

Stress Management:

It's not what you eat, it's what eats you.

Don't Take Yourself So Seriously

- ▶ Laugh at Yourself
- ▶ Laugh at Life
- ▶ Do your best and accept being human/not being perfect.



Check out Your World View

Is it balanced?

-Shades of Gray-

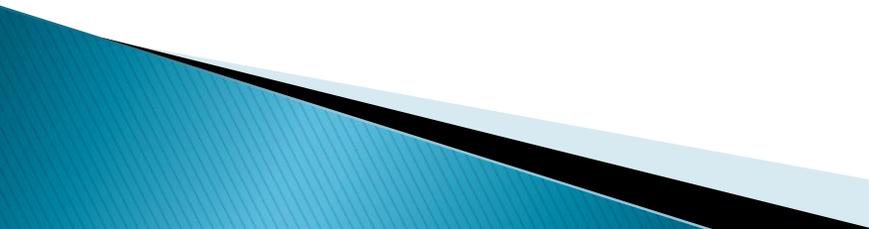
No Man Is An Island



- **Who are your “go to people”?** (these are who you turn to during problem focused coping and emotion focused coping)
- “A cord of 3 strands is not quickly torn apart.”
Ecclesiastes 3:12
- **Join A Group**
“Iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.”
Proverbs 27:17

Stress Management

Preventative vs. Active Measures

- ▶ Preventative: Sleep, exercise, watch your thoughts—no distorted thinking/don't take, anything personally/law of the garbage truck, don't over-plan or over-schedule.
 - ▶ Active: Problem focused coping, emotion focused coping, distress tolerance techniques, mindfulness, bag of tricks, thinking report & thought charts, taking care of past trauma
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Biology of Stress

- ▶ The alarm phase
 - Fight or flight response
 - Hypothalamic–pituitary–adrenal axis
 - Sympathetic and parasympathetic systems



Biology of Stress

- ▶ The resistance phase
 - Mobilization of resources to achieve equilibrium
 - Increase blood to body parts that need it most--over long periods results in:
 - 1) Digestion, growth, sex drive, and reproduction are slowed.
 - 2) In women, menstruation may stop or occur irregularly in times of chronic stress.
 - 3) In men, sperm and testosterone levels may decrease.
 - 4) No new energy is stored. Thus, during chronic stress, there will be no reserve of energy to repair bodily damage, leaving a sense of fatigue.

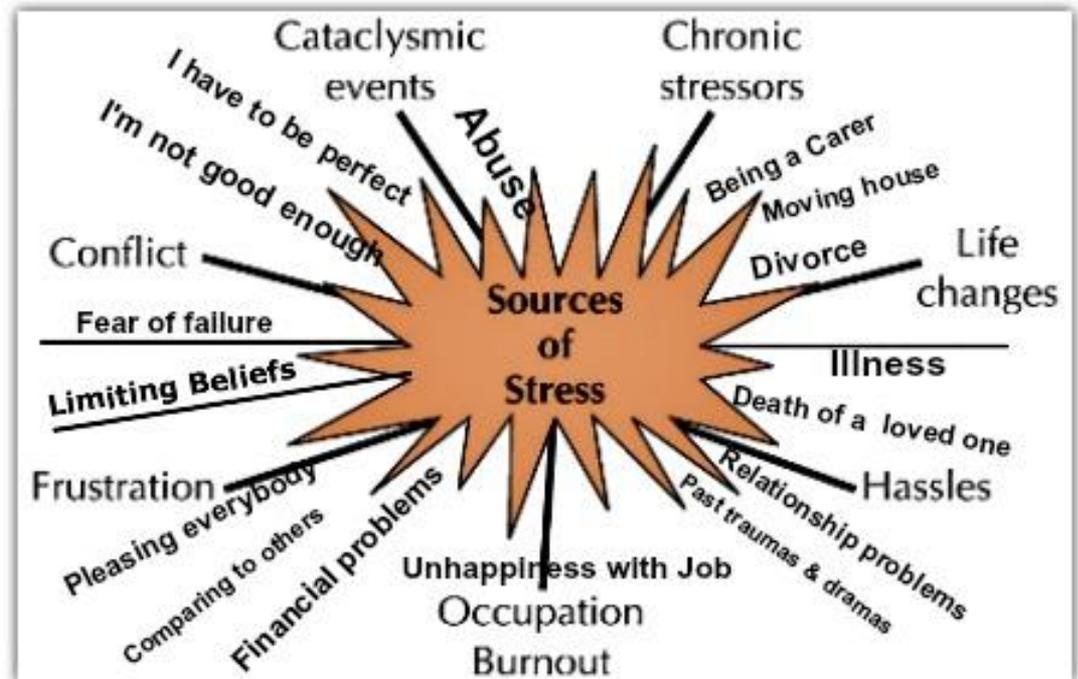
Biology of Stress

- ▶ The exhaustion phase
 - With continued stressors, the body becomes exhausted, because its limited resources in fighting stress become depleted.
- ▶ Psychosomatic illness
 - Research suggests that rather than exhaustion, continued stress responses begin to damage the body, leading to a risk of stress-related diseases.
 - Note: Cortisol, a hormone excreted to increase the production of energy from glucose, can also damage hippocampal cells, adversely affecting learning and memory, when it is in the bloodstream too long.

Sources of Stress

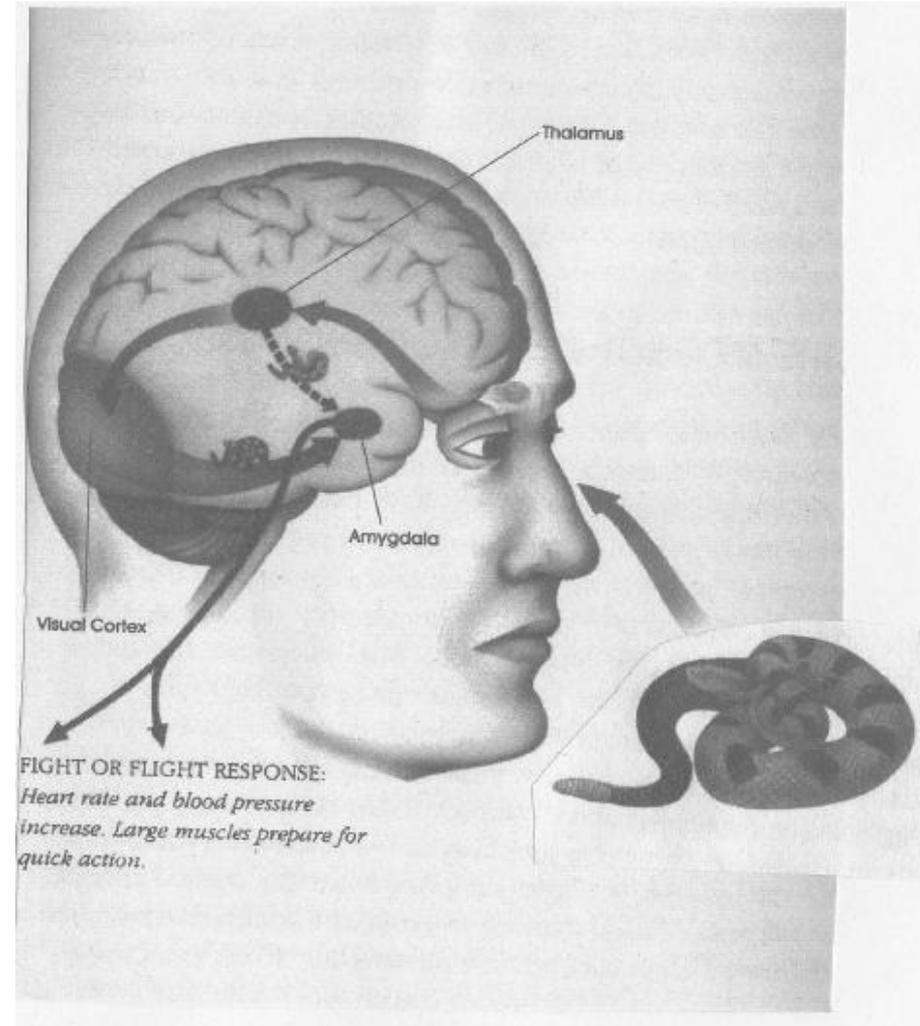
▶ Cognitive appraisal

- Primary appraisal–The stimulus is assessed for the likelihood of danger.
- Secondary appraisal–The resources available to deal with the stressor are identified.
- Coping–taking some course of action regarding the stressor, it's effects, or one's reaction to it.



Anatomy of an Emotional Hijacking

- ▶ Emotional memory
- ▶ Out-of-date neural alarm
- ▶ When a match is not a match



Take Care of Your Trauma

Types:

Emotional

Verbal

Mental

Physical

Medical

Graphic exposure

Death/Loss

- ▶ You can't repress it, you need to process it.
- ▶ Cues—internal & external
- ▶ Feedback Loop
- ▶ EMDR, or bilateral stimulation of the brain interrupts the feedback loop
- Trauma details can now get processed and filed into long-term memory.
- No more fresh, intrusive, disturbing details cycling around in the mind means...
- No more stress from trauma

Coping Strategies

- ▶ Problem-focused strategies
 - Active coping
 - Planning
 - Instrumental social support
 - Suppression of competing activities
 - Restraint coping

Coping Strategies

- ▶ Emotion-focused strategies
 - Emotional social support
 - Venting emotions
 - Positive reinterpretation/growth
 - Behavioral disengagement
 - Mental disengagement

Don't Let The ANT's Take Over Your Life

A utomatic
N egative
T houghts



All or nothing thinking, overgeneralization, mental filtering, discounting the positive, jumping to conclusions, magnification/minimization, emotional reasoning, should statements, labeling and misleading, personalization



“What if” Thinking



Racehorses & Turtles



What's your personality type?

Type **A** = thrives on fast paced life, highly motivated, competitive, aggressive, longs for challenges or adventure—even danger.

Type **B** = Move slowly, require peace and quiet, are cautious and careful, less demanding on self and others.

Type **C** = Mixture of both A & B traits

Population Ratios:

50% = Type A 40% = Type B 10% = Type C



Racehorses vs. Turtles



Racehorses (*Type A's*) tend to be very impatient (*stressed*) with turtles (*Type B's*). They find it difficult to get them to do what they want, when and how they want it. Their impatience is expressed in an attitude of frustration and judgment. They give the impression that there is something wrong with those who don't run at their pace, think as they do, and respond to their time schedule. Type *A* people want everyone to march to their music, at their tempo and timing, and under their upbeat direction.

With this kind of pressure coming at them from the Type *A* they are in relationship with, you can imagine the *stress* that Type *B's* feel.

Are you a Racehorse in constant battle with a Turtle, or are you a Turtle in constant battle with a Racehorse? Either way you are *stressed!*

Distress Tolerance: IMPROVE the Moment

Imagery—guided imagery (Safe Place Technique)

Meaning—Finding the “silver lining”, or what is the possible good in any situation or stressor.

Prayer—Tapping into your higher power for strength, and the skill to endure.

Relaxation—e.g., Breathing the 12’s exercise, or progressive muscle relaxation.

One thing at a time—Focus on one thing at a time in the present moment.

Vacation—Planned get aways, or time limited mini-vacations

Encouragement—Learning to be your own good cheerleader. Looking back over past victories/successes, pumping yourself up, saying, “If I got through that back then, I know I can get through this.”

Mindfulness is:

- ▶ Accepting reality as it is.
- ▶ Paying attention on purpose in the present moment non-judgmentally
- ▶ Taking hold of your mind
- ▶ Observing—paying attention to direct experiencing at the level of pure sensation. Stepping back and watching, noticing what is happening internally and externally.
- ▶ Describing—putting words on the experience w/o adding interpretations to it.
- ▶ Portraying—just the facts
- ▶ Participating—entering completely into the experience of the current moment.
- ▶ Example: The Wind Turbine and Me (handout provided)

#2 of 4 Agreements by Don Miguel Ruiz: Don't Take Anything Personally

- ▶ Whatever way a person thinks, whatever they feel, whatever they say to us, or whatever they do to us is “about them” and not about us. It has to do with the way they see the world, and that has nothing to do with us.
- ▶ If we take it personally, then we agree with them. The person tried to send us poison, and if we took it personally, then we took that poison and made it our poison.
- ▶ *It doesn't make sense* to eat all their emotional garbage, and make it our garbage. It makes better sense to not take anything personally, and to be immune to any poison or garbage from others.
- ▶ It makes sense to save ourselves from the **stress** of all this!
 - ▶ So Don't Take Anything Personally, and keep all garbage on the other side of the fence!