Live without stress

Sadhguru, Isha Foundation

When I first came to the United States, wherever I went, I heard people talking about stress management. We manage our families, our money, our property, our businesses — we manage whatever is valuable to us. Why would anyone manage stress? It took me a while to understand that people have made a conclusion that stress is an inevitable part of life!

Stress is not a part of life. It is not your lifestyle, work, family or the situations in which you exist which cause stress to you. It is your inability to manage your system — your body, mind, emotions and energy. The cause is your lack of understanding of how this system functions, your inability to use the system the way it should be used. People can be stressful in any kind of situation. It is not about this job or that job, it is not about one kind of situation or the other. People are capable of being stressful for just about anything.

What can you do about it? You do not need to do anything about it. Stress is like friction in a machine. Friction occurs in a machine either because there is no proper movement of the parts or there is not enough lubrication. The less friction you have, the more efficient the machine becomes.

We need not look at how to manage stress or keep it under the surface. We need to look at how to create it, because stress is your creation. If you start the simple process of Isha Yoga, you will find that within six weeks, the whole system begins to function at a certain ease. You will see that your pulse rate and heart beat drops. When the very nature of your existence has become ease, you are restful all the time. Then there is no such thing as stress. Restfulness is the basis of all activity. You can be most effective in your life only when everything is at complete ease within yourself. If your ability to act becomes effortless, then naturally there is no such thing as stress.

If your body and mind took instructions from you, would you create stress for yourself or bliss for yourself? You need to look at the fundamental mechanics of life, at why your body and mind are not doing what you want. Isha Yoga is the technology to do this. If you begin a process of yoga, it needs to be in its full depth and dimension, not just the physicality of it as it is generally practiced today. People practice yoga as just a physical or mental exercise. It is neither physical nor mental; it has something to do with the core of your life. If “all of you” is not involved in the yoga that you do, if it has not been transmitted to you, if it has just been taught to you as a bundle of instructions and not an initiation — if that is so, you are using yoga like a car instead of the airplane that it is.

Suppose I gave you an airplane and you did not know what it was, you knew only automobiles. There are these two ugly things that hit your buildings and lampposts, so you chop off the wings and drive around happily. Likewise, you are happy your backache is gone and thyroid problem is fixed but that is very limited, because a man who knows what it means to fly, when he sees an airplane, he will cry.

Right now, when I see the yoga that is going on all over on a large scale, it is very tragic. Yoga is not a solution for your stress — there is no need for stress. Yoga is the removal of the problem. You do not create stress anymore, that’s all. If you do not create stress, then why do you need a solution for it? Stress is your making; it is not the situation which is making stress. If you get deeper access to the experience of life within you, you will distinctly know this and you will drop it. This is the essence of Isha Yoga.

(Sadhguru is a yogi, mystic, visionary and bestselling author. He was conferred the Padma Vibhushan in 2017 for exceptional and distinguished service)