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STRESS RESPONSE STYLES

It is useful to make an assessment of the habitual response style to stress. Many individuals will assert that everything is fine as long as there is not too much stress. Therefore their energy becomes focused on reducing or avoiding stress in their lives. While this is an appropriate strategy, it ignores the reality of stress being a **constant** and **normal** (and potentially **healthy**) aspect of life.

The question becomes not "if" there is stress, but what they do "when" there is inevitable stress. Consequently, it is important to assess not only how they can avoid or reduce stress, but also how the individual, couple, or family respond to stress; is the response style effective and functional? Or, is it ineffective and dysfunctional (harmful to self and others)? This assessment offers guidance in the change process in terms of promoting more successful stress response styles.

STRESS BUILDING RESPONSES

- 1) Denial**
- 2) Intensification**
- 3) Avoidance behavior**
- 4) Hypervigilance**
- 5) Passive-Aggressive Action**
- 6) Co-Dependent Behavior**

STRESS RELEASING RESPONSES

- 1) Proactive Action**
- 2) Cathartic Release**
- 3) Physical Release**
- 4) Breathing**
- 5) Rest**
- 6) Self-Nurturing**
- 7) Seeking Help**
- 8) Understanding/Insight**