

Teacher and Stress

Summary

The book **Teacher and Stress** was, in greater part, written during the totalitarian regime. Its principal finding, based on long-term experimentally verified observations, is that the mental equilibrium of teachers has deep effects on the mental equilibrium of their pupils.

The younger the schoolchild, the more significant is the positive or, more often, negative influence of the teacher on his/her mental health. The investigations have revealed the role which the teachers play in the healthy development of the young generation and, consequently, of the whole future nation.

The book aims at giving the teacher a practical guidance to recognizing the symptoms and causes of his/her state of stress and offers methods for effective prevention. The authors present here the results of many years of their own investigations as well as the experience shared by educators, students and yoga teachers.

The book has five parts. The **Foreword**, which gives the reasons for this publication, is followed by the chapter **Basic Understanding of Stress**, which outlines some methods of recognizing stressors.

The chapter **Effects of Stress** deals with the consequences that frequent stressful conditions have for mental and physical

health. From slight changes in the conscience of a stressed person, described in detail, it proceeds to show the effects of stressors on the character of a person and gives particular attention to the changes which occur in the quality of social relationships of a stressed teacher. To complete the picture, benefits of stress are also mentioned.

In the Causes of Stress the reader learns about the sources of stressful factors related to the teacher's job and is made aware, from a thorough analysis, of the harm done to the educators by 40 years of totalitarianism.

In the last chapter Protection against Stress the authors give an overview of practices useful in managing both acute and chronic stressors. They show the possibilities for teachers to make changes in their style of life and, in this, lay special emphasis on regular exercise. They propose a variety of short physical activity programmes suitable for application both at school and at home. An improvement in teachers' work is also viewed as a result of promoted creativity and autonomy. An essential approach to achieving mental equilibrium is cultivation of the state and content of the mind. The teacher is compared to a gardener who, on his garden — mind, can cultivate positive mental states such as relaxation, joyfulness, concentration, etc. as well as vital mind contents like love for the others, devotion, compassion, ability to stay above difficult life situations, etc. For the teacher to follow the path to mental equilibrium is a priority task which should never end. Only continuous self-perfection is the way to true happiness.