

# Keys To Effectively Managing Stress

*with a focus on self-care*

Presented by:

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# Objectives

- Increase our understanding of stress and its affect on us
- Recognize variety of approaches for handling stress
- Identify resources for coping
- Design an action plan for self-care



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# Is Stress Always Bad?



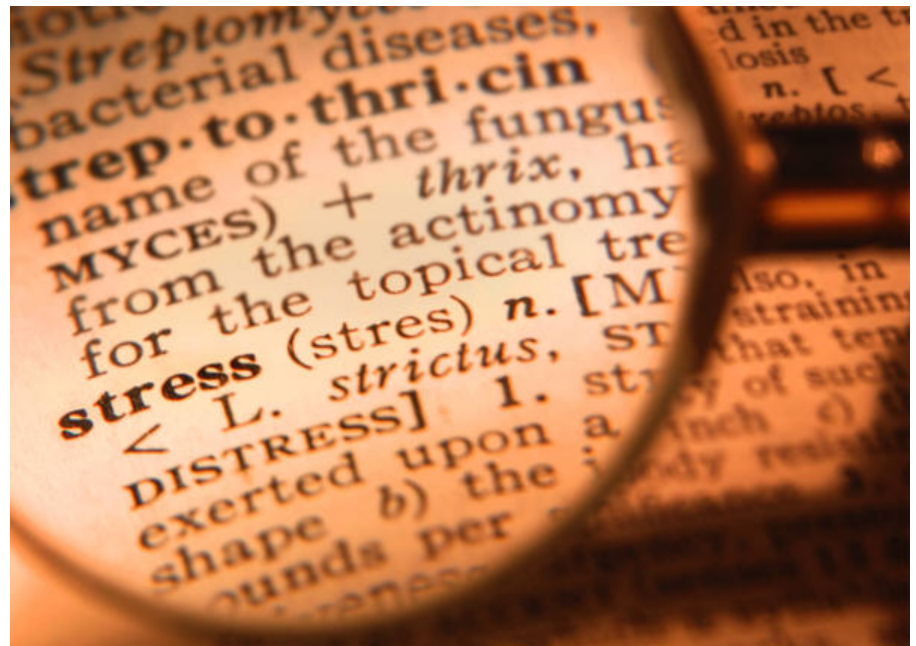
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# 2 Types of Stress

- Distress
- Eustress



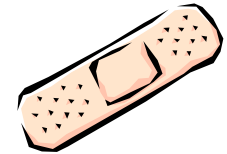
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# Stressful Situations A to Z



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# Common Causes of Stress

- Work/Workload
- Finances/Money
- Family/Children
- Health Issues
- Family Member's Health
- Financial Concerns
- Intimate Relationships
- Multiple roles
  - Friend
  - Spouse
  - Boss
  - Co-worker
  - Parent
- Sometimes it is hard to balance these many roles.



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# Major Sources of Stress

1.) Personal

2.) Environmental

3.) Organizational





# Personal Sources of Stress

- Poor self-esteem
- Poor interpersonal communication
- Lack of connections
- Disruptive relationships
- Health status changes
- Monetary problems
- Burnout/boredom
- Risk taking behaviors
- Substance abuse
- Poor coping mechanisms



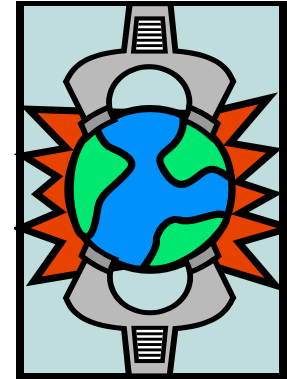
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# Environmental Sources of Stress

- Light
- Noise
- Temperature
- Humidity
- Job hazards/risks
- Demands on time, physical demands, mental pressures
- Improper equipment
- Techno-stress
- Improper interface between people and machines



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# Organizational Sources of Stress

- Too much to do
- Too little to do
- Role ambiguity
- Role conflict
- Too much responsibility
- Accountability
- Over-qualified/under-qualified for the position
- Uncertain future
- Lack of control
- Manager's style



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# How Our Body Responds to Stressful Situations

- Heart rate increases
- Rapid breathing
- Digestion stops
- Increased blood coagulation
- Pancreas releases extra insulin
- Muscles are on alert



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# Symptoms of Unmanaged Stress

- Changes in sleep
- Changes in appetite
- Confusion
- Easily angered
- Overall unhappiness
- Trouble concentrating
- Low energy
- Desire to isolate
- Irritability or intolerance
- Muscle tension
- Frequent illness



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# Chronic Stress Response

→ Stress

→ Release of stress hormones

→ No adaptation

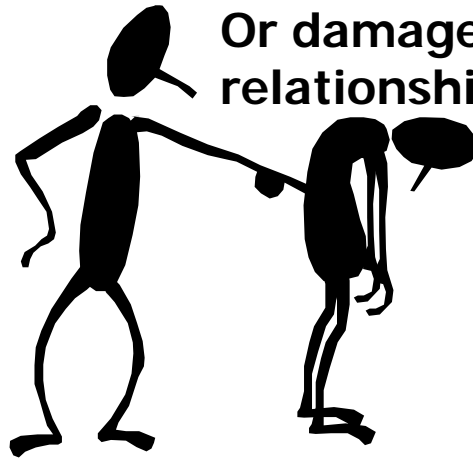
= illness



When people are upset....



Or damage a relationship...



Or don't find much meaning...



Or have lost something important...



Pretty soon they won't feel so good anymore, so they go to the doctor, who gets them back on their feet ...

Or are going too fast...



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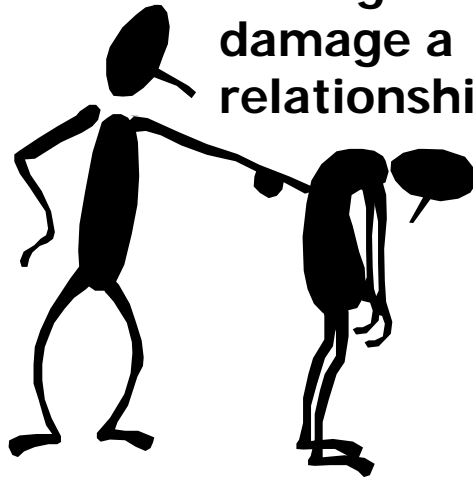
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And get upset  
again ....



And again  
damage a  
relationship...



And still don't  
find much  
meaning...



Or lose  
something  
important  
again...



And, before too long, they  
don't feel so good anymore,  
and they get sick again....



Or go too fast  
again ...



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# “Fight or Flight”

Instinctual reaction

3 possibilities

- Stay and fight
- Run away
- Stand and get eaten



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# What About The “Energies” Our Body Has Prepared?

Body doesn't know difference between physical or mental assault

Adrenaline has made our muscles alert



Stored adrenaline cortisol, which actually fights against our immune system

Makes us more prone to sickness when stressed



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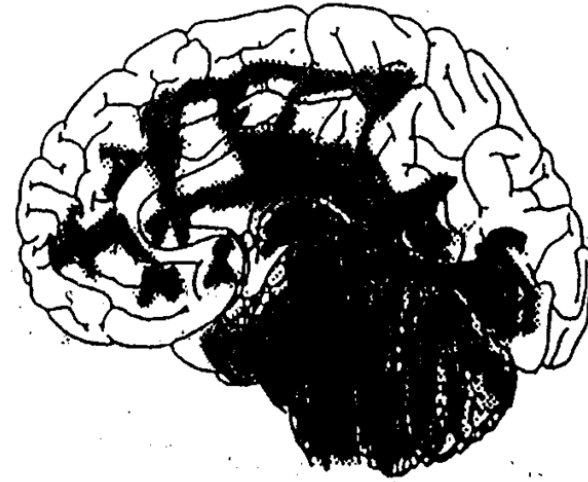
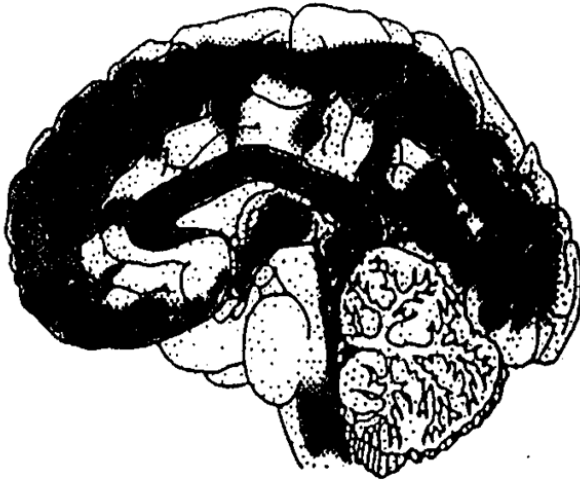
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# Brain Activity in the state of:

High Challenge, Low Stress

Stress, Anxiety, Threat



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# How do we keep these physical symptoms to a minimum?

We need to take control of our stress.

Our perceptions create our stress:

Employee A



VS.

Employee B



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“The primary cause of unhappiness is never the situation but your thoughts about it. Be aware of the thoughts you are thinking.”

Eckhart Tolle



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# Decreasing Stress in our Lives

- Invite team work - Delegate responsibilities: home, work, ...
- Set realistic goals:
  - Sense of accomplishment once completed
  - SMART – Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Results Oriented/Relevant/Rigorous, Time Bound
- Learn to say “No!”
- Put situations into perspective:
  - How will this affect me in 1 week, 1 month, 1 year, 5 years....?



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# Increasing our Stress Heartiness!



- Do physical activities that you enjoy
  - Release energy built up by stress:
    - Tension
    - Adrenaline
    - Anger or irritability
  - Produces stimulating endorphins



# Take a Breath of Life!

- Deep breathing exercises
  1. Sit or lie down
  2. Breathe using your abdomen, not your chest. (In and out, rather than up and down)
  3. Take a deep breath through your nose until your abdomen is fully expanded. Hold for 3 seconds.
  4. With puckered lips, exhale *slowly* through your mouth.



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# Attitude - De-Stress Kit

- Manage your Reactions to news, events, people
- Spirituality
- Sleep
- Exercise
- Reduce comparing now with the way it was
- Reduce fear < balance caution



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# Attitude - De-Stress Kit

- Communicate with others
- Volunteer
- Generate acts of kindness/compassion
- Share appreciation and gratitude
- Decrease drama
- Take care not to judge yourself/others so negatively



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# Proven Stress Reducers

- Organize
- Don't rely on your memory.
- Get up early!
- Drink tea
- Get a massage/untie your knots



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# Proven Stress Reducers

- Plan ahead
- Don't put up with something that doesn't work right.
- Play on the web
- Take the scenic route
- Turn off the TV



# Proven Stress Reducers

- Be prepared to wait. A paperback can make waiting in a post office line more bearable.
- For every one thing that goes wrong, there are probably 10 that go right. It's All About Attitude!
- Simplify, simplify, simplify.
- Count your blessings daily.



# Proven Stress Reducers



- Make friends with non-worriers. Nothing gets you in the habit of worrying faster than associating with chronic worrywarts.
- Live in the “present”
- Let Go!
- Eliminate destructive self-talk: “I’m too old to..., I’m too fat to...,” etc.



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# 7 Ways to Brighten Today...

- Pick up the telephone and renew and old friendship.
- Do something nice and unexpected for someone who's down.
- Smile at everyone you see.
- Have lunch with a friend, a child or a grandchild.
- Send a thank you note to someone who has enriched your life.
- Count your blessing, then thank God – to make him smile.



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# Activity

- Take out a piece of paper
- List 1-5 along the left side
- Over the past week, name five (5) things you've done to care for yourself or to reduce your stress level
- Share with a partner





# Discussion

- What did you learn?
- What are the barriers stopping you from taking time out to decompress?
- Come on! What is really stopping you?
- What tips did you learn from those around you?
- A to Z (yes, again)



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# Key Points to Remember

- Recognize and counter irrational self talk. Irrational self talk often triggers our stress response. Recognizing these negative messages is the first step to managing stress.
- Consider your personality type. Are you a “Type A” personality? Learning about your personality style and it’s impact on your mindset is critical to avoiding stress or minimizing the effects that stress has for you.
- Recognize that what you think does influence how you look at and respond to situations.
- Make a paradigm shift. Replace the thinking that hurts your health with rational thoughts grounded in truth that bring about well-being, happiness, and productivity.



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# Suggestions for Reducing Stress

- The relaxation response, when triggered, sends out chemicals that neutralize or counteract the stress response
- The relaxation response is hard-wired and is a physiological response
- It is like a muscle – you must take the time out to exercise it.
- Daily practice is the best way of obtaining the benefits



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# The Choice is Yours...

## Contract:

I (place your name here) will take back control of my life. I realize I have chosen to place (fill in the blank) before my own needs. Today I will choose to care for myself in large ways and in small by: (fill in the blank). I WILL do this now.



# Thank-you!

## Q & A

