

Reply to Sathnam Sanghera's article in Times Online 10 November 2009

Methinks that Sathnam protests too much!

This year ISMA was supported by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) whose definition of stress he has rubbished. It is based on the well researched and established model of Control-Demand-Support: i.e if you have control of your work/life, can keep the demands on you and of your life to a workable level, and get support from manager/colleagues/family, you can cope with lots of varied challenges and keep ill health at bay.

As a Cambridge graduate, Mr Sanghera may be aware that keeping oneself informed can be proactive in developing a healthy state of mind and body. Certainly the refuse collectors, lawyers, front line housing staff, nurses, teachers, accountants, lorry drivers and surveyors I have worked with over the last two months are aware of this. Like many people, they want to wrestle back control of their lives from the hectic rush which is 21st Century living. They are prepared to listen to and discuss the science behind the body's response to excessive pressure which can result in stress.

We discuss neurochemicals (adrenaline, noradrenaline, dopamine, acetylcholine) as well as serotonin and cortisol.

Perhaps a saliva test for cortisol would help identify whether Mr Sanghera's condition is stress or mere dyspepsia.



Chair of ISMA^{UK}

11 November 2009