Yes, Stress Can Kill Us: How Much Stress Can You Handle? | Ep. 2 Transcript

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Introduction to Stress and Trauma

Hi, I'm Lisa Broyles with Way Too Health MD and this is my second video titled yes stress can kill us a review of the book biology of trauma by Dr. Aimie Apigian. So, how do we tell what state we are in? Are we in calm alive state, activation, or have we crossed that critical line into overwhelm?

I love a quote that Dr. Aimie uses by John Newton. It says, "We can easily manage if we will only take each day the burden appointed to it, but the load will be too heavy for us if we carry yesterday's burden over again today and then add the burden of the morrow before we are required to bear it.

Neuroception and Capacity

" Now, I also want to add here one of my favorite scriptures which is Matthew 11:28-30. "Come to me all you who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you and learn from me for I am gentle and lowly in heart and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." It's one of my favorite quotes directly from Jesus.

Have you ever been in a stressful situation? Dug in your heels, maybe drank an extra cup of coffee, taken an extra B12 lozenge, decided to just push through, gotten a few less hours of sleep? This is a normal human response and healthy if it's only done short-term like studying for a big test or a big uh presentation for work. The problem is that many of us force our bodies to get not enough sleep, not enough healthy food, not enough exercise and we do it over and over again with no recovery time. Dr. Aimie discusses something called neuroception. This is important. This is your body's internal radar. Neuroception is your body's perception of safety. It's constantly assessing internal external threats, measuring your capacity for current danger. So, if your body determines that your danger is too great, then the trauma response kicks in and you move into overwhelm. If you notice, the keyword here is perception. Your body can perceive a danger as greater than it truly is based on prior trauma or long-held beliefs, even some since early childhood.

Faith, Burdens, and Finding Rest

The other important definition from this book is capacity. Capacity is your well. Think of this like a bank account filled with deposits, deposits that are emotional, mental, physical, psychological, and these deposits enlarge your capacity to handle stressful situations. Your capacity determines how well you can meet life's joys, its demands, its dangers.

If you perceive your capacity to be large, then you will feel strong enough to tackle whatever life brings. This capacity is emotional, spiritual, psychological, and physical. And this is where I'm going to be completely honest and open with you. I have been a Christian all my life, but only in the past 6 months have I really understood what it means to give God my burdens and stop worrying. I was struggling with anxiety, especially as I am approaching menopause. I'm 48.

We all want to do it ourselves, try to handle life ourselves, our stressors, manage our own problems, feel internally strong. Well, from a Christian perspective, Jesus Christ died for us and me because he knew that I could never be strong enough to carry all of my own burdens.

My own capacity is never big enough.

Overwhelm, Low Power Mode, and Illness

When I truly understand this basic fact and I started casting my cares upon Jesus and really trusting him to be my provision, my protector, and take care of me. For the first time in my life, I have a peace that transcends all understanding as Paul describes in Philippians chapter 4 verses 6 and 7, one of my favorite books.

My neuroception understands that I am loved and cared for by an infinitely powerful being that is much better at taking care of me than I am. And I can rest in this truth. I know that my capacity is endless because it is his. Dr. Aimée says that the problem is either too much too fast or too little for too long.

Even a small rock held overhead for a long period of time will eventually become too heavy. When we move into overwhelm, we internalize our stress. Our bodies move into low power mode, energy conservation, the yellow light is on. If you feel shut down, it's because physically you are, emotionally you are. Whether or not we move into overwhelm depends on how you perceive your body's capacity to deal with the threat you are facing. Let's take the example of a virus.

Two people can be exposed to the same virus. One person will barely have any symptoms, will recover within a couple days. The other person will get extremely sick, fever, headaches, pouring snot, body aches, laid out in bed, miss a week of work. What was the difference between these two people? Same virus, same stressor. The difference was their capacity before the stress happened. How strong was the immune system prior to exposure to the virus?

How Capacity Affects Recovery

Also, how early did they take the right strategies to keep that virus from replicating itself? For example, at the initial onset of an upper respiratory infection or viral symptoms, I personally take vitamin C, zinc, elderberry syrup, which I made, several times a day. The earlier I start, the better I feel. Viruses use your cells to replicate themselves. They literally hijack your cells and force them to produce more viral cells, which then make you sicker for longer. In the same way, our neuroception can perceive a danger as too great and our capacity too small and throw us into prolonged states of chronic disease.

In the next video, I will discuss how overwhelm affects us on a cellular level.