
televisionexpress

Parks to ride out stress

I DON'T know if you happened to catch last Thursday's **HOWTO BEAT... AGEING**, the first of a new C4 health series that's telling us how to, er, beat stuff. If you did, and if you heeded its sensible advice (eat more healthily, drink less, exercise regularly, get some decent sleep, essentially don't be a blithering idiot), then no doubt you now feel rejuvenated.

If so, you may not even need to bother with episode two, **HOWTO BEAT...STRESS** (C4, 8pm).

After all, what is there to be stressed about if, thanks to the recommendations in episode one,



Mike Ward
previews
tonight's TV

you've reverted to how you looked in 1996?

If, however, that advice brought you zero benefit, you may be feeling more wound-up than ever. In which case, for goodness' sake tune in.

Tonight's episode has enlisted 10 volunteers, all desperate to see their stress levels drop. Once

the programme has learnt a little about each of the volunteers, it'll be asking them to try out an assortment of "simple and effective" techniques so it can measure how they respond.

One of them, Dean, is a firefighter. That means his job is to enter blazing buildings on a regular basis and save other people's lives while repeatedly putting his own at considerable risk.

"Dean, how does stress affect your life?" host Kate Quilton feels the need to ask.

I shan't spoil the fun by revealing all the techniques these volunteers try and how they respond, but there's one that's so remarkable

that I really do have to share it with you.

According to the findings of a scientific study conducted on these people, spending 30 minutes walking through a built-up urban area is rather stressful ("There was quite a lot of beeping of cars," reports one volunteer), whereas spending 30 minutes walking through a park, erm, isn't.

Straight after this programme, there's the final part of one that's been somewhat less sensitive towards its participants, not only sending their stress levels through the roof but doing so with some glee. I'm talking, of

course, about **HUNTED** (C4, 9pm), the show whose gung-ho contestants are dumped in a mystery location and challenged to stay off grid for three weeks-plus, evading the various former copper types, intelligence bods and security rotters endeavouring to ensnare them and deprive them of a share of the £100,000 prize money.

Of our original 10 fugitives, six are still at large. Can they all stay that way for just three more days?

There's an address given out at the end, by the way, if you want to apply to take part in the next series. Yes, that was my response as well.