Managing Stress in a Modern World

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Key Questions to Consider

- Is stress always bad?
- Can I really do anything about stress, or is it just an inevitable demand of living in today's world?
- Was I born with a certain capacity to handle stress? Is successful stress management a result of heredity or environment?

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FYI: Got Stress?

- Individual self-ratings of emotional health dropped to a record 25-year low in 2012
- Fewer individuals than ever before are reporting above-average emotional health
- Individuals feel increasingly overwhelmed even before entering the workforce

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Feeling Overwhelmed?

- The percentage of first-year in the workforce women who report feeling "frequently" overwhelmed is at its highest point, 40.5%, since the question was first asked in 1985
  - This is more than twice the rate of first-year men (18.3%)

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Stress: What Is It?

- A demand made upon the adaptive capacities of the mind and body
- Three important aspects
  - The experience of the stressor as positive or negative
  - The reaction, not the actual event, as the determining factor
  - The capacity for handling stress and whether it is sufficient or exceeded

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Yerkes-Dodson Principle

- To a certain point, stress is healthy, useful, and beneficial
  - Can enhance performance, health, and well-being
- When stress exceeds ability to cope, diminished performance, inefficiency, and health problems can occur

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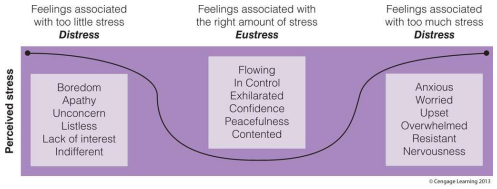
Yerkes-Dodson Principle Illustrated



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Good Stress and Bad Stress

- Stressor: any event or situation that an individual perceives as a threat that causes him or her to either adapt or initiate the stress response
- Eustress: positive, desirable stress
- Distress: negative effects of stress

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Acute and Chronic Stress

- Acute: appears suddenly, is usually quite intense, and then disappears quickly
- Episodic acute stress: repeated episodes of acute stress
- Chronic: long-term stress resulting from problems that just don't seem to go away

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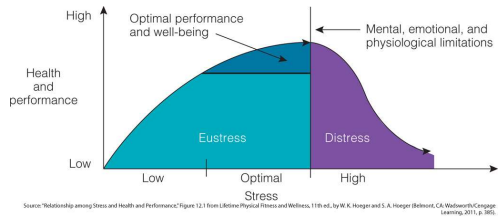
The Relationship Among Stress, Health, and Performance



Source: "Relationship among Stress and Health and Performance," Figure 12.1 from Lifetime Physical Fitness and Wellness, 11th ed., by W. K. Hoeger and S. A. Hoeger (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Cengage Learning, 2011, p. 385).

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Holistic Health

- Understanding health
  - Health is more than just the absence of disease
  - Health relates to more than just the physical dimension

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Dimensions of Health: Physical and Intellectual

- Physical health
  - Functioning of the body's cells, tissues, organs, and systems
- Intellectual health
  - Ability to think and learn from experiences, the ability to assess and question new information, and an openness to learning new things

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Dimensions of Health: Emotional and Spiritual

- Emotional health
  - Experiencing and appreciating a wide range of feelings and the ability to express these feelings and emotions in a healthy manner
- Spiritual health
  - Relates to the principles and values that guide a person and give meaning, direction, and purpose to life

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Dimensions of Health: Social

- Social health
  - Ability to relate to others and express care and concern for others

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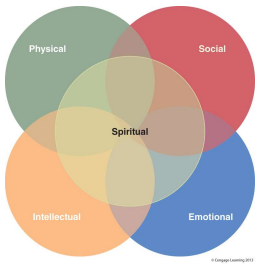
Holistic Health: Putting It All Together



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Nature or Nurture

- What factors influence the experience of stress?
  - Heredity
  - Environment
  - Number of stressors
  - Magnitude of the stressor
  - Subjective meaning of the stressor
  - Developmental level of the individual
  - Availability of social support

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Time Tip

- Time management is vital to stress management
- TRIAGE RUTHLESSLY!
  - Invest your time and energy where it matters most

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Sources of Stress

- Time management
- Personal expectations
- Family expectations and family life
- Employment decisions and finances
- Academic demands
- Living arrangements
- Relationships
- Physical health issues

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More Sources of Stress

- Environmental stressors
- Information overload
- Choices
- Daily hassles

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Culture Connection: Life Out of Balance

- *Koyaanisqatsi*, a Hopi word meaning:
  - A crazy life
  - A life in turmoil
  - That life is disintegrating
  - That life is out of balance
  - A state of life that calls for another way of living

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Prevention

- You can prevent and manage stress through the following three basic approaches
  - Eliminate the stressor
  - Change your thinking
  - Manage the stress

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Key Questions

- I know I feel stressed, but how can I measure my stress?
- How do I rate my stress level compared to the stress level of others?
- I often have headaches and tight shoulders. Could this be due to stress?
- Is my stress because of what is happening in my life or because of how I react or think about what is happening?

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Self-Assessment

- The major challenge of stress management is to determine:
  - What causes you stress
  - What factors are related to unnecessary stress
  - How your stress level relates to the stress levels of others

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FYI: Meditation Slows Breathing

- People who regularly practice meditation:
  - Have slower breathing rates
  - Breathe more efficiently
  - Use the oxygen they breathe in more effectively
- Natural physiologic changes during meditation include
  - Decreased oxygen consumption
  - Lessened respiration rate

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Assess Your Stress

- Physiologic indicators of stress:
  - Resting heart rate
  - Breathing pattern
  - Respiration rate
  - Stress-o-meter
    - On scale of 1 (relatively stress free) to 10 (high anxiety most of the time), rate the past month's stress level

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"Assess Your Stress" Form

FIGURE 2.1 "Access Your Stress" Form

Resting Heart Rate	___Beats per minute
Breathing Pattern	__Abdomen___Chest___Both
Respiration Rate	___Breaths per minute
Stress-o-Meter	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

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Assess Your Stress: What's Normal?

- Heart and respiration rates can change with stress
  - Normal heart rate ranges from 50 to 100 beats per minute and average is 70 to 80
  - Normal respiration rate is 12 to 16 breaths per minute
  - Chest breathing is associated with stress while abdominal breathing is associated with relaxation

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Your Perceptions

- Your perception of stress is instrumental in how your body responds
  - What do your results tell you about your stress level?

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Research: Stress and Deep Sleep

- The link between stress and restless sleep is well-established
- Stressed individuals have changes in heart rate patterns during rapid eye movement sleep, when dreaming occurs
  - The patterns are similar to those seen in insomnia, suggesting a common pathway
- Stressed individuals also wake up more often and have fewer episodes of deep sleep

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Symptoms of Stress: Assessment I

- Rate the frequency with which you experience symptoms of stress
  - Headaches
  - Tense muscles; sore neck and back
  - Fatigue
  - Anxiety, worry, phobias
  - Difficulty falling asleep irritability insomnia
  - Bouts of anger/hostility
  - Boredom and/or depression

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Symptoms of Stress: Assessment II

- Eating too much or too little
- Diarrhea, cramps, gas, constipation
- Restlessness, itching, tics
- Grinding teeth, clenching jaw during sleep
- Difficulty concentrating

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"Symptoms of Stress" Form

FIGURE 2.2 Symptoms of Stress Form

Symptoms	Frequency of Symptoms: Almost all day, every day	Frequency of Symptoms: 2-3 times a day	Frequency of Symptoms: Every night or day	Frequency of Symptoms: 2-3 times per week	Frequency of Symptoms: Once a week	Frequency of Symptoms: Once a month	Frequency of Symptoms: Never
Headaches							
Tense muscles; sore neck and back							
Fatigue							
Anxiety, worry, phobias							
Difficulty falling asleep							
Irritability							
Insomnia							
Bouts of anger/ hostility							
Boredom, depression							
Eating too much or too little							
Diarrhea, cramps, gas, constipation							
Restlessness, itching, tics							
Grinding teeth, clenching jaw during sleep							
Difficulty concentrating							

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Your Symptoms

- The more often you experience symptoms of stress, the more likely it is that stress has a negative impact on your life

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FYI: Lessons from the Titanic

- The captain of the Titanic was warned six separate times to slow down, change course, and take the southern route
  - He ignored all six warnings and was lulled into complacency because he believed the ship was unsinkable
- The lesson:
  - Listen to your body when it sends you signals and slow down, change course, or take another route

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Perceived Stress Scale I

- Rate the frequency, in the past month of:
  - Being upset because of something that happened unexpectedly
  - Feeling unable to control the important things in your life
  - Feeling nervous and “stressed”
  - Feeling confident about your ability to handle your personal problems
  - Feeling things were going your way

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Perceived Stress Scale II

- Finding you could not cope with all the things that you had to do
- Being able to control irritations in your life
- Feeling you were on top of things
- Being angered because of things that happened that were outside of your control
- Feeling difficulties were piling up so high that you could not overcome them

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Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) (1 of 3)

FIGURE 2.3 Perceived Stress Scale (PSS)

For each question, choose from the following alternatives:

0-never 1-almost never 2-sometimes 3-fairly often 4-very often

1. In the last month, how often have you been upset because of something that happened unexpectedly?
2. In the last month, how often have you felt that you were unable to control the important things in your life?
3. In the last month, how often have you felt nervous and "stressed"?
4. In the last month, how often have you felt confident about your ability to handle your personal problems?
5. In the last month, how often have you felt that things were going your way?
6. In the last month, how often have you found that you could not cope with all the things that you had to do?
7. In the last month, how often have you been able to control irritations in your life?

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Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) (2 of 3)

8. In the last month, how often have you felt that you were on top of things?
9. In the last month, how often have you been angered because of things that happened that were outside of your control?
10. In the last month, how often have you felt difficulties were piling up so high that you could not overcome them?

Figuring your PSS score:

You can determine your PSS score by following these directions:

First, reverse your scores for questions 4, 5, 7, and 8. On these four questions, change the scores like this: 0 = 4, 1 = 3, 2 = 2, 3 = 1, 4 = 0.

For all other questions, use the number you wrote down as the score.

Now add up your scores for each item to get a total.

My total score is _____.

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Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) (3 of 3)

Individual scores on the PSS can range from 0 to 40, with higher scores indicating higher perceived stress.

Scores ranging from 0-13 would be considered low perceived stress.

Scores ranging from 14-26 would be considered moderate perceived stress.

Scores ranging from 27-40 would be considered high perceived stress.

Source: A Global Measure of Perceived Stress, by S. Cohen, T. Kamarck, & R. Mermelstein, in *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 24(4) (1983):385-396.

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Score Yourself

- Score your responses to the Perceived Stress Scale as indicated on the form (Figure 2.3)
- An important characteristic of the Perceived Stress Scale is that it focuses on perception of events, not simply the occurrence of events

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Stress Vulnerability Factors

- Assessing vulnerability to stress is important to managing stress
- Vulnerability factors
  - Genetics
  - Coping style
  - Thinking style
  - Environment
  - Social skills

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Stress Vulnerability Questionnaire (1 of 2)

Item	Strongly Agree	Mildly Agree	Mildly Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. I try to incorporate as much physical activity* as possible in my daily schedule	1	2	3	4
2. I exercise aerobically 20 minutes or more at least three times per week.	1	2	3	4
3. I regularly sleep 7 to 8 hours per night.	1	2	3	4
4. I take my time eating at least one hot, balanced meal a day.	1	2	3	4
5. I drink fewer than two cups of coffee (or equivalent) per day.	1	2	3	4
6. I am at recommended body weight.	1	2	3	4
7. I enjoy good health.	1	2	3	4
8. I do not use tobacco in any form.	1	2	3	4
9. I limit my alcohol intake to no more than one drink for women or two drinks for men per day.	1	2	3	4
10. I do not use hard drugs.	1	2	3	4
11. I have someone I love, trust, and can rely on for help if I have a problem or need to make an essential decision.	1	2	3	4
12. There is love in my family.	1	2	3	4
13. I routinely give and receive affection.	1	2	3	4
14. I have close personal relationships with other people who provide me with a sense of emotional security.	1	2	3	4
15. There are people close by whom I can turn to for guidance in time of stress.	1	2	3	4
16. I can speak openly about feelings, emotions, and problems with people I trust.	1	2	3	4
17. Other people rely on me for help.	1	2	3	4
18. I am able to keep my feelings of anger and hostility under control.	1	2	3	4
19. I have a network of friends who enjoy the same social activities I do.	1	2	3	4
20. I take time to do something fun at least once a week.	1	2	3	4

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Stress Vulnerability Questionnaire (2 of 2)

Item	Strongly Agree	Mildly Agree	Mildly Disagree	Strongly Disagree
21. My religious beliefs provide guidance and strength to my life.	1	2	3	4
22. I often provide service to others.	1	2	3	4
23. I enjoy my job (major or school).	1	2	3	4
24. I am a competent worker.	1	2	3	4
25. I get along well with co-workers (or students).	1	2	3	4
26. My income is sufficient for my needs.	1	2	3	4
27. I manage time adequately.	1	2	3	4
28. I have learned to say "no" to additional commitments when I am already pressed for time.	1	2	3	4
29. I take daily quiet time for myself.	1	2	3	4
30. I practice stress management as needed.	1	2	3	4

*Walk instead of driving, avoid escalators and elevators, or walk to neighboring offices, homes, and stores.

Total points: _____

Rating:
- 0–30 points..... Excellent (great resistance to stress)
- 31–40 points..... Good (little vulnerability to stress)
- 41–50 points..... Average (somewhat vulnerable to stress)
- 51–60 points..... Fair (vulnerable to stress)
- ≥61 points..... Poor (highly vulnerable to stress)

Source: *Lifetime Physical Fitness and Wellness*, 13th ed., by W. K. Hoeger and S. A. Hoeger (Stamford, CT: Cengage Learning, 2015, p. 414).

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Tombstone Test

- How do you want to be remembered?
- The choices you make can determine your stress to a large extent
- Assess what is important
- Live your life so you will be remembered for what is important to you

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Daily Stress Diary

- Monitor your stress the same way a food diary allows you to monitor what you eat
- Watch for patterns

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The Science of Stress

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Key Questions

- Why do I need to understand the *science* of stress? I just want to learn to relax.
- What is the purpose of the fight-or-flight response?
- What really happens in my body when I am feeling stress?
- Is the physiological response to stress different in males and females?

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The Science of Stress

- Discovering what actually happens in your body and your mind will help you understand the mechanics behind the stress-prevention and stress-reduction skills
- Knowledge of the science and theory of stress provides strong, credible support for why and how stress-management techniques work

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Stress and the Big Bear

- Why do we feel stress? What is its purpose?
- Consider being out in the woods and encountering a large, hungry bear
  - After you recognize that the bear can harm you, what do you do?
  - Do you run, or do you stay and try to fight it off?

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FYI: Men and Meat

- Images of cooked meat make men calmer and less aggressive

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The Fight-or-Flight Response

- Proposed by Walter Cannon to describe the body's automatic response anytime we perceive a threat or danger
  - Designed to do one and only one thing:
    - Help us survive physical danger
- The physiological and emotional limits at which the body functions efficiently and comfortably is referred to as homeostasis
  - Stress disrupts homeostasis
  - After stress, the body returns to homeostasis

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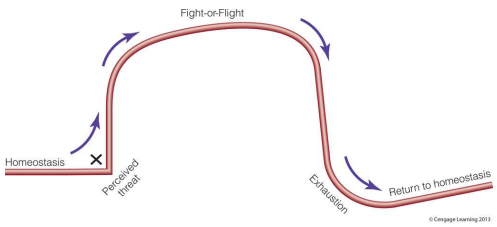
The Fight-or-Flight Response Illustrated



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Culture Connection: Tend-and-Befriend, Not Fight-or-Flight

- Female responses to stress are characterized by a pattern of tend-and-befriend rather than fight-or-flight
  - This simultaneously maximizes the survival of self and offspring

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Men and Women Respond Differently to Stress

- Women respond to stress with brain chemicals that encourage them to bond with other women
  - Builds on the biobehavioral attachment–caregiving processes that depend in part on oxytocin, estrogen, and other sex-linked hormones
  - May partially explain why women live longer than men

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Physiologic Responses to Stress

- When the stress response is initiated, immediate and powerful changes come about because of the autonomic nervous system

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The Two Branches of the ANS

- Sympathetic nervous system (SNS)
  - Responsible for initiating the fight-or-flight response
- Parasympathetic nervous system (PNS)
  - Designed to return the physiology to a state of homeostasis

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The Hypothalamus

- Autonomic nervous system is controlled by the hypothalamus, located in the diencephalon
  - Chief region for coordinating sympathetic and parasympathetic activities
  - Alarm system that delivers a message through the nervous system
  - Delivers a message to the endocrine system to initiate the secretion of hormones

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Stress Hormones

- Produced by the adrenal glands
  - Epinephrine and norepinephrine are released into the bloodstream from the adrenal medulla
  - Cortisol is released from the adrenal cortex
- Autonomic nervous system responses

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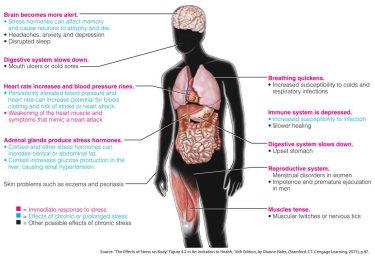
Effects of Stress on the Body



Source: "The Effects of Stress on Body" Fig.ure 4.2 in An Introduction to Health, 10th Edition, by Dianne Hales, Stamford, CT: Cengage Learning, 2015), p.87.

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The Stress Response in Today's World

- The fight-or-flight emergency response is inappropriate in today's social world
  - In the short term, we need to control our stress response to be effective in our daily life
  - In the long term, we need to keep it under control to avoid the consequences of burnout and poor health

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Acute Stress

- Helps us generate great strength, focus more clearly, increase our speed, and perform at a higher level
  - Lasts only 30 to 90 seconds
- BUT, there are typically few acute threats in everyday life

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FYI: Women's Stress

- In similar circumstances and at similar stages of life, women consistently report feeling more stress than men do
- Women's stress hormones and blood pressure, unlike those of men, tend to remain elevated at the end of the workday

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Chronic Stress (1 of 2)

- When the stress response stays in the "on" position longer than necessary to escape danger, nearly all body processes are disrupted
- Although stress is not listed among the top 10 causes of death in the United States, it is linked to many illnesses
  - Stress may not cause problems, but may contribute to problems

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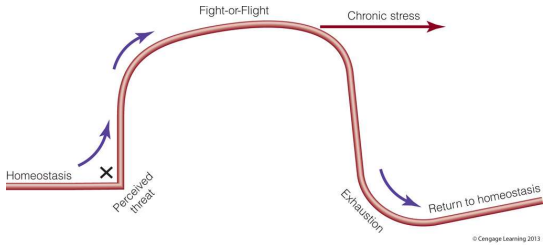
Chronic Stress (2 of 2)



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General Adaptation Syndrome

- History of the general adaptation syndrome
  - Developed by Hans Selye
  - Based on observations of the physiologic responses of rats to chronic stress
  - Selye theorized that the same pattern of changes occurs in the body in reaction to any kind of stress and that the pattern is what eventually leads to disease conditions

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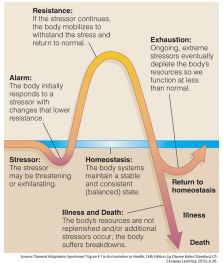
The Three Stages of Selye's General Adaptation Syndrome



Source: "General Adaptation Syndrome" Figure 4.1 in An Introduction to Health, 11th Edition, by Dianne Hales (Stamford, CT: Cengage Learning, 2015), p. 95.

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Alarm

- Homeostasis is disrupted and body systems are activated
- If the stress ceases, homeostasis is restored

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Resistance

- If the stressor continues, the body mobilizes its internal resources in an effort to return to a state of homeostasis
- But because the perception of a threat still exists, the body does not achieve complete homeostasis

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Exhaustion

- If the stress continues long enough, the body can no longer function normally, organ systems may fail and the body breaks down in a variety of ways

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The Stress Response and You

- In thinking about your experience of stress, use the FIT formula
  - Frequency
    - How often is your stress response triggered?
  - Intensity
    - How severe or strong is your stress response when it is triggered?
  - Time or duration
    - How long is the stress response activated?

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Application of the General Adaptation Syndrome

- As you prepare for a stressful situation, you experience an initial alarm reaction
  - If you're prepared for the situation (eustress), the body recovers and stress is dissipated
  - If you are not adequately prepared and are caught off guard, you trigger the resistance stage and stay there until the stressful event
  - If you continue to experience stressful events, you will eventually enter the exhaustion stage

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Time Tip

- When you have a task you dread, start by doing it for just ten minutes
  - You can usually convince yourself to work on it for 10 minutes
  - If you continue past 10 minutes and finish the task, wonderful!
    - Otherwise, come back for another 10 minutes later

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Five Myths about Stress (1-3)

- In an ideal world, there would be no stress
  - Stress is not always bad for us
- What is stressful to me is stressful to you
  - Stress is different for each of us
- Only unpleasant situations are stressful
  - Change, whether positive or negative, is the key ingredient in causing stress

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Five Myths about Stress (4-5)

- No symptoms, no stress
  - Camouflaging symptoms with medications, other drugs, or alcohol may deprive you of the signals you need to begin reducing physiological and psychological stress
- Stress is inevitable, so you can't do anything about it
  - You can learn specific techniques that not only help you cope with stress, but actually prevent some stress from ever happening

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Ultimately

- Your body is designed to respond to acute stress in a predictable manner for one outcome—your survival
- In today's world, many of our challenges are not acute, physical challenges
  - Our stressors are primarily psychological and social
    - The stress response is not well suited to deal with these types of stressors

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The Mind/Body Connection

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Key Questions

- How do my thoughts and feelings change my physical condition? For instance, can stress really change my cells?
- Why do I get sick after I go through a stressful time?
- What is the placebo effect and does it really work?

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The Mind/Body Connection

- *"A sound mind in a sound body is a short but full description of a happy state in this world"*
  - John Locke, 1693
- We all have different experiences with stress
  - What happens in our minds determines what happens in our bodies

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Psychological Health

- Includes emotional and mental health
- Has profound impact on physical health
  - Chronically pessimistic, angry, anxious, or depressed have higher rates of heart disease and cancer

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FYI: The Impact of Stress

- 22% of Americans report experiencing extreme stress
- More adults report their stress is increasing than decreasing
  - More than 9 in 10 adults believe that stress can contribute to the development of major illnesses; and that some types of stress can trigger heart attacks, arrhythmias, and even sudden death

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The Role of Chronic Stress in Disease

- Healthy People 2020: summarizes health goals for the U.S.
  - Mental health problems are among the most pressing concerns in public health
  - Five of the ten Leading Health Indicators are significantly interrelated with stress

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Direct and Indirect Effects of Chronic Stress

- Stress can affect health either directly by way of physiological changes in the body, or indirectly through a change in a person's behavior
  - Direct: release of hormones by the endocrine system during the alarm reaction stage of the general adaptation syndrome
  - Indirect: those who experience high levels of stress may respond with unhealthy behaviors

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Allostatic Load

- The cumulative physiological wear and tear on the body that results from ongoing adaptive efforts to maintain homeostasis in response to stressors
  - Hormones and other physiological factors that mediate the effects of stress on the body are protective and adaptive effects in the short term, but can accelerate disease processes in the long term

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Effects of Medium-Term Chronic Stress

- Muscle tension and pain
- Headaches
- Fatigue
- Upset stomach
- Difficulty sleeping
- Bruxism – teeth grinding
- Cold or sore throat

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Effects of Medium-Term Chronic Stress on the Immune System

- Immune system is unable to work as effectively when you are stressed
  - Your body produces natural antibodies to counteract infection on days with positive events
  - The worse the day, the fewer the antibodies that are produced
  - Cortisol in particular lingers in the body and weakens the body's immune response

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Research Highlight: The Cold, Hard Facts

- The common cold is not an equal-opportunity attacker
  - Happy, relaxed people are more resistant to illness than those who tend to be unhappy or tense
  - Serious work-related or personal stress that lasts at least a month increases the chances of catching a cold
  - The rates of respiratory infection and clinical colds increase in a dose-response manner with the extent of psychological stress

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FYI: Stress and Memory

- Stressful events that cause the release of certain hormones can make you forget things you know you should know
  - Normal memory function returns when the levels of stress hormones return to normal

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Long-Term Chronic Stress

- Evidence suggests a relationship between the risk of cardiovascular disease and environmental and psychosocial factors
  - Mental stress increases oxygen demand because blood pressure and heart rate are elevated

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Stress and the Heart

- Vascular resistance and coronary artery constriction during mental stress decrease the blood supply
  - Blood flow to the heart muscle decreases
  - Blood tends to clot more easily
- Chronically high levels of cortisol may affect cardiac health by promoting inflammation that causes heart attacks

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Long-Term Stress and the Immune System

- Stress hinders the immune system's ability to produce and maintain lymphocytes and natural killer cells
  - Impaired immunity makes the body more susceptible to many diseases

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Long-Term Stress, Aging, and Disease

- Stress and aging
  - Prolonged stress can age people prematurely
    - Shortens lifespan of cells; opens the door to infections
- Stress and inflammation
  - Chronic inflammation plays a role in many diseases
- High levels of stress can trigger a large number of other diseases and conditions

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Research Highlight: Stress and Diabetes

- Men who have reported permanent stress have a 45% higher risk of developing Type 2 diabetes than men who reported no periodic stress
  - Independent of other known risk factors

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How the Mind and Body Communicate (1 of 2)

- Psychosomatic illnesses
  - Now termed psychophysiological illnesses to avoid connotation that illness is somehow “imagined”
  - Experience plays a complex role in determining health

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Culture Connection: In a Culture of Overwork, Japan Tries to Chill Out

- *Karoshi*
  - Death by overwork
    - Victims average over 80 hours of work per week
- Many Japanese workers are finding options to help relieve the strain
- *Iyashi*
  - A mixture of healing, calming, and getting close to nature

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Culture Connection: Ingrained Beliefs

- Ingrained beliefs may make relaxation more difficult
  - Should a worker sacrifice personal well-being for the company?
  - Obsession with work is often seen as a virtue in Japanese culture, and weariness a sign of weakness

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Blaming the Victim

- The mentality that disease is the victim's "fault" is not a productive approach to health
- Psychoneuroimmunology
  - Seeks to understand the complex communications between and among the nervous system, the psyche, and the immune system, and their implications for health

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- The body is affected by what the mind experiences, and the mind is affected by what the body experiences
  - The mind can be a healer or a slayer

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The Power of Perception

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Key Questions

- Is my life really stressful, or is it all in my mind?
- Why does one of my classmates thrive while balancing a full class load, a job, and an active social life, while another classmate in the same situation burns out?
- I feel like I'm being pulled in too many directions, with no choices. What can I do about this?

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The Power of Perception

- Individuals can have the same experience but with very different results, depending on their thinking
  - People can learn to think differently

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Perception and Stress

- The way we perceive or interpret events is what causes us to feel stress
  - Ask yourself if you are in life-threatening danger
  - The perception or the interpretation of an event is what initiates the fight-or-flight response
    - The event itself is not what causes us to experience stress

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The World Is NOT a Stressful Place

- No event in life is inherently stressful
  - Instead, we interpret events as stressful

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What is Cognition, and How Do We Use It?

- Cognition
  - A mental process that consists of thinking and reasoning skills
- Cognitive appraisal
  - Our interpretation of a stressor
- Cognitive distortion
  - The process in which perceptions become magnified out of proportion to their seriousness

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Cognitive Restructuring

- Cognitive restructuring refers to the mental act of changing the meaning or our interpretation of the environmental stressors in life
  - Also called reframing
  - Entails first awareness, and then correction, of stressful, erroneous thoughts

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Hardiness

- A hardy individual is someone who:
  - Views potentially stressful events as interesting and meaningful (commitment)
  - Sees change as normal and as an opportunity for growth (challenge)
  - Sees himself or herself as capable of having an influence on events (control)

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Commitment

- Turn problems into opportunities
  - Finding meaning and purpose through life-changing experiences affects perception, and ultimately the quality of life

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Challenge

- View change as a challenge rather than a threat
  - Either resist and fear change or embrace it and see new opportunities for growth in it

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Culture Connection: Fear of Failure

- If you fear failure, you are under the kind of constant, slow-burning stress that can deplete your energy and corrode your health
  - If you can learn to see your failures as opportunities to learn and grow, the danger is gone and stress evaporates

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Control

- Believe that you can directly impact a situation
  - There are some things in life over which we have no control
  - By contrast, we do have total control over some things, related primarily to ourselves

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Self-Limiting Beliefs

- In many instances, we have much greater control than we realize
  - Premature cognitive commitments: we commit prematurely to an inaccurate belief about ourselves
- When we are highly motivated, we can take control and prevent the event from initiating the stress response

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Locus of Control

- The extent to which we believe that we control events that affect us
  - People with an internal locus of control see themselves as responsible for the outcomes of their own actions
  - People with an external locus of control believe that whatever happens to them is unrelated to their own behavior—making it beyond their control

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Self-Efficacy

- The belief in our ability to accomplish a goal or change a behavior

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FYI: An Oldie but Goodie

- Norman Vincent Peale's *Power of Positive Thinking*
  - You can have control over your life
  - You can get farther in life if you have a hopeful outlook
  - You can create your own luck
  - The only person who can change you is you
  - Believe in yourself! Have faith in your abilities!

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Putting It All Together

- Is this stressor real?
- Can I handle the situation?
- Can I think about this differently?

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Research Highlight: Out of Control

- Men working 25 or more years in a demanding job where they felt they had little control had higher blood pressure at work and home than those who felt they had more control

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Takeaway

- Perception, or interpretation, is the first step toward stress-response activation
  - Most of us are actually in real danger less than 1% of the time, and therefore, rarely need the stress response for protection
  - By changing how we interpret events, we can prevent the stress response from activating
- Preventing unnecessary stress will promote health, improve quality of life, and prevent disease

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Chapter 6

Thinking and Choosing

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Key Questions

- Stressful thoughts automatically pop into my mind. Can I really control how I think?
- My first thoughts always seem to be on the negative side of things. Can I learn to be more optimistic in how I think about things?
- Can I do anything to change how I respond to stressful events?

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Thinking and Choosing

- Cognitive (thinking) techniques can transform stress-producing thought patterns into thought patterns that actually prevent stress

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Cognitive Distortions

- Cognitive distortion occurs when thoughts are magnified out of proportion to their seriousness, resulting in excess stress
  - All-or-nothing thinking
  - Personalizing
  - Discounting the positive
  - Assuming the worst
    - Pessimism or awfulizing

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Cognitive Therapy

- Focuses on cognitive distortions and relearning thought processes as a way to:
  - Alter negative emotions
  - Raise self-esteem
  - Gain hope for the future

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FYI: Believing What You Are Told

- In a study of parent-child interactions over several days, researchers found that, on average, there were 400 negative comments for every positive one spoken to each child

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Thinking Errors (1-3)

- Albert Ellis identified 12 irrational ideas, or “thinking errors”
  - I must be loved by everyone and everyone must approve of everything I do
  - Certain acts are awful or wicked, and people who perform such acts should be severely punished
  - It is horrible when things are not the way I like them to be

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Thinking Errors (4-6)

- Human misery and unhappiness are always externally caused and are forced on me by outside people and events
- If something is or may be dangerous or fearsome, I should be terribly upset and endlessly obsess about it
- It is easier to avoid difficulties and responsibilities in life than to face them

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Thinking Errors (7-9)

- I absolutely need something or someone stronger or greater than me, on whom I must rely, to succeed
- I should be thoroughly competent, intelligent, and achieving in all possible respects
- Because something once strongly affected my life in the past, it must determine my present and future behavior; the influence of the past cannot be overcome

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Thinking Errors (10-12)

- I must have certain and perfect control over things
- Human happiness can be achieved by inertia and inaction
- I have virtually no control over my emotions; I am their victim and cannot do anything about how I feel when things happen

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Research Highlight: Cognitive Therapy for PTSD

- Cognitive behavior therapy (CBT) can be effective in treating phobias and obsessive compulsive disorder
- Intensive CBT may also be effective for posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
  - Can lead to improved PTSD symptoms over a shorter period of time and greater reduction of depression

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Cognitive Techniques: Positive Self-Talk

- Self-talk describes the messages you send to yourself
- Negative self-talk is largely habitual
- Positive self-talk can improve self-esteem and eliminate the chronic, nagging stress that destroys people from the inside out

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Cognitive Techniques: Thought Stopping

- Stopping negative thoughts when they enter your stream of consciousness
- The outcome of positive self-talk and thought-stopping is learned optimism

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Cognitive Techniques: Power Language

- The words you use to describe your emotions will have a noticeable effect on how you feel
- Change how you feel by changing the words you use

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Cognitive Techniques: Going with the Flow

- Accept conditions we cannot change

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Research Highlight: Going with the Flow

- Ryan Pittsinger, a lifetime surfer, surveyed 107 surfers
  - After a 30-minute surfing session, positivity and tranquility increased significantly, while negative mood and fatigue decreased
  - Used his findings in his work with an “ocean therapy” program to help at-risk youth

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Underlying Theories and Practices: Conditioned Response

- When things happen in our environment, we are conditioned to respond in certain ways
  - Most experts agree that people are conditioned to a large extent
    - Some patterns of behavior serve us well and others do not serve us quite so well
    - The good news is that if we have learned to respond in a certain way to something that happens, we can unlearn it

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Underlying Theories and Practices: Choice

- As conscious and aware human beings, we have the capacity to place something between the stimulus and the response
  - This will immediately put us in control of how that situation will affect us
  - Frankl: whenever we are upset, angry, bored, nervous, anxious, embarrassed, shy, or experience any other emotion, it stems from our thoughts, not the event that is happening

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Underlying Theories and Practices: Ineffective Methods of Response

- Attachment/rightness
  - Clutching emotionally to ideas, concepts, or situations and getting disappointed when our expectations aren't met
- Judgment/criticism/blaming
  - Putting a label on something and then trying to make that label the reality
- Resistance/complaining
  - Wishing things were different than they are

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Culture Connection: A Taoist Perspective on Resistance

- A man was so disturbed by the sight of his own shadow and so displeased with his own footsteps that he determined to get rid of both
  - He tried to run away from them
  - He failed to realize that if he merely stepped into the shade, his shadow would vanish, and if he sat down and stayed still, there would be no more footsteps

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Underlying Theories and Practices: Effective Methods of Response

- Observation
  - Notice what is going on
- Discovery
  - Observe and seek to understand
- Allowance/acceptance
  - Emotionally embrace the way things are
- Gratitude
  - Be thankful for the opportunity to experience the moment

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Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy

- You are responsible for your own emotions and actions
  - Your harmful emotions and dysfunctional behaviors are the product of your own irrational thinking
  - You can learn more realistic views and, with practice, make them a part of you
  - You will experience a deeper acceptance of yourself and greater satisfaction of life by developing a reality-based perspective

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When it comes to our thoughts…

- How we think matters
- Managing our self-talk, stopping negative thoughts, and going with the flow help us prevent the stress response from activating

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Mindfulness

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Key Questions

- How can enjoy each thing I need to do rather than get so stressed about having so much to do?
- Does mindfulness mean living in the moment, and if so, how can I plan for the future and accomplish my goals?
- How does mindfulness relate to meditation?
- Does mindfulness lead to living recklessly?

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The Nature of Reality

- Reality is what is, or what is happening
- Unreality is what is not (happening), or an illusion
- We find reality through:
  - Our senses
  - What is happening internally

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The Here and Now

- Every moment of our lives, we are *here* and *now*
- Life is successive present moments of here-and-now experiences

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What is Mindfulness?

- Commonly defined as the state of being attentive to and aware of what is taking place in the present
  - The present moment has no stress
  - Based on *vipassana*, an ancient contemplative tradition
  - Mindlessness occurs when our thoughts are not in the present moment and when we tune out what is happening

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Qualities of Mindfulness (1 of 2)

- Beginner's mind: thinking like a child
  - Involves seeing things "as if for the first time"
- Non-judging
  - Represents straightforward observations
  - Detached observation: simply staying in an observational state of mind without judgment or expectations

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Qualities of Mindfulness (2 of 2)

- Mindfulness self-efficacy
  - How confident are you in your ability to maintain non-judgmental awareness?
- Acceptance of what is happening
  - Holistic and unconditional
- Non-attachment
  - Non-identification with the object of attention
- Non-striving
  - Giving up our need to try to change anything

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Research Highlight: Daydreaming – Is It Good for You?

- People's minds wander about 47% of the time
- Research shows people don't merely fantasize when they are unhappy
  - Wandering minds lead to unhappiness
  - If you want to stay cheerful, you're better off focusing on the present, no matter how unpleasant it is

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Culture Connection: A Culture of Doing

- As a function of culture and shared expectations, we move through transitions
  - Infants: the purest form of being
  - Adolescence: a transition to adulthood, from the joyfulness of play to a preference for doing over being
  - Adulthood: an even greater emphasis on doing over being
  - Elderhood: brings us full circle to a life that favors being over doing

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Mindfulness as a Way of Being

- Being present in all of one's activities and interactions
- When we live mindfully, we become more effective and productive

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Why Be Mindful?

- As thoughts accumulate, our minds get cluttered
  - The result is sensory overload

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Benefits of Mindfulness

- Mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) may be effective for:
  - General stress reduction with nonclinical populations
  - Managing stress and mood disorders in patients with cancer

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FYI: Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction

- Participatory wellness program based on mindful meditation
- Learn how to work with aspects of awareness
  - Decreases a wide range of physical and psychological symptoms and increases clients' well-being
  - Improves physical, emotional, social, and mental health

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Research Highlight: Does Mindfulness Decrease Stress?

- Eight-week mindfulness-based stress-reduction course on stress and empathy for nursing students
  - Intended to provide students with tools to cope with personal and professional stress and to foster empathy
  - Participation significantly reduced anxiety
    - Being mindful may reduce anxiety and decrease tendencies to take on others' negative emotions

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Experiencing Mindfulness: Testing the Principle

- Sit at a desk or table with a pen and piece of paper
  - Place your non-dominant hand where you can easily see it, and write down everything you notice about your hand using all of your senses
  - Continue doing this for several minutes
  - When you think you have observed everything, stop and observe again with all of your senses, and continue writing

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Experiencing Mindfulness: What Did We Learn?

- This simple activity demonstrates a powerful principle:
  - When we focus our attention on what is happening, when we keep our awareness on the here and now, we take part in an experience without stress

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Inner Mindfulness Meditation (1 of 2)

- Focuses the mind internally rather than externally through the five senses
  - Encourages non-judgmental observation of thoughts and images for heightened awareness

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Inner Mindfulness Meditation (2 of 2)

- With eyes closed, take a moment to tune in to your thoughts
  - Allow yourself to non-judgmentally watch your thoughts as they seem to come and go
  - As you keep your eyes closed, separate your awareness from the many thoughts that pop in and then leave your mind
  - Continue to watch your thoughts passively as if you were pulling up a chair and sitting next to your thoughts

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Practice Being More Mindful – Focus

- Choose an activity that you do in a less than mindful way, and focus on involving yourself completely in the experience
- Pay attention to things that are happening around you
  - Rather than thinking about so many things, try simply observing all that is showing up for you in your experience

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Practice Being More Mindful – Accept and Enjoy

- Consciously speak to yourself, saying something like:
  - In this moment, I allow myself to be here now; I cannot be anywhere else right now, nor can I be in my past or future, so I choose to relax and enjoy what is happening, here and now
- Take “mindfulness breaks” in which you do nothing but engage yourself in a certain place and time

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Practice Being More Mindful – Rearrange

- If you find yourself in a setting that is mundane or always the same, take time to rearrange things
- Try a new sport or hobby
  - Totally engage yourself in learning a new skill
- Change your normal routines slightly

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Practice Being More Mindful – Observe

- When you are involved in, or notice others engaging in, situations with heightened emotion, step back and simply become an observer rather than becoming emotionally involved in the incident

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Planning for the Future

- Living mindfully does not mean that you ignore planning for the future or setting goals for what you want to accomplish
  - Instead, think of it as a visionary process that constructively focuses on the future in this present moment
  - Worrying about a future event and directing our attention to the potentially painful outcomes of that event is not productive

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Putting It All Together

- Two stages of mindfulness
  - Self-regulating one's attention on immediate experience
  - Adopting a certain orientation toward one's experiences in the present moment, an orientation characterized by curiosity, openness, and acceptance

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- Mindfulness is essential to management of stress
  - Ability to fully experience and appreciate the moment is elusive for many
- To be at peace with yourself, learn to replace thoughts that produce unhealthy emotions such as guilt, worry, fear, and anger with a mental focus on the present

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Managing Emotions

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Key Questions

- Am it realistic to think that I can eliminate negative emotions such as fear and anger?
- What can I do to overcome my fears of taking on challenges such as studying abroad?
- Is worrying a result of heredity or environment?
- What can I do to control my anger?

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The Physiology of Emotions

- Negative emotions can activate the sympathetic nervous system and evoke the stress response
- Long-term emotions such as fear and anger can affect health
  - Somaticizing is the body's way of turning mental stress into physical manifestations
  - As many as half of all patients who visit physicians have physical symptoms directly caused by emotions

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The Benefits of Positive Emotions

- Positive emotions, like optimism, can reduce stress levels

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Research Highlight: Positive Nuns

- 180 nuns wrote autobiographies while they were in their early twenties
- Diaries were analyzed many years later and assessed for common psychological features
- Positive emotional content in early-life autobiographies was strongly associated with longevity six decades later

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Guilt, Worry, and Anxiety

- Guilt
  - The conscious preoccupation with undesirable past thoughts and behaviors
- Worry
  - The manifestation of fear, which keeps the mind focused on events yet to come
- Anxiety
  - The psychological and physiological response to worry

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FYI: Sources of Worry

- Surveys show that the most common sources of worry for Americans are family and relationships, job or school, health, and finances
  - Most people worry about 5% of the time
  - Chronic worriers spend an average of about 50% of their time worrying

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Letting Go of Worry

- Most things we worry about are out of our control – and will likely never happen
- Worry is not the same as caring
- Worry is not the same as planning
- Strategies
  - Move your worries from your mind to paper
  - Practice mindfulness
  - Remember—worry is a habit

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Time Tip:

- Worrying wastes time and energy
- Will worrying will change the outcome?

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Research Highlight: Worry and the Mind

- Chronic worry is linked to a more than doubled risk of cognitive decline

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Letting Go of Guilt

- Guilt can destroy or teach
- Guilt is a habit
  - You can change the focus of your thinking to mindfulness

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What is Fear?

- A state of escalated worry and apprehension that causes distinct physical and emotional reactions
  - Occurs when worry becomes intense
  - Usually involves a focus on the future
  - May be the single most potent stressful emotion

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Types of Fear

TABLE 8.1 Types of Fear with Examples

Fear	Examples
Change	Afraid to move to a new city, change majors, or back up with a boyfriend or girlfriend
Pain or physical suffering	Fearful of going to the dentist or getting a shot
Failure	Afraid of not being selected for the track team or not being accepted into graduate school
Some *thing*	Afraid of snakes or spiders or being mugged
The unknown	Fearful of going away to school or of people who are different from you
Death	The biggest unknown of all

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What Can We Learn From Fear?

- Fear is about growing
  - We have a natural tendency to want to expand, to become more of who we are
- Comfort and discomfort zones
  - We tend to gravitate toward our comfort zones
  - But to grow, we must leave our comfort zone and move out into our discomfort zone

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Fear – Putting it Together

- Most of us believe we are here not to be stuck in a rut of comfort but, rather, to grow and move in the direction of our potential
- Overcoming fear is necessary for growth, and growth takes effort
- Moving toward your potential results in feelings of accomplishment and gives meaning to life

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Fear Factors

- Fear can motivate positive action
- Nothing in the world is inherently fearful
- Fear is learned
- With practice and experience, we can learn to overcome our fears

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Strategies for Overcoming Fear

- Admit you are fearful
- Confront your fear
- Engage in whatever you are afraid of – at least three times
- As you confront your fear, call it something else
  - Excitement or challenge

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FYI: Scared to Death

- If fear is intense enough, all systems can be overloaded fatally

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The Fear-Faith Connection

- The more we believe that our lives are about something, the more courageous and less fearful we are when we are confronted with difficult situations
- You will never overcome all your fears, but you can conquer the fears that prevent you from living your life to the fullest

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Anger

- Transient emotional response based on the way one chooses to think about events
  - Usually triggered by perceived provocation or mistreatment

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Culture Connection: Road Rage

- Study of road rage conducted in Sydney, Australia
  - Motorists view driving as a source of autonomy, pleasure, and self-expression
  - Road rage is seen as a response to:
    - Driving in a crowded road system and lack of time
  - Expression of anger challenges the idea of the "civilized self," but viewed as understandable

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What is Anger?

- Everyone experiences anger, although to widely differing degrees
  - Considered a temporary emotion
  - Combines physiological and emotional arousal
  - Expressed along a continuum from simple resentment or jealousy to full-blown, out-of-control rage
  - Not the same as hostility

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Three Major Forces Contributing to Anger Today

- Time
- Technology
- Tension

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FYI: Mad Driver Disease

- American Automobile Association's Foundation for Traffic Safety says that incidents of violently aggressive driving rose 7% a year in the 1990s

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When Do We Typically Feel Angry? (1 of 2)

- In the car
- In competitive games
- At things that seem to be out of place
- About taxes
- About the tardiness of others
- At the disorganization or sloppiness of others

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When Do We Typically Feel Angry? (2 of 2)

- At inanimate objects
- Over the loss of objects
- Over world events and conditions beyond your control

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What Are the Effects of Anger?

- Increase in cortisol and adrenalin
- Increase in blood pressure
- Increase in blood sugar
- Faster pulse
- Constriction of blood vessels
- Increased serum cholesterol levels
- Decreased immune function
- Insomnia and fatigue

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Why Do We Get Angry?

- Anger is a reaction we have when expectancy is not met
- Expressing anger
  - Expressing anger is healthy, but how you express that anger may be even more important to your well-being

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Research Highlight: Anger Expression

- Risk of a nonfatal heart attack was cut by more than 50% in men with moderate levels of anger expression
- Relationship between anger and cardiovascular disease may be more complex than previously thought

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Anger Blockers – Understanding Yourself

- Get in touch with your thoughts at the time of your anger
  - Remind yourself that you don't have to think the way you've always done so in the past
- Try postponing your anger
- Don't try to delude yourself into believing that you enjoy something that you find distasteful
  - You can dislike something and still not have to be angry about it

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Anger Blockers – Understanding Others

- Remind yourself at the moment of anger that everyone has a right to be what he or she chooses
  - Demanding that anyone be different will simply prolong your anger
- Ask someone whom you trust to let you know when he or she sees your anger

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Anger Blockers – Admit It

- Keep an anger journal
  - The act of having to write down the incident will persuade you to choose anger less often
- After you have had an angry outburst, admit that you have slipped and that you are working on thinking differently

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Anger Blockers – Challenge Yourself

- Try being physically close to someone that you love at the moment of your anger
- Defuse your anger for the first few seconds by labeling how you feel
- Get rid of unrealistic expectations
- Love yourself
- Use a situation as a challenge to change it
- Stop viewing anger as natural or "only human

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Hostility

- Often thought of as anger that is projected outward at something or someone in an aggressive or antagonistic way
  - Especially dangerous to the heart and may be a good predictor of heart attacks

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FYI: Happy Aging

- After age 50, people report being consistently happier, less stressed, and less worried than their younger counterparts
  - Older people may be more effective at regulating their emotions than younger adults

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Spirituality

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Key Questions

- What does spirituality have to do with managing my stress?
- How can spirituality in my daily life help me cope with, or even prevent, stress?
- Can I be spiritually healthy even though I don't go to church?
- Can prayer change anything?
- How can I learn to forgive someone who has hurt me so I can get on with my life?

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Spirituality

- Spirituality is at the heart of stress management
- People with a deep sense of spirituality
  - Have a purpose, a sense of meaning in life, and a broader perspective
  - Are not defeated by crises
- Spirituality buffers stress

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FYI: Spirituality in America

- A large majority of Americans (78%) say they believe in God
  - 15% say they don't believe in God, but do believe in a higher power

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The Spiritual Quest

- Americans are looking for answers and seeking guidance on human spirituality
  - People may be tired of seeking pleasure through material gain
  - Discussions of spirituality are no longer isolated in religious settings, but are part of current events and daily life

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Spirituality and Religiosity

- Think of spirituality as having:
  - A vertical dimension, which involves a transcending relationship with a higher power
  - A horizontal dimension, which involves a sense of purpose and meaning in life
- Think of religiosity as participation in or adherence to the beliefs and practices of an organized religion

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Research Highlight: Spiritual Changes in Undergraduate Students

- Religious engagement among students declines somewhat during college
- Spirituality shows substantial growth
  - Students become more caring, more tolerant, more connected with others, and more actively engaged in a spiritual quest
  - Spiritual growth enhances other outcomes, such as academic performance, psychological well-being, leadership development, and satisfaction with college

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Research Highlight: Spiritual Growth in Undergraduate Students

- Spiritual growth is enhanced by:
  - Study abroad, interdisciplinary studies, and service learning
  - Engaging in “inner work” through meditation, self-reflection, and/or academic exploration
- Spiritual growth is impeded by:
  - Engaging in activities that distract from the ordinary experience of campus life—such as watching television and playing video games

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Culture Connection: A Native American Perspective

- Man is like an island, a circle within circles
  - Man is separated from these outer circles by his mind, his beliefs, and the limitations put upon him by a life away from the Earth
  - Beyond man's island of ego, his prison, lays the spirit-that-moves-in-all-things, the force that is found in all things
  - The power of the pure mind is what makes all spiritual communication pure and unrestricted
    - The logical mind is a barrier or filter

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Research on Spirituality – Terms

- Defining terms
  - Spiritual health is not an exact science
    - As terminology becomes standardized, studies on spirituality will yield more relevant, applicable findings
- Placebo power
  - Placebo describes the positive effects that are created when a person merely believes he or she will benefit from an intervention
    - About 35% of people are susceptible

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Research on Spirituality – Variables

- Variables in religion, health, and lifestyle research
- Alternative variable may determine results
  - Regular participation in religious activities and practices adds 7 to 14 years to the life span, BUT much of this benefit comes from the health-promoting practices of most religious groups

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Research on Spirituality – The Bottom Line

- Great strides are being made in applying scientific research methodology to understanding the impact of spiritual and religious variables on health and stress management

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Five Qualities of Spiritual Health

- A sense of meaning and purpose in life
- Faith in God or a higher power—however you choose to define it
- A feeling of connection to others and seeing oneself as part of something bigger
- Compassion for others
- Participation in religious behaviors or meaningful spiritual rituals

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Meaning and Purpose

- Without some purpose in life, we wander aimlessly and our enthusiasm for life can be lost
  - Learning that even the most difficult times in life can bring meaning can change the experience in a positive direction
  - Those who find meaning, even in their suffering, are able to find peace

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FYI: Survivor's Story

- Something as devastating as cancer can actually bring peace and improve quality of living

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Faith

- Belief in a higher power is the cornerstone of every major religion
- Faith is the belief in or commitment to something or someone seen or unseen that helps a person realize a purpose
- Believing that we can release to a higher power some things that are beyond our control relieves stress
  - Provides a sense of tranquility and security

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Connectedness

- The feeling of relatedness or attachment to others
- A sense of relationship to all of life
- A feeling of harmony with self and others
- A feeling of oneness with the universe and/or a universal element or Universal Being

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Compassion for Others

- Two important qualities of compassion have special relevance to stress management
  - Forgiveness: experience of psychological peace that occurs when injured people transform their grievances against others
  - Altruism: the act of helping or giving to others without thought of self-benefit; Random Acts of Kindness movement

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Research Highlight: The Forgiveness Factor

- Studies using positron emission tomography (PET) show that different parts of the brain are activated when we contemplate forgiveness rather than revenge or retaliation

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FYI: The World of Doing Good

- More than 60 million Americans are involved in volunteer efforts
- "We make a living by what we get, we make a life by what we give"
  - Winston Churchill

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Research Highlight: Prayer in the Coronary Care Unit

- Randolph Byrd's research suggests intercessory prayer may improve health outcomes

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An Action Plan for Stress Management through Spiritual Wellness

- Define what spirituality means to you
- Reflect on spiritual moments in your life
- Based on your definition of spirituality, reflect on how spirituality relates to stress in your life

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Spiritual Health

- The path to spiritual health is not prescribed
  - The right way is the one that works for you

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Social Support, Relationships, and Communication

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Key Questions

Do men and women communicate differently?

My spouse/partner just doesn't understand me. What can I do to get him/her to really listen to what I am saying?

When I ask my spouse what's wrong and she says "nothing," I believe her. Why is it that she means something else, and what can we do to communicate better?

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Social Support, Relationships, and Communication

Friends are good medicine, especially when it comes to preventing stress

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Social Support (1 of 4)

Individual's knowledge or belief that he or she is cared for and loved, belongs to a network of communication, and has a mutual obligation with others in the network

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FYI: You've Got a Friend

Humans need each other

Social support provides buffer for stress

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Time Tip: Learn to Say NO

Once you learn how to say NO to the unimportant things, you have more time and energy to say YES to the important things, such as quality time with family and friends

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Research Highlight: More Is Better

Having more types of social relationships, including family but also neighbors, friends, workmates, and members of religious and social groups, reduces susceptibility to infectious illnesses like the common cold

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FYI: Family Rituals

Family rituals may be one of the most powerful prophylactic measures that parents can bring to bear when there are significant stressors

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Relationships

Social support systems are composed of a web of relationships

The way we interact with those around us can have a potent effect on the stress we feel

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What Makes Us Happy? (1 of 2)

Source: "The New Science of Happiness," by C. Wallis, Time 165(3), Jan. 17, 2005, 42.

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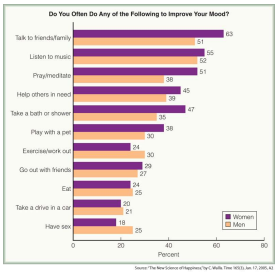
What Makes Us Happy? (2 of 2)



Source: "The New Science of Happiness," by C. Wallis, Time 165(3), Jan. 17, 2005, 42.

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Research Highlight: The Truth about Cats and Dogs

College students are more likely than older people to say their pet helps them get through hard times

Pets are better than people at calming their stressed owners, in part because they are nonjudgmental

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Relationships in Marriage (1 of 2)

Though disagreements are not pleasant, they are necessary to some extent in all good marriages

Five-to-one ratio:

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Relationships in Marriage (2 of 2)

Research suggests that people should first select a mate with whom inevitable annoyances can be managed

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Love and Relationships

People have a need to feel loved

Words of affirmation

Quality time

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Research Highlight: Hugging, Kissing Lower Stress Hormones

Couples who reported more physical contact, from holding hands to sexual intercourse, had lower levels of the stress hormone cortisol in their saliva

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Determining Your Love Language (1 of 2)

What does your partner do or fail to do that hurts you most deeply?

What have you most often requested of your partner?

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Determining Your Love Language (2 of 2)

In what way do you express love to your partner regularly?

Think back to a time in your life when you felt totally and completely loved

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Communication (1 of 3)

One of the most important qualities for a relationship to survive and thrive is effective communication

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Communication (2 of 3)

Listening

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Listening Tips

Listen more, talk less
Suspend judgment
Find attractive aspects of the other person
Avoid giving advice
Allow moments of silence
Listen with your eyes and your heart as much as your ears
Use appropriate body signals

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Research Highlight: Hold My Hand

Loving contact before a tough day at work can carry over and protect a person throughout the remainder of the day

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FYI: In Touch with Touch

Waitresses who touch their customers get better tips than waitresses who don't

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Culture Connection: Reach Out and Touch Someone

Couples in the United States aren't very "touchy-feely" in public

Comforting physical contact is out of favor among friends and co-workers because of the legal climate

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Managing Conflict

Conflict

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Conclusion

Social support engenders a sense of belonging, feeling accepted and loved, and being needed

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Creating a Healing Environment

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Key Questions

When I walk into my home, does it relax me?

Do things like color, plants, and light really make a difference in how we feel?

If all this new technology is supposed to help me have more time to relax, why do I feel busier and more stressed than ever?

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Scents and Air (1 of 2)

Smell is analyzed in the limbic part of the brain, an area associated with emotions

Aromatherapy

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Scents and Air (2 of 2)

Air quality

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Noise (1 of 3)

Noise is among the most pervasive pollutants today

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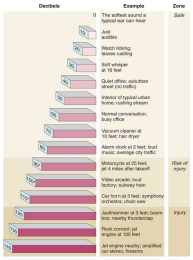
Loud and Louder



*Note: The maximum exposure allowed on the job by federal law, in hours per day, is as follows: 90 decibels—8 hours; 100 decibels—2 hours; 110 decibels—15 minutes.

Source: An Invitation to Health 2009–2010 Edition, by D. Hales (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Cengage Learning, 2009).

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FYI: Indoor Pollution

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has estimated that indoor air pollution is one of the top five environmental risks to public health

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Research Highlight: The Nose Knows

Patients administered a pleasant scent during an MRI report lower levels of stress

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FYI: Hear Today, Gone Tomorrow

As many as one in four college students have mild hearing loss

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Research Highlight: Quiet Down

Typical levels of office noises can elevate epinephrine levels

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Temperature

Heat hypothesis

Heat effect

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FYI: Hot-Headed

There are 2.6% more murders and assaults in the United States during the summer than other seasons of the year

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Taking Control of Your Surroundings

Review and reflect on how sensory input, such as sights, sounds, and smells, contribute to your daily quality of life

Identify aspects of your environment that either contribute to, or take away from, the balanced, healthy life you desire

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Time Tip: Organize

Organizing your environment can save time

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Culture Connection: Healing Places

Ancient Greeks worshipped the god of healing by building healing temples within cypress groves near the ocean

Ancient Egyptians decorated their healing places with murals because they believed the murals helped patients maintain their interest in life

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Technology and the Environment

Technology and the constant flow of information from it need to be managed

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Are You a Victim of Technosis?

FIGURE 14.2 Are you a Victim of Technosis?

Yes	No	Do you feel stressed if you haven't checked your voice or e-mail within the last 12 hours?
Yes	No	Do you think you can't cook a meal without technological gadgets?
Yes	No	Do you become upset when you can't find an ATM for quick cash?
Yes	No	Do you have difficulty writing unless you are sitting in front of your computer?
Yes	No	Do you have a hard time determining when you are finished researching a topic on the Internet?
Yes	No	Do you feel less adequate than your highly technologized peers?
Yes	No	Do you rely on pre-programmed systems to contact others?

Source: *TechnoStress: Coping with Technology @WORK@HOME@PLAY,* by M. Weil and L. Rosen (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1998) © M. Weil and L. Rosen. Used with permission.

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FYI: Changing Times

With instantaneous communication like texts, tweets, Facebook chat, and Skype, teens are using e-mail less

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FYI: Face Reality

Facebook statistics

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Managing Technology Stress

Take a pro-humanity rather than an anti-technology stance

Just because technology is capable of doing multiple jobs at the same time does not mean that we are

Avoid techno-cocoons

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Healing Surroundings

A healing environment starts with you

The impact of our environment on our health and well-being is profound

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