experiences easily cause poisonous feelings of resentment and anger.”[8] Home upbringing plays a role such that children from one protective home or unduly restrictive of the children’s activities, making them over dependant and insecure making them react with chronic emotional mobilization to problems that do not seem threatening to most people. Some people lack the acumen for coping with stress. These people tend to lack the quality of proper expression of emotions either verbally or action. They have failed to learn to use the various ego-defense mechanisms like fantasy, intellectualization which expel emotional tension; the only used mechanism is repression which continues the physiological components of the emotion leading to structural damage on the organ system. Stresses and organ system manifestation: each type of psychosomatic disorder has a particular stress associated to it. Peptic ulcers associated with frustration of the needs for love and protection. As this frustration amounts to anxiety and anger which in turn leads to excessive secretions of stomach acid. Emotional stress or tension may then interfere with the body’s normal defensive forces or immunological system. This makes the person more prone to infections because the immune system is weak.

The Miracle Comes: Relaxation is a behavior that is useful in coping with a variety of problem situations. This is defined as ‘casting off of nervous tension and anxiety’. This is a state which has as its qualities calmness and serenity accompanied by a state of muscular release and passivity. Any type of relaxation is a stress healing therapy but never use alcohol, drugs tobacco or any other substance to achieve relaxation. These does not end or help you overcome real life anxieties, relaxation involves use of deep muscular relaxation. Stillness of mind is the only tool to knowing the who you are because inspiration is bum in stillness. Stillness is the right and most effective form of self - healing that is available. For example trying relaxing your hand and arm or our jaw muscles, you will see how much energy you tie up in muscular tension as it is said that you employ 72 muscles to frown and 14 to smile. You can also experience subtle mental changes as your muscles cast off their tension. Introduction of mild tranquilizers aimed at reducing emotional tensions some use drugs, cigarettes, alcohol, licking chalks, sex but funny aspect is that all these do not deal with the stress situation or the coping reactions involved. Although by alleviating or reducing emotional tension and distressing symptoms they may provide individual with a breathing spell during which he can regroup his coping resources. Though Relaxation has remained effective, there is need for based educational counseling leading to changes in the lifestyle of individuals and families. Once emotional tension arises in



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response to stress situations, if the person fails in adequate discharge, it becomes chronic and this never discharged tensions moves to a particular organ system which sustains physiological damage. Relaxation when learnt can be used to overcome anxieties but of high importance is recognizing the first signs of tension. Relaxations are better achieved in a private place, quiet, free of interruptions and distracting stimuli.

This is a demand for some solitary confinement which according to Merton Thomas without solitude of some sort there is and can be no maturity, this is because only "solitude alone allows a man to discover, and so to face, all the obscure forces that he bears within himself, the man who does not know how to be alone, does not know either (and secretly does not wish to know) what conflicts there are in the depths of his heart, conflicts which he feels that he is capable of untangling, even of touching...solitude is found in interior peace and quiet...the aspiration of the solitary side of life is to just be." [9] Positive thoughts/ Mind-training: The less time you spend in picturing all you want, the more you live in thinking of peoples visions of what they expect of you, you will be living for people rather than having what you need. What you say in a chamber like a cave comes back to you as you said it as if there is someone at the other end repeating what you had said. There is power in what you say and think because these are what comes to you are your reality. What you think and say moulds your believe and disposition about whatever you encounter as the bible says that out of the abundance of the mind the mouth speaks, so much so that your faith can be rated from what you say. What you say as implied here is not about what you say when joking. When we speak wrongly we tend to diminish our ability to see beyond the here and after. Let us analyze the drama that takes place in negative talks and thoughts. At the invent of an emotional stress relating to thinking and worrying the skull muscles tend to contract which amounts to vascular contractions, the person automatically feels band of pain round his head. It is common within adolescent age and reoccurs periodically at the point of stress. It is sometimes severe and incapacitating except alleviated.

Apart from migraine and ulcer, Asthma is another psychosomatic disorder and among the different types of asthma, intrinsic has been recorded as resulting from emotional stimuli' and these cases medical examination reveals no selective sensitivity to particular Allergens. When one trains his or her mind this bores an emotional calm and inner serenity and in doing this one will only focus on higher ideals. An untrained mind tends to find its attention caught up by anything that comes its way. "Merton writes in Thoughts in Solitude that contemplation helps us to live in a silence which so reconciles the contradictions within us that, although the remain



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within us they cease to be a problem”[10] Such a mind is directed by the attractions and impulses of the moment. The challenger is left for us to develop or become inner-directed that outer-directed such you can decide what you think rather than having your thought determined by what is around you. Mental chatter needs to be reduced before you can overcome tension.

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[3] Ibid.p11

[4] Philomena Agudo, I Chose You.p26-27

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