

# Eplerian philosophy model for managing stress at home and in the Community

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A woman standing in the supermarket line felt her eyes fill with tears from the pain caused by stress of taking care of her dying husband with incurable dementia. She was upset with herself because she couldn't fix the problem. She felt guilty because she didn't spend enough time with him. She was stressed because she couldn't enjoy a cup of coffee before returning home. This is level-10 stress. Too many people in communities throughout the country have unhealthy severe stress every day. There is another option. People can learn to have zero stress throughout their lives.

**Stress is good.** Obtain the benefit and neutralize the stress with opposite and equal action or behavior. Stress the biceps and neutralize with the opposite and equal triceps. If a person strengthens the quadriceps without doing the opposite and equal amount of work with the hamstrings, this person won't be able to stand up from sitting in a chair. Stressing the brain is good, but this must be neutralized with the opposite and equal offline activity. Stress keeps the immune defense system in top performance, but this must be neutralized with eight hours of sleep, healthy nutrition and one hour of physical exercise. Self-criticism about not spending enough time with someone who is ill must be neutralized in a few seconds by shifting to different thinking such as self-compassion and self-kindness.

**The concept of knowing who you are** dates back to ancient philosophers with the aphorism, "know thyself," inscribed in granite. Socrates wrote "the unexamined life is not worth living," and Aristotle wrote "to know thyself is the beginning of wisdom" [1]. These concepts have survived thousands of years, but what do they mean?

**There are several interpretations of "know thyself"** including knowing unconscious conflicts and knowing the conscious self in the here and now [1]. Other meanings include accurate self-appraisal [2] and self-knowledge [3]. My meaning of the concept is you learn who you are. Early in life, you're who your parents, teachers and friends want you to be. Later, who your boss wants you to be and who society wants you to be. Then, you compare yourself to an unattainable person in our mind who you think you should be. Eventually, over a long period of time, you learn who you are. The results are extraordinary. You're free. You don't have to listen to anyone. You're not controlled by anyone or by society. You don't compare yourself to anyone. There is no need for blame, criticism, judgement or excuses. However, there are too few people that ultimately arrive at this point in their lives. These people continue to compare themselves to others, be controlled by others, blame and judge others, and are not trustworthy because they're not their true selves. If "knowing who you are" is a life-changing event, then an easy, reproducible method of how to do this is needed.

**The Eplerian Philosophy Model for knowing who you are.** Brain science has shown there are many different independent brain regions,

and people can only think from one brain region at a time [4-13]. Thinking from some regions like the prefrontal cortex and creative frontal cortex result in healthy and productive outcomes. Sustained thinking from the amygdala anger region [11] and the posterior cingulate cortex self-thinking region [12-13], result in poor health, decreased productivity, lack of innovation, and disconnection from the community.

**The Eplerian Philosophy** is defined as "know who you are moment by moment." This means know your brain region. Learn to move out of the bad regions quickly within a few seconds and into healthy brain regions. People who can learn to stay out of cingulate thinking by curbing thoughts of self-criticism, self-importance, resentment or retaliation are healthier, more productive, more creative, enjoy life more, and are better citizens than counterparts who spend long periods of time thinking from the cingulate [13]. Paradoxically, the less time thinking about yourself, the more you are yourself, i.e., know who you are moment by moment.

**The Eplerian Philosophy Model is relevant for people, businesses, and the community.** For people, applications include learning how to eliminate the harmful effects of stress by managing anger, fear, sadness, worry and anxiety. The philosophy will help manage the stress caused by the many types of self-thinking including self-criticism, self-pity, resentment, jealousy, revenge, judgment and blame. How to manage the stress? By learning how to leave the amygdala anger center and the cingulate self-thinking center in a few seconds. Obtain the benefit of stress and eliminate the harm. There are several ways to do this, one way is to do the opposite behavior. Anger means something has been taken, e.g., pride, integrity or self-worth; therefore, leave the amygdala anger center by doing the opposite – give. Give your time, give your energy and give your help with expecting nothing in return. This is also useful for cingulate thinking, which is also a "taking behavior" with blame, jealousy, resentment, and judgement. Cingulate thinking is unhealthy and is harmful for others and the community. Do the opposite, give. For self-criticism and self-pity as a cause of stress, do the opposite with self-compassion, be kind to yourself. Moving out of these two brain regions in a few seconds will result in zero stress level throughout the day. For businesses, this model can be used to attain zero-level stress at work for increased productivity, innovation and sales. For the community, application will create trust and increased socialization resulting

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Received: February 07, 2020; Accepted: February 21, 2020; Published: February 25, 2020

in reducing fear and creating a healthy community. The Eplerian Philosophy is for people to live their best lives at home, at work and in the community.

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