To: Mary Moreno

From: Gaurav Gireesh

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Re: Stress management

It indeed is very unfortunate that when we have other pressing concerns in the society to deal with, we have completely forgotten about one silent killer among the corporates, stress. It is not too main-stream, however, certainly, does call for some attention.

The dictionary defines stress as “a state of mental or emotional strain or tension resulting from adverse or very demanding circumstances”. What we do not often realize is that stress is one of the biggest problems faced by mankind today. It is becoming an increasingly worrying problem for employers and employees alike, a lurking danger like an iceberg, hiding in plain sight.

Here are some statistics:

Recent surveys in the US by the American Psychological Association indicate that:

* 75-90% of visits to a doctor are stress-related.
* 70-75% of adults suffer adverse physical/psychological effects due to stress.
* 25% of drugs prescribed in the United States for the treatment of stress.
* Stress can contribute to heart disease, high blood pressure, strokes and vulnerable to catch serious illnesses.
* It can contribute to alcoholism, obesity, drug addiction, cigarette use, depression and other harmful behaviors.

We have gotten into a dull-boring routine. Often, our shift tilts toward work (as it eats up the prime part of our day). Feeling the need to earn a living and striving for a better tomorrow, we are ruining our today.

Below are the top causes of stress in the United States, as reported by the Statistic Brain Research Institute, American Institute of Stress, NY ([**http://www.statisticbrain.com/stress-statistics/**](http://www.statisticbrain.com/stress-statistics/)):

1. Job pressure, co-worker tension, bosses, work overload.
2. Money, loss of job, reduced retirement, medical expenses.
3. Health crisis, terminal or chronic illness.
4. Relationships, divorce, death of spouse, arguments with friends, loneliness.
5. Poor nutrition, caffeine, processed foods, refined sugars.
6. Media overload, television, radio, internet, e-mail, social networking.
7. Sleep deprivation, inability to release adrenaline and other stress hormones.

So, is all stress bad? Surprisingly, it is not! Stress can also be a positive force. It can stimulate us to work harder and increase our focus for short periods of time. The key then is to find a balance between having enough stress to improve performance and ensuring that the level of stress does not impact negatively on performance and well-being.

The pertinent question is, how about designing an application to minimize stress and its damaging consequences? We manage things that we love, things that are close to our heart. Why manage stress? Let the app handle it!

I would like to propose an application that can “learn” an individual and program itself. This is not difficult as there are other apps which do achieve a subset of this functionality. This app, however, should serve as a unified portal to:

* Trace the symptoms and levels of stress in an individual, much like the suggested search results from Google.
* Advise on stress-busting techniques as may be relevant based on an individual’s patterns.
* React positively and quickly to anything that could go wrong in a routine work-day.
* Help maintain a healthy equilibrium between work and life by doing things like:
  + Time the breaks to rejuvenate
  + Maintain a playlist
  + Catch the schedules/live scores/stats from the favorite sports
  + Help pursue a person’s hobbies, a healthy distraction, whatever pleases them.
  + Have emergency advice/contacts/speed dials in case of dire situations.
* Can serve as a Chat-bot, as sometimes, it’s just a listener what one needs to de-stress!

This app will surely be the best among a lot of one’s the people use every day, as it would care for them. Care makes people happy.

This will also serve as an awareness among us, which will certainly bring up our daily throughput and in-general, of the entire society.

We have been so focused on all socio-political problems plaguing the world that we have lost sight of this lurking danger that can kill. It needs due attention and now. Look out for the stressed around us, start with ourselves! We need to rejuvenate, bring back the energy levels and stop thinking about negativities, however grave they may be. Stress is the result of flawed management elsewhere. If that can be managed, stress will be eradicated.

Coming up with an idea like this, that above all, cares for the people, will surely gain us trust and their goodwill. Seeing profits is far too short-sighted compared to what good this app can bring to the society. Sometimes, it is important to do something that matters to the people rather than just bringing good money. Just the idea of a stress-free world makes me so excited to know how this idea is going to unfold and bring in a much needed change in our society!