

# Chart Your Change Now Newsletter

Change Your Thoughts and Change Your Life

October Issue 2009 - Vol 4, Issue 8

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RECOGNIZING  
STRESS IN OTHERS

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**Dear Reader,**

*"At the core of all anger is a need that is not being fulfilled."*

*~Marshall B. Rosenberg*



### **Workplace Drama and Creating a Moment of Peace**

*In this week's episode of Grey's Anatomy, Dr. Derek Shepherd is challenged by Isaac, a hospital staffer, to operate on his inoperable tumor wrapped around his spine. The surgery is extremely risky and at first Dr. Shepherd refuses. He then decides to do an exploratory which lasts several hours and incurs the wrath of Dr. Richard Webber, Chief of Staff, who refused to allow Derek to operate, putting the hospital at risk. Dr. Shepherd defies Dr. Webber once again when he schedules surgery to remove the tumor. This time he has to have the willing participation of the other surgeons and a diversion to keep Dr. Webber away from the OR for the 26 hours it takes to do the surgery. The surgery is not without its moments of terror, fear and extreme stress.*

*Dr. Shepherd miraculously succeeds in removing the tumor, and of course, this means he is the most amazing neurosurgeon on the planet. Nevertheless, he is at odds with his boss, well, let's just say, that while he saved a life in a really big way and made medical history, he also went against hospital policy, defied his boss, cost the hospital several hundreds of thousands of dollars and so on.*

*The showdown happens at the end of the day. Dr. Shepherd and Dr. Webber have a collegial relationship. Derek walks over to where Dr. Webber is writing the surgical rotation for the day, on a white board and says to him, "you can't keep doing this, Richard (Dr. Webber)." There is history here. The hospital went through a merger and Dr. Webber is responsible for its profitability. He is stressed and angry. He cannot afford any mistakes by his staff. He has to let go some of his doctors to accommodate the new owners. Derek continues to talk to Richard and says, "I'm tired of fighting you. Let's put this behind us, if we can." Dr. Webber turns around and says, "you're fired, immediately. Get the hell out of my hospital." Derek looks at Richard with intensity, then relaxes and takes a deep breath. He now looks at Richard with eyes that hold peace, wisdom, insight and love and very softly, says, "Go home. Sleep on it. We'll talk more tomorrow."*

*He responded to Dr. Webber from a very different mindset then*

someone being fired. Dr. Shepherd knew his friend well and trusted that his breach of loyalty and defiance, in the light of day, would be overpowered by their mutual passion and dedication to medicine. Their first oath is to saving lives and this is Dr Webber's internal conflict -- his responsibility is also to run a viable and profitable hospital.

The moment of peace was achieved when Derek found within himself reconciliation and trusted in the right outcome. Derek gave Richard an out (from his impulses) at a time when Richard felt betrayed, hurt, disrespected and also feeling the full weight of his staggering responsibility to run a hospital in a state of flux.

**How well do we know ourselves to deal trustingly with others when they are stressed to the point of anger or impulsive behavior?**

Check out "How to Recognize Stress in Others" in this issue.

*"Holding on to anger is like grasping a hot coal with the intent of throwing it at someone else; you are the one who gets burned."*  
~Buddha

**NOVEMBER IS GET ACQUAINTED MONTH. JOIN ME ON ANY ONE OF THE FOLLOWING DATES:  
NOVEMBER 10, 17, 19 OR 24 AT 8 PM EASTERN,  
FOR A FREE PHONE CLASS ON THE ESSENTIAL TIPS TO MASTER THE WORKPLACE -- A VALUABLE PREVIEW TO "THE WORKPLACE SERIES."**

*This is an opportunity to bring your concerns, pesky interpersonal, inter-generational skirmishes to the call and get valuable tips and coaching in a group setting.*

**To sign up for a free phone class, [click here.](#)**

**To learn more about the benefits of Flo's new fall program, click on [find joy in the workplace.](#)**

**To experience a complimentary coaching session, click on [Coach Me.](#)**

## How to Recognize Stress in Others

*"There is nothing more galling to angry people than the coolness of those on whom they wish to vent their spleen."*  
~Alexandre Dumas

### How good are you at recognizing signs of stress in others?

- Some of the most common symptoms of stress include a quick temper, a decline in personal appearance, lack of concentration, lackluster response, fatigue

- Emotional stress can be recognized when someone is suddenly more difficult, irritable or angrier than usual; depressed or just unhappy
- When stress is particularly severe, people lose the ability to feel or care and become more difficult
- When people experience physical symptoms such as an upset stomach, neck pain, back ache, a tight chest or blurry vision, they would rather become more difficult than admit discomfort or that they are stressed

It's helpful to distinguish between difficult behavior brought on by stress or whether it's more of a personality trait. Your conversation may differ when the behavior is temporary as opposed to a difficult style.

## **Scenarios**

### **Your Everyday Challenges**

If your boss is hovering, asking lots of questions or is asking others about your work, this is a sign that he or she is not being kept informed. They may exhibit signs of stress that may feel oppressive. An obvious approach is to give more feedback on your progress.

If you're dealing with someone who has no enthusiasm and will never tell you what's wrong, encourage him or her to reflect on their achievements as they get closer to their goals. Make sure positive feedback outweighs the negative.

If you are dealing with someone who dumps their tasks on others, make sure to set clear objectives and deadlines. Make sure those responsible for a project are the ones who deliver the feedback. Define responsibilities very clearly. Get agreement.

### **The Tough Challengers**

If you are dealing with someone who has to have the first and last word and be one step ahead of everyone else, then be one step ahead of them: confirm in writing, whatever is agreed to. At meetings, anticipate this person to raise objections and prepare questions and goals to challenge him or her.

Finally, if you are dealing with a bully, someone who intimidates others and gets his or her way by being aggressive, this is the time to stand your ground. Be assertive. Always state your case calmly. Encourage the person to consider the consequences of their actions.

These are surface fixes and while I'm not advocating managers to be psychologists, it will always be useful to understand others' behavior styles and how to best approach and interact with those differences. The first step in dealing with those you find difficult is to first observe and identify behaviors. Then notice what it is about their behavior that pushes your buttons and finally, gain awareness about your impact on others.

A professional coach can help you become more self-aware of your own style, how it impacts on others and how to resolve confrontations with challenging people.

*To experience a complimentary coaching session, click on [Coach Me](#).*

Have a Joyful Month,

Flo Mauri  
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