



INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON COGNITIVE RESEARCH & DISORDERS

ISCRD VIRTUAL
SUMMIT

IBCCES

STRESSED OUT: Understanding & Conquering Stress So YOU Can Thrive

Presenter:

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Today's Agenda

- WHAT IS STRESS?
- REASONS WE FEEL STRESS
- HOW WE RESPOND TO STRESS
- THE EFFECTS OF STRESS
- GOOD STRESS/BAD STRESS
- PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL CHALLENGES
- HOW TO HELP YOURSELF
- WHEN TO GET HELP



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Stress

What is Stress?

- ✓ Body's response to mental or emotional pressure, challenge, or demand
- ✓ Feeling of emotional or physical tension
- ✓ "Wear and Tear" on our body as we adjust to change
- ✓ Can come from any situation, event, or thought that makes you feel frustrated, angry or nervous

Stress is normal.

There are 2 kinds of stress:

1. Short-term (acute)

2. Long-term (chronic)

- *Should* be caused by chronic stress

ACUTE STRESSORS	CHRONIC STRESSORS
End of quarter grading	Not Having Admin Support
Progress Reports	Employment Dissatisfaction
Grading Papers	Doing work at home
Parent/Teacher Conferences	"Those" Parents
Traffic	Long Commutes
Bills	Debt
Fight with a Partner	Marital Discord
March 13, 2020	... Pandemics

The Problem:



The Effects of Stress (BC/BS, 12/2012)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TZZIKXcolo>

- It's not always the actual STRESSOR that determines whether stress is acute or chronic...

... but how we respond to that stressor

How Do We Respond to Stress?



- ▶ Distracted Driving
- ▶ Fighting with Partners
- ▶ Snapping at Children and Students
- ▶ Physical Complaints
- ▶ Forgetting to Do Things
- ▶ Headaches/Migraines
- ▶ Over/Undereating
- ▶ Insomnia/Being unable to sleep
- ▶ Needing More Sleep
- ▶ Difficulty Concentrating
- ▶ Trying to Control *EVERYTHING/ONE*
- ▶ Crying
- ▶ Yelling
- ▶ Drinking the Entire Bottle of Wine
- ▶ Anxiety
- ▶ Depression
- ▶ Overdependence on Medication



The Purpose of Stress

Good Stress & Bad Stress

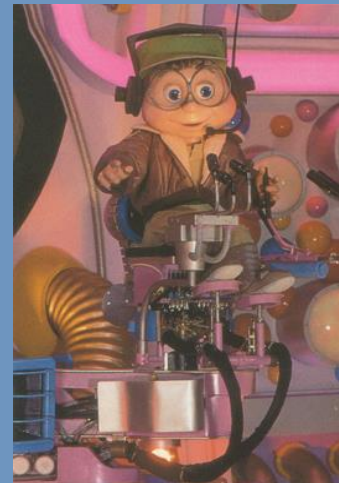
GOOD STRESS

- Can make you feel energized
- and motivated
- Encourages us to deal with challenges
- Increases strength
- Increases speed
- Increases stamina

** Stress is inevitable... we need to learn to deal with it. **

BAD STRESS

- When our coping mechanisms are overcome by stress, we do not (cannot) function at our best
- Stress turns to distress when we cannot cope with it... or we *believe* we can't
- Our body responds to stress in the same way... but when that stress is not *acute*, the body can't sustain itself



4 Reactions to Fear



...Are also the 4 Reactions to Stress and Challenges

FIGHT (Anger)	FLIGHT (Denial)	FACE (Connect)	FREEZE (Shut down)
When a threat can be conquered	When a threat can be avoided	When a threat can be mitigated	When there is no way to avoid harm
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Posturing <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal outbursts or threats <input type="checkbox"/> Confrontation <input type="checkbox"/> Physical aggression/Attack <input type="checkbox"/> Insult <input type="checkbox"/> Blame <input type="checkbox"/> Mistreat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Physically moving away <input type="checkbox"/> Dissociation <input type="checkbox"/> Hiding <input type="checkbox"/> "Shrinking" in posture or tone of voice <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid/omit <input type="checkbox"/> Sabotage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Persevere and mitigate <input type="checkbox"/> See the situation rationally <input type="checkbox"/> Respond calmly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Complete helplessness <input type="checkbox"/> Physical freezing <input type="checkbox"/> Stupor <input type="checkbox"/> Catatonia <input type="checkbox"/> Paralyzed by emotion <input type="checkbox"/> Justify and Rationalize (irrationality)

The Effects of Prolonged Stress

- Memory
- Exhaustion
- Insomnia
- Over-eating
- Not wanting to eat/"No time to eat"
- Physiological Effects
- Strain on Heart
- Vascular Disease
- Increased Blood Pressure (Hypertension)
- Ulcers
- Gum Disease
- Reduced Teeth Enamel
- Adrenal Failure
- Reduced Metabolism

Physical or mental stresses may cause physical illness as well as mental or emotional problems. Here are parts of the body most affected by stress.

Hair:

High stress levels may cause excessive hair loss and some forms of baldness.

Brain:

Stress triggers mental and emotional problems such as insomnia, headaches, personality changes, irritability, anxiety and depression.

Muscles:

Spasmodic pains in the neck and shoulders, musculoskeletal aches, lower back pain, and various minor muscular twitches and nervous tics are more noticeable under stress.

Digestive tract:

Stress can cause or aggravate diseases of digestive tract including gastritis, stomach and duodenal ulcers, ulcerative colitis, and irritable colon.

Skin:

Some individuals react to stress with outbreaks of skin problems such as eczema and psoriasis.

Mouth:

Mouth ulcers and excessive dryness are often symptoms of stress.

Heart:

Cardiovascular disease and hypertension are linked to accumulated stress.

Lungs:

High levels of mental or emotional stress adversely affects individuals with asthmatic conditions.

Reproductive organs:

Stress affects the reproductive system causing menstrual disorders and recurrent vaginal infections in women and impotence and premature ejaculation in men.



Anxiety

- Some situations *are* anxiety-provoking
- Occurs when we experience vulnerability:
 1. Feeling we are *always* in danger
 2. Feeling it is beyond our control to get away from the danger/threat
 3. Experiences early in life that caused great anxiety and we frequently relive those moments
- Anxiety can result in increased risk of drug/alcohol use, medical concerns, missed work, etc.



Factors that Help to PREVENT Negative Effects of Stress

- Positive coping skills
- Consistent, appropriate, and manageable expectations
- Ability to express feelings appropriately
- Good nutrition/exercise
- Time to relax/do recreational activities
- Predictable and manageable schedule
- Establishment of routines

Self-Care and Coping

- Recognize that stress is real
- Employ good, healthy ways of blowing off steam
- Utilize healthy Coping Skills
- Don't minimize/ignore problems – deal with them
- Talk to someone you trust
- Take your signs of stress seriously
- Take care of yourself... so you can take care of others



Managing Stress

- Use rhythmic breathing
- Remember that you're going to be okay...
but it's okay to not feel okay right now
- Allow for time to re-center -
- Practice mindfulness and yoga
- Exercise, Stretch, Walk
- Maintain a balanced sleep/wake schedule
- Practice Sensory Grounding
- Learn how to "fool" the body into destressing

Handle every stressful situation
like a dog.
If you can't eat it or play with it,
Just pee on it and walk away.



Coping Skills Pros & Cons (Indigo Daya)

	WHAT	PROS	CONS
Distraction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conversation, listen to talk radio, do puzzles, watch TV, clean, garden, arts and crafts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gives your heart/mind a break• Great short-term relief• Great to get through crisis	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can't do it for too long• Doesn't resolve issues
Grounding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Smell fragrances, slowly taste food, light candles, feel the ground beneath you, do yoga, meditate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Helps slow or stop disassociation• Reduces physicality of anxiety	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sometimes it's better to stay a bit connected; dissociation can become a crutch preventing reality
Emotional Release	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Yell, scream, run, take a cold shower, let yourself cry, box, pop balloons, dance without hesitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Great for anger and fear• Releases the pressure of overwhelming emotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hard to do in every situation;• Can make people think you've lost your mind 😊

Coping Skills Pros & Cons (Indigo Daya)

	WHAT	PROS	CONS
Self Love	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Massage hands with nice lotion, manicure nails, shave, clean your room, buy a treat	Great for guilt and shame Being pampered reminds you of your inherent worth	Sometimes can feel really hard to do; Can feel superficial when it's not.
Thought Challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Write down negative thoughts then negate them; Will this matter in 7 hours? Days? Months? Years?	Can help to put things into perspective; being logical can reduce extreme emotion	The more emotional you feel, the harder it is to do this; feelings of shame can make this very hard
Access Your Higher Self	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Help someone else; pray; volunteer, do random acts of kindness; contribute to a cause	Reminds us that everyone has value and that purpose can be found in small things	Saving someone else distracts you from the work you need to do

When to Get Help

- If your student's anxiety results in YOUR anxiety
- When your adaptive functioning becomes compromised
- When you realize you're getting sick more often
- When your teeth are extra sensitive
- When you want to feel better/manage better than you are

- Remember: Asking for help is a sign of strength
- Everyone can benefit from therapy, but at some points in life, we require it.





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