

A red Adirondack chair is positioned on a sandy beach, viewed through a blue door frame. The chair is the central focus, with its shadow cast on the sand. The background shows a clear blue sky with light clouds and a calm ocean. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Olpin Hesson

Stress
Management
for Life

A Research-Based, Experiential Approach :: fourth edition

Fourth Edition

Stress Management for Life

A Research-Based,
Experiential Approach

Michael Olpin *Weber State University*

Margie Hesson *South Dakota State University*



Australia • Brazil • Mexico • Singapore • United Kingdom • United States

This is an electronic version of the print textbook. Due to electronic rights restrictions, some third party content may be suppressed. Editorial review has deemed that any suppressed content does not materially affect the overall learning experience. The publisher reserves the right to remove content from this title at any time if subsequent rights restrictions require it. For valuable information on pricing, previous editions, changes to current editions, and alternate formats, please visit www.cengage.com/highered to search by ISBN#, author, title, or keyword for materials in your areas of interest.

***Stress Management for Life: A Research-Based,
Experiential Approach, Fourth Edition***
Olpin, Hesson

Product Director: Yolanda Cossio

Product Manager: Aileen Berg

Content Developer: Michael Kopf, S4Carlisle
Publishing Services

Associate Content Developer: Kellie Petruzzelli,
Casey Lozier

Product Assistant: Chelsea Joy

Media Developer: Stefanie Chase

Marketing Manager: Julie Schuster

Content Project Manager: Tanya Nigh

Art Director: John Walker

Manufacturing Planner: Karen Hunt

Production Service and Compositor: MPS Limited

Photo and Text Researcher: Lumina Datamatics

Text and Cover Designer: John Walker

Cover Images:

Room with View – Ermis Kasapis Photographer/

Moment Open/Getty Images

Two red chairs on beach – M.M. Sweet/Moment/
Getty Images

© 2016, 2013

WCN: 02-200-203

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. No part of this work covered by the copyright herein may be reproduced, transmitted, stored, or used in any form or by any means graphic, electronic, or mechanical, including but not limited to photocopying, recording, scanning, digitizing, taping, Web distribution, information networks, or information storage and retrieval systems, except as permitted under Section 107 or 108 of the 1976 United States Copyright Act, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

For product information and technology assistance, contact us at
Cengage Learning Customer & Sales Support, 1-800-354-9706.

For permission to use material from this text or product,
submit all requests online at www.cengage.com/permissions.

Further permissions questions can be e-mailed to
permissionrequest@cengage.com.

Library of Congress Control Number: 2014947469

ISBN: 978-1-305-12059-4

Cengage Learning

20 Channel Center Street
Boston, MA 02210
USA

Cengage Learning is a leading provider of customized learning solutions with office locations around the globe, including Singapore, the United Kingdom, Australia, Mexico, Brazil, and Japan. Locate your local office at www.cengage.com/global.

Cengage Learning products are represented in Canada by Nelson Education, Ltd.

To learn more about Cengage Learning Solutions, visit www.cengage.com.

Purchase any of our products at your local college store or at our preferred online store www.cengagebrain.com.

Brief Contents

Preface x

PART I

Getting Started

Chapter 1 Stress in Today's World 1

Chapter 2 Self-Assessment 15

PART II

Understanding Stress

Chapter 3 The Science of Stress 30

Chapter 4 The Mind/Body Connection 44

PART III

Stress-Prevention Strategies

Chapter 5 The Power of Perception 61

Chapter 6 Thinking and Choosing 76

Chapter 7 Mindfulness 96

Chapter 8 Managing Emotions 114

Chapter 9 The Importance of Values 134

Chapter 10 Spirituality 150

Chapter 11 Time and Life Management 171

Chapter 12 Money Matters 193

Chapter 13 Social Support, Relationships, and Communication 211

Chapter 14 Creating a Healing Environment 233

Chapter 15 Healthy Lifestyles 254

PART IV

Stress-Reduction Techniques

Chapter 16 Introduction to Relaxation 275

Chapter 17 Take a Breath 285

Chapter 18 Autogenics 297

Chapter 19 Progressive Relaxation 305

Chapter 20 Guided Imagery: Using Your Imagination 316

Chapter 21 Meditation 329

Chapter 22 Yoga 344

Chapter 23 Complementary and Alternative Health 363

Chapter 24 More Stress-Reduction Strategies 380

Glossary 396

Index 404

Contents

Preface x

PART I

Getting Started

Chapter 1 Stress in Today's World 1

Stress in Today's World 2

Stress: What Is It? 3

Yerkes–Dodson Principle 3

The Terminology of Stress 4

Good and Bad Stress 4

Acute and Chronic Stress 4

Holistic Health 6

Understanding Health 6

Dimensions of Health 6

Physical Health 6

Intellectual Health 6

Emotional Health 7

Spiritual Health 7

Social Health 7

Holistic Health: Putting It All Together 8

Nature or Nurture 8

Sources of Stress 10

Time Management 10

Personal Expectations 10

Family Expectations and Family Life 10

Employment Decisions and Finances 10

Academic Demands 10

Living Arrangements 11

Relationships 11

Physical Health Issues 11

Environmental Stressors 11

Information Overload 11

Choices 11

Daily Hassles 11

Conclusion 12

Chapter 2 Self-Assessment 15

Self-Assessment 16

Where Are You Now Stress-Wise? 16

Assess Your Stress 17

Resting Heart Rate 17

Breathing Pattern 17

Respiration Rate 17

Stress-o-Meter 17

Assess Your Stress Results 18

Symptoms of Stress: Assessment 18

Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) 20

Inventory of College Students' Recent Life Experiences 21

Ardell Wellness Stress Test 22

Student Stress Scale 23

Stress Vulnerability Factors 23

Tombstone Test 26

Daily Stress Diary 26

Conclusion 27

PART II

Understanding Stress

Chapter 3 The Science of Stress 30

The Science of Stress 31

Stress and the Big Bear 31

The Fight-or-Flight Response 32

Physiological Response to Stress 33

Autonomic Nervous System Responses 34

The Stress Response in Today's World 36

Acute Stress 37

Chronic Stress 38

The General Adaptation Syndrome 38

History of the General Adaptation Syndrome 38

Stages of the General Adaptation Syndrome 39

Application of the General Adaptation Syndrome 39

The Stress Response and You 40

Five Myths About Stress 41

Myth 1: In an ideal world, there would be no stress 41

Myth 2: What is stressful to me is stressful to you 41

Myth 3: Only unpleasant situations are stressful 41

Myth 4: No symptoms, no stress 41

Myth 5: Stress is inevitable, so you can't do anything about it 41

Conclusion 41

Chapter 4 The Mind/Body Connection 44

The Mind/Body Connection 45

Psychological Health 45

The Role of Chronic Stress in Disease 46

| | |
|--|----|
| <i>Direct and Indirect Effects of Chronic Stress</i> | 46 |
| <i>Allostatic Load</i> | 46 |
| Medium-Term Chronic Stress | 47 |
| <i>Effects of Medium-Term Chronic Stress</i> | 48 |
| <i>Medium-Term Stress and the Immune System</i> | 50 |
| Long-Term Chronic Stress | 50 |
| <i>Stress and the Heart</i> | 50 |
| <i>Long-Term Stress and the Immune System</i> | 51 |
| <i>Stress and Aging</i> | 51 |
| <i>Stress and Inflammation</i> | 52 |
| <i>Other Disease Conditions of Stress</i> | 53 |
| How the Mind and Body Communicate | 54 |
| <i>Psychosomatic Illness</i> | 54 |
| <i>The Placebo and Nocebo Effects</i> | 55 |
| <i>Psychoneuroimmunology</i> | 57 |
| Conclusion | 58 |

PART III

Stress-Prevention Strategies

Chapter 5 The Power of Perception 61

| | |
|---|----|
| The Power of Perception | 62 |
| Perception | 63 |
| <i>Are You in Danger?</i> | 63 |
| <i>Stress Comes from Within</i> | 64 |
| The World is NOT a Stressful Place | 65 |
| Cognitive Restructuring | 67 |
| Hardiness | 67 |
| <i>Commitment—Turning Problems into Opportunities</i> | 68 |
| <i>Challenge—Change as Challenge Rather Than Threat</i> | 68 |
| <i>Control</i> | 69 |
| Putting It All Together | 71 |
| Conclusion | 73 |

Chapter 6 Thinking and Choosing 76

| | |
|---|----|
| Thinking and Choosing | 77 |
| Cognitive Distortions | 77 |
| Thinking Errors | 78 |
| Cognitive Techniques That Help Overcome | |
| Distorted Thinking | 80 |
| <i>Positive Self-Talk</i> | 80 |
| <i>Thought-Stopping</i> | 82 |
| <i>Power Language</i> | 83 |
| <i>Going with the Flow</i> | 83 |
| Underlying Theories and Practices | 84 |
| <i>Conditioned-response</i> | 84 |
| <i>Choice</i> | 85 |

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| <i>Levels of Responding</i> | 86 |
| Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy | 91 |
| <i>REBT Guidelines</i> | 91 |
| <i>ABCDE Technique</i> | 92 |
| Conclusion | 93 |

Chapter 7 Mindfulness 96

| | |
|---|-----|
| Mindfulness | 97 |
| The Nature of Reality | 97 |
| The Here and Now | 98 |
| Understanding Mindfulness | 98 |
| Qualities of Mindfulness | 99 |
| <i>Beginner's Mind: Thinking Like a Child</i> | 99 |
| <i>Non-Judging</i> | 100 |
| <i>Acceptance of What Is Happening</i> | 102 |
| <i>Non-Attachment</i> | 102 |
| <i>Non-Striving</i> | 103 |
| Mindfulness as a Way of Being | 104 |
| Why Be Mindful? | 105 |
| Benefits of Mindfulness | 106 |
| Experiencing Mindfulness: Testing the Principle | 107 |
| A Simple Mindful Exercise | 108 |
| Inner Mindfulness Meditation | 109 |
| Ways to Practice Being More Mindful | 109 |
| Planning for the Future | 110 |
| Putting It All Together | 111 |
| Conclusion | 111 |

Chapter 8 Managing Emotions 114

| | |
|--|-----|
| Managing Emotions | 115 |
| The Physiology of Emotions | 115 |
| <i>The Benefits of Positive Emotions</i> | 116 |
| Guilt and Worry | 116 |
| <i>Letting Go of Worry</i> | 117 |
| <i>Guidelines to Help You Manage Worry</i> | 117 |
| <i>Relieving Test Anxiety</i> | 118 |
| <i>Letting Go of Guilt</i> | 120 |
| Fear | 120 |
| <i>Types of Fear</i> | 121 |
| <i>It's about Growing</i> | 121 |
| <i>Comfort and Discomfort Zones</i> | 121 |
| Putting It Together | 123 |
| <i>Fear Factors</i> | 123 |
| <i>Strategy for Overcoming Fear</i> | 125 |
| <i>The Fear–Faith Connection</i> | 125 |
| Anger | 126 |
| <i>Sources of Anger</i> | 127 |
| <i>Effects of Anger</i> | 128 |
| <i>The Only Reason We Get Angry</i> | 129 |

| | |
|---|------------|
| <i>Expressing Anger</i> | 130 |
| <i>Anger Blocker</i> | 130 |
| Hostility | 131 |
| Conclusion | 132 |
| Chapter 9 The Importance of Values | 134 |
| The Importance of Values | 135 |
| Understanding Your Values | 135 |
| <i>Discovering Your Values</i> | 137 |
| <i>Cognitive Dissonance</i> | 137 |
| The Niagara Syndrome | 138 |
| Source of Values | 138 |
| Values within Cultures | 139 |
| <i>Predominant Values in the United States</i> | 139 |
| <i>Predominant Alaska Native Values</i> | 140 |
| The Dynamic Quality of Values | 141 |
| Acquiring Values | 142 |
| Beliefs about Values | 142 |
| Types of Values | 142 |
| <i>Instrumental and Terminal Values</i> | 142 |
| Values Clarification | 143 |
| Creating Your Personal Constitution | 143 |
| <i>Step 1: Identify Your Values</i> | 144 |
| <i>Step 2: Prioritize Your Values</i> | 144 |
| <i>Step 3: Write a Clarifying Paragraph for Your Values</i> | 146 |
| Conclusion | 147 |
| Chapter 10 Spirituality | 150 |
| Spirituality | 151 |
| The Spiritual Quest | 152 |
| Spirituality and Religiosity | 152 |
| Research on Spirituality | 154 |
| <i>Defining Terms</i> | 155 |
| <i>Placebo Power</i> | 156 |
| <i>Variables in Religion, Health, and Lifestyle</i> | |
| <i>Research</i> | 156 |
| <i>Bottom Line on Research</i> | 156 |
| Five Qualities of Spiritual Health | 157 |
| <i>Meaning and Purpose</i> | 157 |
| <i>Belief in a Higher Power</i> | 158 |
| <i>Connectedness</i> | 159 |
| <i>Compassion for Others</i> | 160 |
| <i>Religious Behaviors and Meaningful Spiritual</i> | |
| <i>Rituals</i> | 164 |
| An Action Plan for Stress Management Through | |
| Spiritual Wellness | 166 |
| Conclusion | 167 |
| Chapter 11 Time and Life Management | 171 |
| Time and Life Management | 172 |
| What Is Time Management? | 172 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| Time and Stress | 172 |
| Planning for Control | 174 |
| <i>Pareto's Law</i> | 174 |
| <i>Methods of Time Management</i> | 175 |
| ABC123 Prioritized Planning | 175 |
| <i>Phase I: Make a List</i> | 176 |
| <i>Phase II: Give a Value to Each Item on the List,</i> | |
| <i>Using ABC</i> | 176 |
| <i>Phase III: Prioritize Again, Using 123</i> | 177 |
| Quadrant Planning | 178 |
| <i>First Things First</i> | 178 |
| <i>Urgency versus Importance</i> | 178 |
| <i>Quadrant Planning in Action</i> | 179 |
| Lifebalance | 181 |
| Keys to Creating Balance | 182 |
| <i>Simplifying</i> | 182 |
| <i>Doing What Really Matters</i> | 182 |
| <i>Don't Just Do Something—Sit There!</i> | 183 |
| <i>Balancing Attitude—Balancing Structure and</i> | |
| <i>Spontaneity</i> | 183 |
| Serendipity | 184 |
| <i>The Three Princes of Serendipity</i> | 184 |
| <i>The Keys to Serendipity</i> | 184 |
| <i>Applying Serendipity</i> | 185 |
| <i>Split-page Scheduling</i> | 185 |
| Procrastination | 186 |
| <i>Styles of Procrastination</i> | 186 |
| <i>Tips for Overcoming the Procrastination</i> | |
| <i>Habit</i> | 186 |
| Digital Time and Life Management | 189 |
| <i>Wunderlist</i> – https://www.wunderlist.com/en/ | 189 |
| <i>Workflowy</i> – https://workflowy.com/ | 189 |
| <i>Trello</i> – https://trello.com/ | 189 |
| <i>Evernote</i> – http://evernote.com/ | 190 |
| <i>Dropbox</i> – https://www.dropbox.com/ | 190 |
| <i>inClass</i> – http://www.inclassapp.com/index.php | 190 |
| Conclusion | 190 |
| Chapter 12 Money Matters | 193 |
| Money Matters | 194 |
| The ABCs of Money Management | 195 |
| <i>Assessment</i> | 195 |
| <i>Budget</i> | 196 |
| <i>Control</i> | 198 |
| Doodads and Credit Cards | 198 |
| <i>Doodads</i> | 198 |
| <i>Credit Cards</i> | 200 |
| Stress on the Job | 202 |
| <i>Preventing Job Stress</i> | 202 |
| <i>Set a Goal to Reduce Stress</i> | 203 |
| Additional Tips for Managing Your Money | 203 |
| Can Money Make You Happy? | 204 |
| <i>Affluenza</i> | 204 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| <i>Reference Anxiety—Keeping Up with the Joneses</i> | 205 |
| <i>Money and Relationships</i> | 206 |
| Putting It All Together—What the Experts Say | 207 |
| Conclusion | 208 |
| Chapter 13 Social Support, Relationships, and Communication | 211 |
| Social Support, Relationships, and Communication | 212 |
| Social Support | 213 |
| <i>Types of Social Support</i> | 213 |
| <i>Social Support and Stress</i> | 214 |
| <i>Social Support and Health</i> | 214 |
| Relationships | 216 |
| <i>Sources of Stress in Relationships</i> | 217 |
| <i>Relationships with Pets</i> | 217 |
| <i>Relationships in Marriage</i> | 219 |
| <i>Love and Relationships</i> | 219 |
| Communication | 221 |
| <i>Listening</i> | 222 |
| <i>Touch</i> | 225 |
| <i>Men and Women—Different Can Be Good</i> | 226 |
| Managing Conflict | 227 |
| <i>Styles of Conflict Resolution</i> | 227 |
| Conclusion | 230 |
| Chapter 14 Creating a Healing Environment | 233 |
| Creating a Healing Environment | 234 |
| Stress and the Environment | 234 |
| <i>Types of Environmental Stressors</i> | 234 |
| <i>Individual Perceptions</i> | 235 |
| <i>Learned Response and the Environment</i> | 235 |
| <i>Managing Environmental Stressors</i> | 235 |
| A Healing Environment | 236 |
| Color | 236 |
| Light | 237 |
| Smells and Air | 238 |
| <i>Aromatherapy</i> | 238 |
| <i>Air Quality</i> | 239 |
| Noise | 240 |
| <i>Perceived Noisiness</i> | 240 |
| <i>Effects of Noise</i> | 240 |
| <i>Relaxing Sound</i> | 242 |
| Temperature | 242 |
| Taking Control of Your Surroundings | 243 |
| <i>Nature</i> | 243 |
| <i>Organizing and Simplifying</i> | 244 |
| Ergonomics | 246 |
| Technology and the Environment | 246 |
| <i>Technostress</i> | 247 |
| <i>Technology and Stress</i> | 248 |
| <i>Managing Technology Stress</i> | 250 |
| Conclusion | 250 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| Chapter 15 Healthy Lifestyles | 254 |
| Healthy Lifestyles | 255 |
| Exercise | 255 |
| <i>Exercise as a Stress Buffer</i> | 255 |
| <i>Other Benefits of Exercise</i> | 256 |
| <i>Components of Physical Fitness</i> | 257 |
| <i>Which Exercise Is Best?</i> | 257 |
| <i>Sticking with Exercise</i> | 258 |
| Nutrition | 259 |
| <i>A Healthy Diet</i> | 259 |
| <i>Nutrition and Stress</i> | 260 |
| <i>Drinking Water</i> | 261 |
| <i>What to Limit or Avoid in Your Diet</i> | 261 |
| <i>Overeating</i> | 261 |
| Stress and Healthy Weight | 262 |
| <i>Eating to Cope—The Food/Mood Connection</i> | 262 |
| <i>Unused Glucose</i> | 263 |
| <i>The Cortisol Connection</i> | 263 |
| Eating Disorders | 264 |
| <i>Types of Eating Disorders</i> | 264 |
| <i>Causes of Eating Disorders</i> | 265 |
| <i>Factors That Can Contribute to Eating Disorders</i> | 265 |
| Sleep | 266 |
| <i>Sleepy Connected Americans</i> | 266 |
| <i>How Much Sleep Do You Need?</i> | 267 |
| <i>Healthy Sleep Advice</i> | 267 |
| Lifestyle Behaviors to Avoid | 268 |
| <i>Tobacco</i> | 268 |
| <i>Alcohol</i> | 269 |
| <i>Drugs</i> | 271 |
| Putting It All Together | 272 |
| Conclusion | 272 |

PART IV

Stress-Reduction Techniques

| | |
|---|------------|
| Chapter 16 Introduction to Relaxation | 275 |
| Introduction to Relaxation | 276 |
| Understanding Relaxation | 277 |
| Benefits of Relaxation | 278 |
| Getting Started | 278 |
| Relaxation Sensations | 279 |
| Use Good Judgment | 280 |
| Time for a Nap—A Power Nap | 280 |
| <i>Benefits and Background</i> | 280 |
| <i>How the Power Nap Works for Relaxation</i> | 280 |
| How to Do the Power Nap | 281 |
| <i>Adding the Power Nap to Your Daily Routine</i> | 282 |
| Conclusion | 282 |

Chapter 17 Take a Breath 285

- Take a Breath 286
- Background 286
- How Breathing Works 286
- Benefits of Relaxation Breathing 288
- Breathing and Relaxation 289
- How to Do Relaxation Breathing 289
- Breathing Exercises 290
 - Simple Diaphragmatic Breathing* 290
 - Restful Breathing* 290
 - Breath Counting* 291
 - Reduced Respirations Technique* 291
 - Alternating Nostril Breathing* 291
 - Full Breathing* 293
 - Visualization Breathing* 293
 - Command Breathing* 293
 - Pelvic Tilt with Diaphragmatic Breathing* 293
 - Breathing While Stretching* 294
- Conclusion 294

Chapter 18 Autogenics 297

- Autogenics 298
 - The Power of Suggestion* 298
- Background of Autogenic Training 298
- How Autogenics Works 299
- Benefits of Autogenics 299
- Experiencing Autogenics 300
 - Creating Favorable Conditions* 300
- A Simple Autogenics Script 301
- Conclusion 302

Chapter 19 Progressive Relaxation 305

- Progressive Relaxation 306
- Background 306
- Muscle Physiology 307
 - All-or-none Principle* 307
- Muscles and Relaxation 307
- How PMR Works 308
- Benefits of Progressive Relaxation 308
- How to Do Progressive Muscle Relaxation 309
 - Active Progressive Muscle Relaxation* 309
 - Passive Progressive Relaxation Script: The Body Scan* 312
- Conclusion 313

Chapter 20 Guided Imagery: Using Your Imagination 316

- Guided Imagery: Using Your Imagination 317
- Background 317
- The Mind and How It Works 318

- Hypnosis* 318
- The Conscious and Subconscious Mind* 319

- Imagery and Visualization 320
- Uses of Imagery 321
- Relaxation Guided Imagery: What Is It? 323
 - Benefits of Guided Imagery* 323
- Guided Imagery as a Technique for Relaxation 324
 - Suggestions for Improving Guided Imagery Practice* 325
 - A Simple Guided Imagery Script* 325
- Conclusion 326

Chapter 21 Meditation 329

- Meditation: It's Not What You Think 330
- Meditation: What Is It? 331
- What Meditation Is Not 332
- Meditation Put into Practice 332
 - Mantra Meditation* 332
 - Breathing Meditation* 334
- Additional Ways to Meditate 336
 - Contemplation* 336
 - Breath Counting* 336
 - Thought-Watching* 336
 - Chakra Meditation* 336
 - Walking Meditation* 337
- Benefits of Meditation 338
 - Physiological Benefits* 338
 - Psychological Benefits* 339
- Frequently Asked Questions about Meditation 340
 - How do I stay focused when I meditate?* 340
 - When is the best time to meditate?* 340
 - How long should I meditate?* 341
 - Will meditation get easier with practice?* 341
 - Does it matter if I lie down, rather than sit, during meditation?* 341
 - How will I know if I am meditating correctly?* 341
- Conclusion 341

Chapter 22 Yoga 344

- Yoga 345
- Background 346
- Overview of Yoga Styles 346
- Benefits of Yoga 347
- Hatha Yoga 349
 - Postures—Asanas* 350
 - Pranayama—Breathing* 350
 - Dhyana—Meditation* 351
 - Putting It All Together* 351
- How to Practice Yoga 352

Taking Precautions before Starting Yoga 353
Tips for Enhancing Your Yoga Experience 353
Finding a Yoga Class 354
Sample Poses 354
Conclusion 361

Chapter 23 Complementary and Alternative Health 363

Complementary and Alternative Health 364
Understanding Complementary and Alternative Health 364
 Complementary Versus Alternative 364
 Most Common CAM Therapies 365
Categories of Complementary and Alternative Medicine 365
Applications of the Five Categories of CAM to Stress Management 366
 Alternative Medical Systems 366
 Mind/Body Interventions 368
 Biologically Based Therapies 370
 Energy Therapies 370
 Manipulative and Body-based Methods 372
 Types of Massage 375
Conclusion 377

Chapter 24 More Stress-Reduction Strategies 380

More Stress-Reduction Strategies 381
Laughter and Humor 382
 Benefits of Laughter 382
 How Laughter Works 383
 Subjective Nature of Humor 383
 Laughter/Humor Strategies for Stress Prevention 384
Music 384
 Music and Mood 384
 History of Music 384
 The Effects of Music on the Body and Mind 384
 How Music Works 385
 Which Music Is Best for Stress Management? 386
What Else Can I Do? 387
“Solutions” to Avoid 391
 Don’t: 391
Stress Management for LIFE—Planning for the Future 393
Conclusion 393

Glossary 396
Index 404

Preface

A little knowledge that acts is worth infinitely more than much knowledge that is idle.

—KAHLIL GIBRAN

Stress Management for Life is more than just another book about stress. It is an experience. This book will teach you what you need to know about stress—and it doesn't stop there. You will find a toolbox of skills you can apply immediately to prevent and manage stress in your life. You will learn about stress; you will learn and practice specific techniques; and you will be inspired to continue a life-long program of stress management. *Stress Management for Life* provides information, inspiration, and application—a powerful approach to a healthy, balanced life.

Listen to what this student says about *Stress Management for Life*:

This book really helped me to get in touch with myself and the way I view a variety of things in my life. What I learned will help me well into my future and the book should be required reading for every student. The book was very inspirational in motivating me to take action to live a better, stress-free life. The materials and activities were beyond good. With all the perceived stress we experience in our daily lives, on top of the rigorous academic studies, it is easy to let things get to us. This book would help everyone put things into perspective. The book opened my eyes to the variety of stress-relieving exercises I can use throughout my daily life. The things I learned will last a lifetime.

You too can learn to replace unhealthy stress with life-enhancing energy. The best news is that it's up to you! You are in charge of the choices you make every day. Through reading, thinking, learning, and actually practicing the numerous strategies presented in *Stress Management for Life*, you will be on your way to a healthier, more balanced, and more productive life. The real power of this book will be found in the action you take. You will learn to experience the benefits of energizing relaxation immediately. And you will be prepared to develop a lifetime plan to assure that these benefits will continue long after your class is over.

Stress Management for Life is:

- A practical guide for incorporating stress management into your daily life.
- A holistic approach to prevent, reduce, and manage unhealthy stress.
- A “how to” book with clear instructions on stress management techniques that work.
- A book that will change your life, enhance your health, and improve your quality of life.

You have complete control over three things in your life: what you think, what you say, and how you behave. To make a change in your life, you must recognize that these gifts are the most powerful tools you possess in shaping the form of your life.

—SONYA FRIEDMAN

Overview of *Stress Management for Life*

Part I: Getting Started In this introduction to stress management, you will begin thinking about the most common sources of stress facing college students in today's world. *Stress Management for Life* is written to provide you with a holistic approach to stress management so that you will be inspired by learning how each dimension of health—physical, intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and social—can be managed for a more balanced approach to stress management. You will personalize the information by completing a variety of stress self-assessments that will help you understand your own individual stressors and how you handle them. Unique to this book is this comprehensive assessment at the beginning of the book. Students often report that this assessment of their stress captures their attention about the need for better personal stress management and sets the stage for their motivation to learn and change.

Part II: Understanding Stress Part II explores the physical and psychological implications of stress—how the body and mind communicate. Learn about psychoneuroimmunology and other exciting research on the connection between mind and body. You might be surprised by the comprehensive list of physical symptoms and diseases caused by stress. Could stress be contributing to your chronic headaches, frequent colds, or difficulty sleeping? Find out in Part II.

Part III: Stress-Prevention Strategies Part III offers some concrete and effective tools that you can incorporate into your life with immediate results to *prevent* stress in the first place. By applying the POPP formula or living “A Day Above the Line,” you will learn how changing how you think about things can prevent stress and dramatically improve your day. You will receive some proven tips for eliminating stress by managing time and organizing your schedule. You will read about how to control emotions including anger, fear, and worry. Values clarification, spirituality and stress, financial management, and a healing environment are just a few of the interesting topics covered here.

Part IV: Stress-Reduction Techniques Despite our best efforts to prevent stress, we know that stress happens. In Part IV you will learn a wide variety of techniques designed specifically to help you reduce stress. You will be amazed to find that simple techniques such as the Power Nap, breathing exercises, meditation, autogenics, and yoga can leave you feeling relaxed and energized. You will learn about massage, guided imagery, the latest in complementary and alternative approaches, and other powerful stress-reduction techniques.

One of the selling points for *Stress Management for Life* is that you will benefit from the information while you are reading the book and also will be preparing to reap the benefits for a lifetime. You will be able to incorporate the techniques that work best for you and that fit your lifestyle, values, and goals into a plan for life.

New in the Fourth Edition

Each chapter has been revised and updated to keep you current on the latest in stress-management advancements and to help you stay abreast on current stress-related issues.

New to this edition:

- The results are in: The latest National College Health Assessment statistics show students rate stress as their number one factor affecting academic performance, followed by anxiety at number two.
- Working at a job while going to school can be stressful. Learn about the burden of job stress and specific strategies to prevent and reduce job stress.
- There’s an app for that. Need some help managing your time and organizing your life? Check out some of the best and freely available apps and online tools to help you become more productive and better organized in every area of your life.
- For help in improving your dietary habits, check out MyPlate for specific guidelines and tools to reduce stress through healthier eating.
- Find new tips for reducing test anxiety. Who doesn’t need help with test stress?
- Read about new research on the relationship between stress and diabetes.
- Yoga is growing in popularity. Find the current statistics indicating more people than ever are practicing yoga for stress reduction and improved health.

Features

Stress Management for Life is written in a *clear and easy-to-understand* style. The reading level and content are geared for university students like you. This book doesn’t try to cover everything about stress. Instead, it covers everything that matters to successfully prevent and manage stress in your life.

Who said a textbook has to be boring? The authors of *Stress Management for Life* teach stress-management courses to university students every semester. They have taught stress

management to thousands of students, and they know from experience that the best learning happens in an *interesting, engaging, challenging, and positive* environment. This book has many features to make this a positive and engaging experience for you including:

- **Chapter quotations** for inspiration and insight.
- **Student Objectives** to clearly guide you in your learning.
- **Key words**, bolded in the chapter and tied to definitions in the Glossary.
- **Frequently Asked Questions** to capture your interest about things on your mind to which you want answers.
- **Real People, Real Stories**, beginning each chapter with true stories that bring the information to life.
- **Author Anecdotes** scattered throughout the chapters, which describe the authors' own experiences to help you better understand and relate to the content.
- **Research Highlights** throughout the book to keep you informed on the latest and most relevant research on topics involving stress and stress management.
- **FYI (For Your Information)** tidbits of motivational and interesting information scattered throughout the chapters.
- **Stress Busting Behavior** checklists for quick, interactive application of content.
- **Culture Connections** that will open your mind and increase your awareness of stress topics from divergent cultures around the world.
- **Time Tips** with specific, proven suggestions from students just like you to help prevent stress by managing time.
- **Key points and a list of key terms** at the end of each chapter to reinforce the chapter's most important content and terminology.
- **Stress Management Labs** at the end of each chapter to provide you with an opportunity to review and apply important learning.

In addition to all the book has to offer, *Stress Management for Life* comes with an access code for the book's CengageBrain website, which includes several resources to help you develop your stress-management skills:

- **Stress Relief Activities:** Audio files for relaxation exercises that go along with Part IV of your textbook. A narrator will guide you through each technique. So not only will you read in the chapters about how to deeply relax, but you will also get to practice as you experience each stress-management technique. Each audio file relaxation technique is in MP3 format so that you can download it to your computer and then transfer it to an MP3 device, such as an iPod or MP3 player.
- **Student Activities Manual:** An online companion where you will find engaging activities, handouts, stress assessments, chapter outlines, and other resources to help you achieve the benefits of stress management.

To the Instructor

The authors of *Stress Management for Life* are full-time professors who teach stress-management courses every semester, both face-to-face and online, to hundreds of students each year. Over their many years of teaching stress management to students across the country, they searched high and low for just the right book for their students. They wanted a book that would:

- Emphasize experiential learning by clearly explaining the “how to” of stress management and prevention.
- Cover the important aspects of stress management without going into so much depth that students get lost and lose interest.
- Capture students' interest by presenting the information in a clear, interesting style with a variety of attention-grabbing features throughout the book.
- Include topics that are sources of stress for college students today—finances, time management, relationships, spiritual stress, and many others.
- Provide motivation and inspiration along with facts.

- Build on a strong foundation of well-researched information.
- Provide opportunities for students to practice relaxation techniques while they are learning the content.
- Be teacher-friendly and include a comprehensive *Instructor's Manual* and test bank.
- Include easy-to-use ancillaries and supplements, including guided relaxation exercises and a journal for student reflection.

The authors wrote *Stress Management for Life* to meet these needs.

Stress Management for Life is written so that the chapters can be assigned in the order that works best for you and your students. Combining an activity chapter from Part IV with a chapter from Parts I, II, or III is an especially effective teaching strategy. Students get to start practicing relaxation techniques immediately. You will find a sample 15-week semester schedule in the *Instructor's Manual* to get you thinking about scheduling options.

Ancillaries A deliberate goal of *Stress Management for Life* and the accompanying ancillaries is to provide you with a ready-to-go package to make your job easier. The authors are teachers, just like you, who know what makes the job easier.

CourseMate: Cengage Learning's Nutrition CourseMate brings course concepts to life with interactive learning, study, and exam preparation tools that support the printed textbook. Watch student comprehension soar as your class works with the printed textbook and the textbook-specific website. Nutrition CourseMate goes beyond the book to deliver what you need!

Global Health Watch: Updated with today's current headlines, Global Health Watch is your one-stop resource for classroom discussion and research projects. This resource center provides access to thousands of trusted health sources, including academic journals, magazines, newspapers, videos, podcasts, and more. It is updated daily to offer the most current news about topics related to your health course.

Stress Relief Activities The unique collection of Audio Relaxation Exercises included on the book's CengageBrain website provides clear demonstrations of many stress-management techniques presented in Part IV of the book. Techniques available on the website include the Power Nap, autogenics, progressive relaxation, restful breathing, a mindful relaxation, and three guided imageries. This collection of Relaxation Activities was developed specifically to supplement the content in *Stress Management for Life*. The students will be able to read about the methods and also will have the opportunity to practice the techniques for optimal results.

Guided practice creates powerful experiential learning for effective relaxation. Students who have practiced the relaxation exercises often comment that the exercises became one of the most helpful and useful tools in their stress-management course, enabling them to achieve effective relaxation at home. Many instructors use the Stress Relief Activities in the classroom to assist them in teaching these methods for relieving stress.

Critical Thinking/Discussion Questions The CengageBrain website also contains critical thinking/discussion questions to get your students really thinking and to engage them in lively classroom discussion.

Cengage Learning Testing Powered by Cognero Cengage Learning Testing Powered by Cognero is a flexible, online system that allows you to:

- author, edit, and manage test bank content from multiple Cengage Learning solutions
- create multiple test versions in an instant
- deliver tests from your LMS, your classroom, or wherever you want

About the Authors

Michael Olpin is a professor in the Department of Health Promotion and Human Performance at Weber State University in Ogden, Utah, where he teaches courses in stress management, mind/body wellness, and wellness coaching. His background includes instruction in stress management at four institutions of higher education and more than 25 years studying the subject. He has published other books on stress management including, *The World is NOT a Stressful Place*, and *Unwind: 7 Paradigms of a Stress-Free Life*. He has presented many workshops and papers on stress management and mind/body wellness both in his own state and around the country. He consults privately for individuals and corporations in stress management, along with other areas of health and high-level wellness.

Margie Hesson is a Registered Nurse and College of Nursing faculty at South Dakota State University. She is endorsed by the American Holistic Nurses Association as a Certified Holistic Stress Management Instructor. She is the author of the *Journal for Stress Management for Life*, two general-audience books on stress and healthy living, and is a contributing author to numerous textbooks. In addition to more than 30 years' experience as a nurse and a teacher, she has travelled around the world exploring health care in other countries and is a frequent presenter on health-promotion topics at the state, national, and international levels. Ten years ago Professor Hesson developed the Stress Management for Life course for students at South Dakota State University, where she continues to teach the popular class every semester.

Acknowledgments

This fourth edition couldn't have happened without the help and support of many. Thanks to all the professionals at Cengage Learning for their valuable contributions. Many others worked behind the scene and we thank each of them for moving this book through the steps to publication. We also appreciate the guidance from Dr. James Hesson. As an experienced author, his suggestions and insights helped shape the book from the very beginning.

Thanks, too, to those who served as reviewers: Michelle Alexander, Thomas Nelson Community College; Julie David, Normandale Community College; Brenda Guerrero, Our Lady of the Lake University; Denise Hatter-Fisher, Otterbein University; Craig Hoffard, University of Oklahoma; Jerome Kotecki, Ball State University; Tobias Mastrocola, Florida Atlantic University; and Kathy Normansell, Ohio University-Zanesville. We appreciate their time and energy, which helped us make this fourth edition even better. Their suggestions and wise advice enhanced the quality of this book immeasurably.

Michael's Acknowledgments It feels to me like people are more stressed than ever. As I watch the crazy way things unfold on this planet, and as I work with people who struggle with so many personal challenges, it's no wonder stress levels continue to rise. That being said, I am so happy with the way the information in this book continues to help people with their stress. And even more exciting is the knowledge that people who use this textbook don't sell it back to the bookstores. They keep it and share it with their family and friends. Together, we are working to solve a problem that everybody struggles with and nobody needs or wants. I think that's very cool, indeed!

None of this could have happened, however, without the passion and commitment of my wonderful co-author, Margie Hesson, and all the terrific folks at Cengage who helped construct this text. They see the same things that I do. It's clear they are as eager as I am to make an impact. I am deeply appreciative of each person who played a part in putting this book together.

I am similarly grateful to my wonderful wife, Shanyn, and my four awesome kids, Analise, Erica, Adam, and Ben who continue to be my greatest sources of inspiration, joy, and happiness. I love them dearly.

I'm also thankful for all the thoughtful students and instructors with whom I have worked over the years. Curiously, our wisest ideas and best information seems to come not when we are pouring through books and articles on stress management, but in the middle of lively classroom discussions. Someone asks a question, we play with it, and an insight hits us with startling clarity. We test it, and it proves to be true. This tells me we are moving in the right direction.

Margie's Acknowledgments Thanks to my co-author, Dr. Mike Olpin, for his expertise in stress management, positive attitude, and work ethic. His years of teaching stress management have resulted in a keen understanding of how to help others manage stress. I am grateful for the rich and rewarding professional relationship with Mike that continues to grow with each new edition.

Photographer Jenny Evans of Candy Apple Photography provided professional pictures and expert consultation on the photos. Thanks to Jenny for always capturing the image we envisioned to help communicate visually what we couldn't always say with words.

Thanks go to my colleagues and students at South Dakota State University College of Nursing. Many of my students contributed personal stress stories and valuable suggestions in an effort to help other students learn about stress management. Every semester I learn from my students.

My family continues to be a source of inspiration to me, and I feel very blessed to have them in my life. Thanks to our children, David Hesson and Jenny and Rich Evans. Most of all, I am grateful for my #1 stress-reliever—my husband, Jim. He is my greatest supporter, and I can't thank him enough for encouraging me to set goals and embrace new opportunities. I continue to be inspired by Jim's sincere desire to help others through his writing. His textbook, *Weight Training for Life*, is written to help others and I tried to model his commitment and dedication in our book. I have felt Jim's support every step of the way.

1/Stress in Today's World

Is stress always bad?

Stress seems to be everywhere. Can I really do anything about it, 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?

REAL PEOPLE, REAL STORIES

Nicole's Story Nicole was about to graduate, but reflecting on her first year of college still brought some painful memories. Here is Nicole's story.

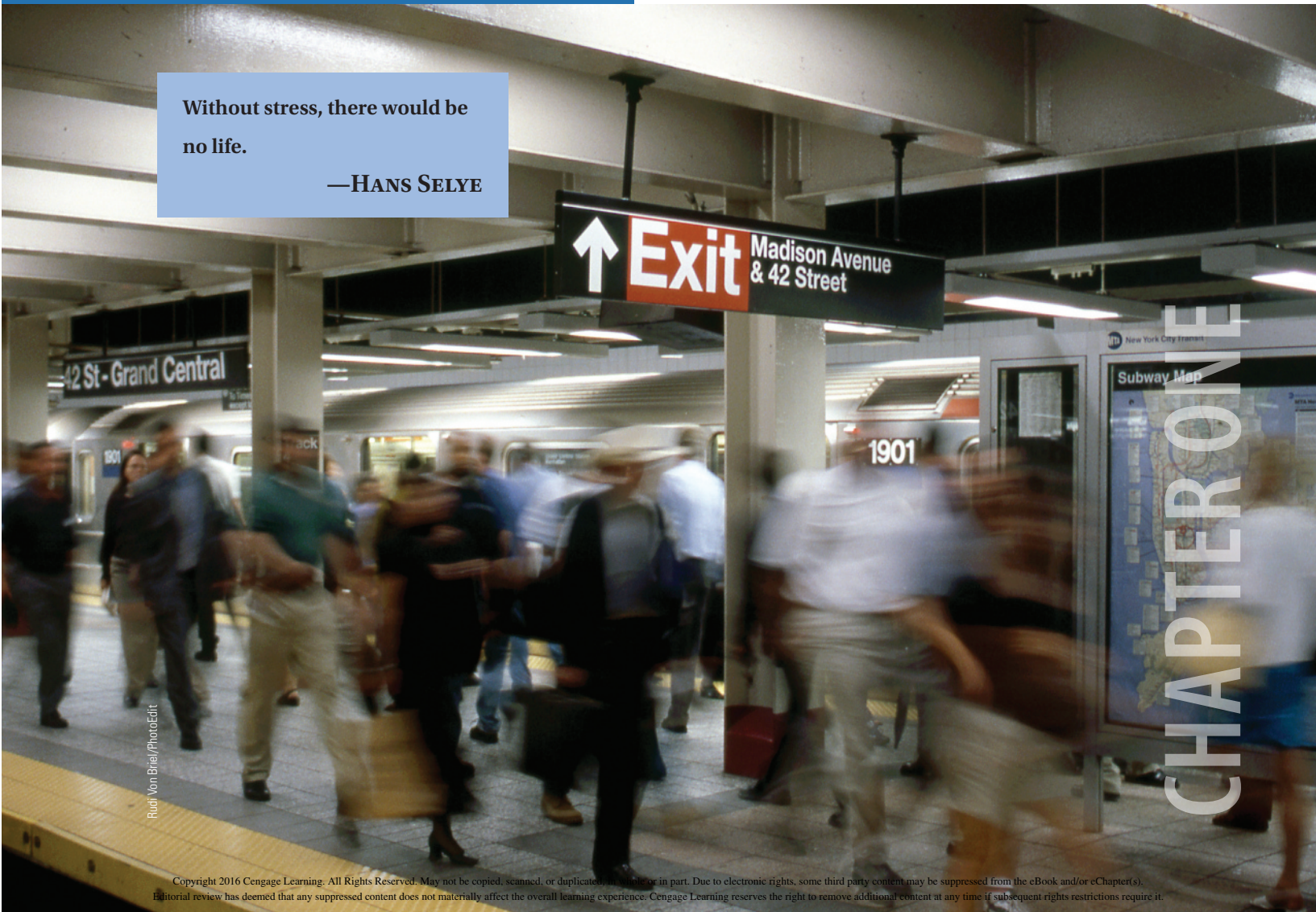
My first year of nursing school proved to be more stressful and more challenging than I had bargained for. It wasn't just the 18 credits and 6 lab hours that had me floundering. I was also working 20–30 hours per week at a local grocery store and trying to maintain a social life.

Early in the semester I began to feel the stress. I began cutting back on my social life because I needed to study or work. Day after day I kept reminding myself that this situation was “just for this semester,” and “I can get through this.”

My stress started affecting me physically. By the first week in October, I had lost 5 pounds and was starting to have stomach cramps nearly every day. My weight loss and stomach cramps were caused mainly by my not eating. I would get stressed out and skip meals. My sleep patterns started changing, too. I needed more and more sleep just to be able to function.

Without stress, there would be no life.

—HANS SELYE



Some days I slept 14–16 hours but still felt tired. Other days I couldn't sleep at all. By Thanksgiving break I had lost 10 pounds and was taking prescribed muscle relaxants and ulcer medications.

My emotions started changing, too. I cried at the drop of a hat, sometimes over nothing. I took long, hot showers so my roommates wouldn't see me crying. I also became angry easily. I couldn't seem to get happy about anything. I quit caring about my appearance, so I stopped wearing makeup and fixing my hair.

School was the main stressor, and my grades began to show it. As my grades initially began to slip, I became even more stressed out. I was worried that I would fail a class and be out of the nursing program, so I spent more time studying.

I tried so hard to conceal my problems because I didn't want to admit I couldn't handle things. I didn't want people to think I was stressed out and such a mess. How could I ever be a good nurse and help other people if I couldn't even help myself?

It was really difficult for me to do, but I finally told my family and friends what I was going through. With their help, I made several changes in my life. The first major change came with the end of my busy, class-loaded semester. When registering for classes the next semester, I cut back my class load. I also found a new job that paid more per hour so I could work less. My parents helped me out financially as much as they could. My boyfriend maintained a 24/7 “hotline” for me, and he encouraged me to call him whenever I felt stressed. I started riding my bicycle and doing yoga to “de-stress.” I also set aside time each day just for myself, when I could do anything I wanted.

I'm still learning how to handle my stress, but my first year in nursing school taught me a lot about myself and how I handle stress. I learned what my limits are and what can happen if I don't deal with my stress appropriately. I'll graduate in a month, and I know I'll still have stress, but now I know how to deal with stress in a healthier way.

Student Objectives

Study of this chapter will enable you to do the following:

1. Define the terms *stress* and *stressor*.
2. Define and explain the difference between eustress and distress.
3. Differentiate between acute, acute episodic, and chronic stress.
4. Relate stress to the five dimensions of holistic health—physical, intellectual (also referred to as mental), emotional, spiritual, and social.
5. Discuss some of the most common stressors affecting college students today.

FYI

Got Stress?

Students' self-ratings of emotional health dropped to a record 25-year low in 2012, according to the 2012 CIRP Freshman Survey conducted by the Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA. The annual survey is based on the responses of nearly 200,000 first-time full-time students entering four-year colleges across the United States. Findings include the following:

- Fewer students than ever before are reporting above-average emotional health.
- Students feel increasingly overwhelmed before entering college.
- Differences between men and women persist. The percentage of incoming first-year 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 incoming first-year men (18.3%).

“Stress is a major concern when dealing with college students,” lead author and CIRP Director John H. Pryor said in a statement. “If students are arriving in college already overwhelmed and with lower reserves of emotional health, faculty, deans, and administrators should expect to see more consequences of stress, such as higher levels of poor judgment around time management, alcohol consumption, and academic motivation.”

Source: The American Freshman: National Norms. Fall 2012, UCLA Higher Education Research Institute. Retrieved January 25, 2014 from www.heri.ucla.edu/monographs/theamericanfreshman2012.pdf.

Stress in Today's World

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times,” Charles Dickens wrote of 18th-century France in his masterpiece, *A Tale of Two Cities*. Could the same be said for you, today's college student? Never before have college students been faced with such vast opportunities, such freedom of choice, and such an array of information. Yet these opportunities, the numerous choices, and the information overload can leave you feeling overwhelmed and stressed.

Will this be the best of times or the worst of times for you? With the proper skills and the right information, you will be in control of your destiny. *Stress Management for Life* is packed with information that will help you do more than merely survive your college years. These can be the best of times for you. The decision is yours.

Stress: What Is It?

Stress, stressors, eustress, distress, good stress, and bad stress. What is stress all about? Hans Selye, the noted stress researcher, once said: “Stress is a scientific concept which has suffered from the mixed blessing of being too well known and too little understood.”

Coming up with an accepted definition of stress is not easy. Nurses and physicians, psychologists, biologists, engineers, and students may have different meanings in mind when they talk about stress. Here is one useful definition: **Stress** is a demand made upon the adaptive capacities of the mind and body.¹ This definition helps us understand the following three important aspects of stress:

1. How you experience stress depends on your personal view of the stressor, and it can be both a positive and a negative factor in your life.
2. Your *reaction* to events in life, rather than the actual events, is what will determine whether the outcomes will be stressful or not.
3. Stress is a demand upon the body’s capacity. When your capacity for handling stress is strong and healthy, the outcome is positive. When you lack the ability to handle the demands, the outcome is negative.

We can relate managing stress to building muscle. To build bigger biceps, you faithfully perform arm curls with gradually increasing weight. Over time, your muscles respond to the overload and become bigger and stronger. The key is finding the proper balance. Too little weight will not produce the desired results, and too much weight may result in fatigue and injury. You need to overload the muscle just enough to make it stronger. So it is with stress: Too little stress leads to boredom and lethargy, and too much stress leads to physical and emotional breakdown. The right balance leads to a productive, healthy life.

Although we often think of stress as negative, keep in mind that stress can be stimulating and helpful. Think of how boring life would be without some changes and challenges to push you along, to provide opportunities to learn and grow, and to provide the impetus for accomplishing your goals in life! (see Figure 1.1)

Yerkes–Dodson Principle

Harvard physicians Robert Yerkes and John Dodson first described the relationship between stress and performance in 1908.² The **Yerkes–Dodson Principle** implies that to a certain point, a specific amount of stress is healthy, useful, and even beneficial. In addition to enhanced performance, this usefulness can be translated into one’s health and well-being.

Activation of the stress response is often essential for success. We see this in situations such as sporting events, academic pursuits, and even in creative and social activities. As stress levels increase, so does performance. This relationship between increased stress and increased performance, however, does not continue indefinitely. Stress or arousal can increase performance but when stress exceeds one’s ability to cope, this overload contributes

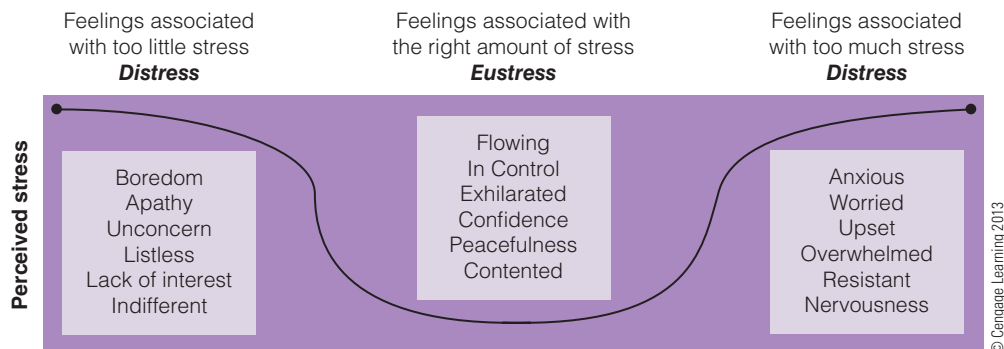


FIGURE 1.1 Feelings Associated with Perceived Stress . . . Finding the Balance



Bill Vanie/Flint/Corbis

to diminished performance, inefficiency, and even health problems.

A good image to remind us that we each have an ideal amount of stress is the tension in the strings of a guitar. When a guitar is strung too tightly (too much tension), the string will sound a note higher than desirable. The guitar string, when tightened to its maximum, is likely to snap. The same string, if not tightened sufficiently, will play a note that is lower than is desirable. If it is strung without any tension, no sound at all will come from it. The proper tension results in the desirable note. The same image can be used to illustrate how healthy we are, and how we feel, with too much or too little stress.

College students are faced with many stressors. What is your #1 stressor?

The Terminology of Stress

Stress can be good or bad, acute or chronic. These and other variances of stress are explained in the following definitions.

Good and Bad Stress A **stressor** is any event or situation that an individual perceives as a threat that causes him or her to either adapt or initiate the stress response. (The stress response will be explained in detail in Chapter 3.) Therefore, a stressor is a stimulus, and stress is a response. To think of it another way, the stressor is the cause and stress is the effect.

Hans Selye, one of the first people to study the effects of stress, coined the term **eustress** to explain the positive, desirable stress that keeps life interesting and helps to motivate and inspire. Events such as going off to college, getting married, starting a new job, or having a baby can be happy, joyous, *and* stress-producing. Eustress also involves managing stress successfully even when dealing with a negative stressor. Notice in Figure 1.2 that eustress is represented on the curve where stress level, health, and performance increase simultaneously. Eustress implies that a certain amount of stress is useful, beneficial, and even good for our health, much like the perfectly strung guitar string.

Distress refers to the negative effects of stress that drain us of energy and surpass our capacity to cope. Often when we are talking about stress, we are referring to distress. Notice the place on Figure 1.2 where stress continues to increase yet performance and health begin to decline. This downward curve represents distress. For optimal performance and well-being, you want to stay on top of the curve.

Acute and Chronic Stress Stress can be acute or chronic. **Acute stress** results from a short-term stressor. It appears suddenly, is usually quite intense, and then disappears quickly. Imagine being out for a leisurely evening stroll when suddenly, from out of nowhere, a large, mangy dog leaps from the bushes, growling, with teeth bared. Your response would fit the definition of acute stress.

Have you ever been cruising down the highway, relaxing to your favorite tunes when you glanced in your rearview mirror to see the flashing lights of a police car bearing down from behind? If so, chances are you experienced acute stress at that time.

If you have ever parachuted or participated in other exhilarating activities, you will understand that when you manage acute stress well, it can help you



Jennifer Evans/Candy Apple Photography

Getting married is an example of a positive stressor, also known as eustress.

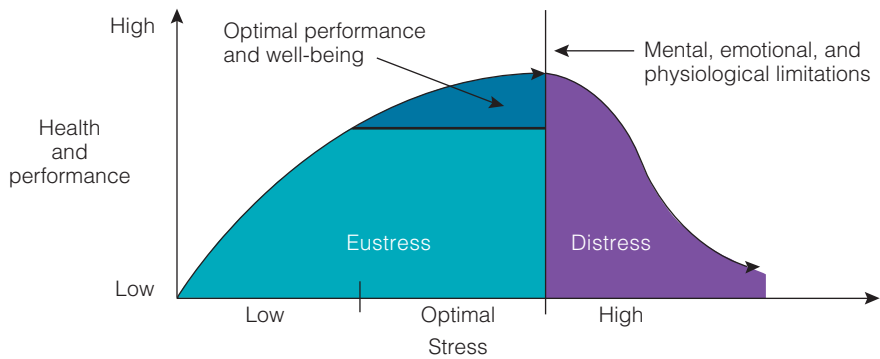


FIGURE 1.2 Relationship among Stress, Health, and Performance

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).

think clearly and perform optimally. Acute stress can be exciting and invigorating in small doses—but too much is exhausting.

People experiencing **episodic acute stress** seem to be perpetually in the clutches of acute stress. These are the people who make you say “What now?!” when you see them racing toward you. They seem to be always in a rush—but usually late. If something can go wrong, it will. They can’t seem to get their act together or organize the many self-inflicted demands and pressures that clamor for their attention. They often blame their problems on other people and external events.

People who have frequent episodes of acute stress tend to be over-aroused, short-tempered, irritable, anxious, and tense. They may describe themselves as having “a lot of nervous energy.” As you can imagine, the symptoms of episodic acute stress are the symptoms of extended over-arousal including persistent tension headaches, migraines, digestive problems, hypertension, chest pain, and heart disease.³

Chronic stress is long-term stress resulting from those nagging problems that just don’t seem to go away. This is the grinding stress that can wear you down day after day, year after year. Chronic stress can result from credit card debt that keeps growing, long-term health problems, emotionally draining relationships, or staying in an unfulfilling, energy-draining job. Chronic stress can be a result of unrelenting demands and pressures that go on for an interminable time.

The danger of chronic stress is that some people get used to it, lose hope, and give up searching for solutions. As their physical and mental resources are depleted, they are overcome by feelings of apathy, hopelessness, and fear. Chronic stress can actually kill—through suicide, heart attacks, and violence. You will learn in later chapters that this chronic, long-term stress is what results in stress-related disease and reduces the quality of life.

Author Anecdote

High Stress

The soothing sound of the engine hummed in my ears as the small Cessna airplane slowly climbed to 3,000 feet over Lincoln, Nebraska. I was about to make my first parachute jump—and I was feeling anything but soothed. I have a list of “Things to Do Before I Die,” and parachuting was on the list. At this moment I couldn’t for the life of me remember why.

My heart was racing, my jaw was clenched, and I was having trouble thinking clearly. Suddenly the small door flew open and a blast of noisy, cold air brought me to my senses. I knew what I had to do. Rather awkwardly I maneuvered my parachute-laden body so I was sitting in the doorway with my legs dangling in the wind. I tried not to think about the fact that 3,000 feet separated my dangling boots and the earth below. I eased forward slowly to balance precariously on the extremely small step and held on for dear life to the bar attached under the wing of the airplane.

Every cell in my body was shouting, “Whatever you do, don’t let go of this airplane!” Somewhere in the distance I heard my jumpmaster, Gary, shout over the tremendous wind, “Margie, let go!”

There it was—the moment of decision. With a deep breath I released my grip, pushed off, arched my back, spread my arms and legs, and began to fall.

Seconds later my parachute popped open and there I was, floating in the sky. It was exhilarating! I have never felt more alive. My stress response was fully engaged. The powerful stress hormones were surging through my body. As I touched down, my knees shaking, I fully understood the feeling of an adrenaline high. My body had served me well in this experience of acute stress.



Gunter Marx Photography/Documentary/Corbis

Acute stress can be exhilarating!

—MH

Holistic Health

Understanding Health To understand how stress affects you and to learn how to increase your capacity for handling the demands of life, you will have to understand the relationship between health and stress. Two important points about health are as follows:

1. *Health is more than just the absence of disease.* The focus of this book is on more than just controlling stress to prevent disease and the other negative consequences of stress. The focus is on increasing your capacity for dealing with stress so you can enjoy optimal health and well-being, both today and in the years to come.
2. *Health relates to more than just the physical dimension.* **Holistic health** encompasses physical, intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and social dimensions. An imbalance in any of these dimensions will affect your health. Even broader definitions of health include occupational and environmental dimensions. In later chapters we will discuss these last two dimensions and how they relate to stress. The important message here is that the holistically healthy person functions as a total, balanced person.

Dimensions of Health

Figure 1.3 depicts the five dimensions of health—physical, intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and social.

Following is a brief description of each of the dimensions of health and an explanation of how stress relates to that dimension. Understanding each of these dimensions will help you plan a more balanced approach to managing stress.

Physical Health When the cells, tissues, organs, and systems that function together to form your body are in working order, you can claim to be in good **physical health**. You are able to minimize disease and injury and function optimally. Physical qualities include body weight, visual acuity, skin integrity, and level of endurance, among others. Examples of promoting health in the physical dimension are taking care of your body by eating healthy foods, exercising, getting adequate sleep, spending appropriate amounts of time in the sunshine, avoiding alcohol and drugs, and getting regular health screenings.

Physical health and stress are closely related. Stress is a risk factor for many of the serious health problems that plague us today. Stress has been shown to weaken the immune system, resulting in increased susceptibility to a variety of health problems. A strong, healthy body is better able to resist many of the damaging physiological changes that otherwise might result from excessive stress. It works both ways: Stress can cause disease and illness, and disease and illness can cause stress.

Intellectual Health **Intellectual health**, also called mental health, relates to the ability to think and learn from experiences, the ability to assess and question new information, and an openness to learning new things. Your mind—how and what you think—has a powerful impact on your health and well-being. In this text you will learn about exciting new research that sheds light on the connection between the body and the mind.

Learning about stress is an important first step in preventing and managing it. Intellectual understanding of the physical and psychological aspects of stress and wise decision-making skills will allow you to process the information you learn. You will then be able to apply this information to a plan that will improve your health and well-being. In this book you will learn a variety of stress prevention and management techniques. Through critical thinking and informed choice, you will decide on the tools and techniques that work best for you. Your ability to process and act on this information will strengthen the intellectual dimension of your health.

Modern man is sick
because he is not whole.
—CARL GUSTAV JUNG

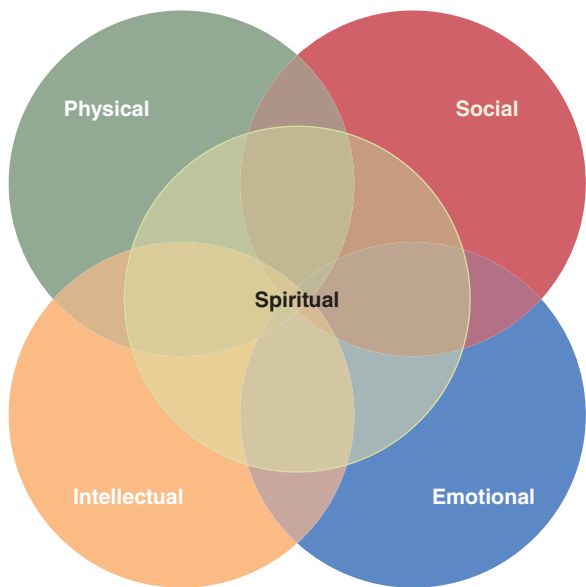


FIGURE 1.3 Dimensions of Health

Emotional Health In contrast to mental health, which encompasses thoughts and the mind, **emotional health** pertains to feelings. It involves experiencing and appreciating a wide range of feelings and the ability to express these feelings and emotions in a healthy manner. An indication of emotional wellness is the ability to remain flexible in coping with the ups and downs of life.

Stress and emotional health are strongly related. Everyone is affected by feelings such as anger, fear, happiness, worry, love, guilt, and loneliness. Emotionally healthy people use healthy coping skills to keep from becoming overwhelmed by these feelings. Dealing successfully with stress means taking control of your emotions rather than letting your emotions take control of you.

Spiritual Health **Spiritual health** relates to the principles and values that guide a person and give meaning, direction, and purpose to life. A conviction that life is meaningful and a belief that your life is guided by a reality greater than yourself are indications of spiritual health. Spiritually healthy people believe that their life has value and that they are here for a reason. The spiritual dimension may be the foundation for all other dimensions of health.

Stress, especially chronic stress, often arises from a sense of aimlessness or lack of purpose. It can happen when someone feels worthless or has a low self-esteem. Much of the stress in today's society relates to being out of touch with our principles, values, and beliefs. Making choices that are not consistent with your core values can be stressful. For example, if you have a high value for family and find that the demands of work and school leave little time for family, you likely will experience distress. In later chapters you will learn how techniques such as values clarification can contribute to spiritual peace.

Nurturing your spiritual dimension through introspection, religion, volunteer work, nature, art, or music will most certainly reduce stress and promote health. Spirituality as a key component in stress management will be discussed further in Chapter 10.

Social Health **Social health** refers to the ability to relate to others and express care and concern for others. The ability to interact effectively with others, to develop satisfying interpersonal relationships, and to fulfill social roles is important for social health. Relationships

A man too busy to take care of his health is like a mechanic too busy to take care of his tools.

—SPANISH PROVERB



Randy Farris/iwycorbis

The support of family and friends is vital for health in the social dimension.

TABLE 1.1 Negative Effects of Stress on Each Dimension of Holistic Health

| Physical | Intellectual | Emotional | Spiritual | Social |
|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Muscle tension | Forgetful | Anxiety | Lack of meaning | Isolated |
| Headaches | Poor concentration | Frustration | Lack of purpose | Lashing out |
| Teeth grinding | Low productivity | Nervousness | Lonely | Clamming up |
| Fatigue | Negative attitude | Worrying | Depressed | Lowered sex drive |
| Insomnia | Confusion | Tension | Low self-esteem | Nagging |
| Backaches | No new ideas | Mood swings | Loss of self-worth | Fewer friends |
| Stomach problems | Lethargy | Easily discouraged | Feeling abandoned | Using people |
| | Boredom | | Inability to love | |
| Colds | | Crying spells | | |
| Neck aches | | Irritability | | |
| Loss of sex drive | | Anger | | |
| Nausea | | Hostility | | |
| Shoulder pains | | Fear | | |
| Drug use | | | | |

© Cengage Learning 2013

with others, particularly family and friends, affect social well-being. When you are socially healthy, you feel accepted by others and see yourself as an important part of your world.

A strong social support system increases the capacity for handling the demands of life. As you will learn in Chapter 13, many studies show that people who have the support of friends and family are better able to deal with the ups and downs in life.

Holistic Health: Putting It All Together Upon reviewing Nicole’s story in the opening vignette, you will readily see that stress affected every dimension of her health. Physically, she had trouble eating and sleeping. She developed ulcers and required medication for muscle tension. Intellectually, as she became more overwhelmed by all the demands, her grades began to drop. Emotionally, she was overwhelmed by all the pressure, was depressed, and felt like a failure. Spiritually, she began to question her purpose and meaning in life. She doubted her value as a person, saying to herself, “How can I ever be a good nurse and help other people if I can’t even help myself?” Nicole initially withdrew from her friends and family, cutting back on her social life so that she could study and work. She had difficulty admitting that she needed help and support from others. Table 1.1 is a summary of how stress negatively affects every dimension of health.

You will find in this book a toolbox of various techniques and strategies for managing stress, and you will determine what works best for you. Understanding the holistic model of health will guide you in assessing all dimensions of health.

Nature or Nurture

Everyone is unique. Genetic variations may partly explain the differences in how we react to stressors. Some people are naturally laid-back, while others react strongly at the slightest hint of stress. Life experiences also may increase your sensitivity to stress. Strong stress reactions sometimes can be traced to early environmental factors. People who were exposed to extremely stressful events as children, such as abuse or neglect, tend to be particularly vulnerable to stress as adults.⁴

Your unique genetic makeup, life experiences, and environment as you were growing and developing all play a part in your individual reactions to the inevitable stressors of life.

Stress is an individual experience representing a personalized physiological, psychological, and spiritual response to the presence of a stressor. Many factors affect our experience with stress. Table 1.2 lists some of the factors influencing the impact of stress. The important point is to remember your uniqueness. Stress affects each person differently. Getting in touch with your individual circumstances will help you determine the stress management techniques that are most effective for you.

TABLE 1.2 Factors Influencing the Impact 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

© Cengage Learning 2013



TIME TIP

Students reported that time management is so important to stress management that they want tips in every chapter to help them develop healthy time management habits. We listened. In addition to an entire chapter on time management (Chapter 11), we asked our students to share their proven time tips with you. Watch for these time management tips, from students to students, in every chapter.

Time Tip: “Triage ruthlessly! *Triage* is a term I learned in nursing school to describe the process of determining the priority of patient care based on the severity of their condition. This rations patient treatment efficiently when resources are insufficient for all to be treated immediately. How does this relate to time management and you? **Invest your time and energy where it matters most.** You have a limited number of hours in the day. Ration your time so you spend it on your priorities. Apply triage to the things you want to accomplish today.”

—Evan H.

Research HIGHLIGHT

Stress and the Developing Brain

We know, from a plethora of research, that the early months and years of life are crucial for brain development. Still, the question remains: How do early influences act on the brain to promote or challenge the developmental process? Researchers have suggested that positive and negative experiences, chronic stressors, and various other environmental factors may affect a young child’s developing brain. Now, studies involving animals reveal in more detail how this may happen.

One important line of research has focused on brain systems that control stress hormones such as cortisol. Cortisol and other stress hormones play an important role in emergencies: They help make energy available to enable effective responses, temporarily suppress the immune response, and sharpen attention. Excess cortisol may cause shrinkage of the hippocampus, a brain structure required for the formation of certain kinds of memory.

In experiments with animals, scientists have shown that a well-defined period of early postnatal development may be an important determinant of the capacity to handle stress throughout life. In one set of studies, rat pups were removed each day from their mothers as briefly as 15 minutes, and then returned. The natural maternal response of intensively licking and grooming the returned pup was shown to alter the brain chemistry of the pup in a positive way, making the animal less reactive to stressful stimuli. Although these pups were

able to mount an appropriate stress response in the face of threat, their response did not become excessive or inappropriate.

Striking differences were seen in rat pups that were removed from their mothers for 3 hours a day—a model of maternal neglect, compared to pups that were not separated. After 3 hours, the mother rats tended to ignore the pups, at least initially, upon their return. In sharp contrast to the pups that were greeted attentively by their mothers after a short absence, the “neglected” pups showed a more profound and excessive stress response in subsequent tests. This response appeared to last into adulthood.

Another study reported that infant monkeys that were raised by mothers who experienced unpredictable conditions in obtaining food showed a pattern often seen in humans with post-traumatic stress disorder and depression. The distressed monkey mothers, uncertain about finding food, behaved inconsistently and sometimes neglectfully toward their offspring. The affected young monkeys were abnormally anxious when confronted with separations or new environments. They also were less social and more subordinate as adult animals.

It is too early to draw firm conclusions from these animal studies about the extent to which early life experience produces a long-lived or permanent set point for stress responses. Nevertheless, animal models that show the interactive effect of stress and brain development deserve serious consideration and continued study.

Source: National Institute of Health, *Stress and the Developing Brain* (NIH Publication No. 01-4603) (Bethesda, MD: NIH, 2001).



Dan Lamont/Encyclopedia/Corbis

Monkeys deprived of love and support as babies become less social and more anxious as adults.