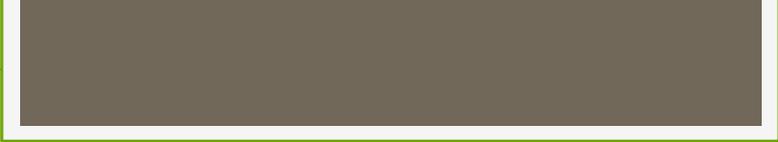


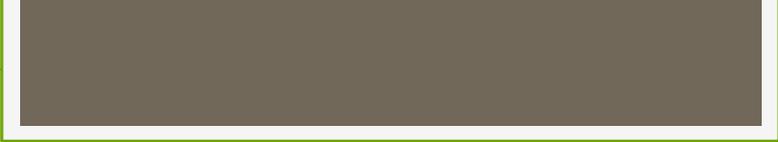


# Stressed? Who Me? I'm JUST a Farmer...

Janie Jones Taylor, PhD, LMFT

My Plan for  
Our Time Our  
Time This  
Afternoon...

- 
- A brief intro of Who...
    - You Are
    - I Am...
  - Professionally
  - Life on the farm...



# Stress...

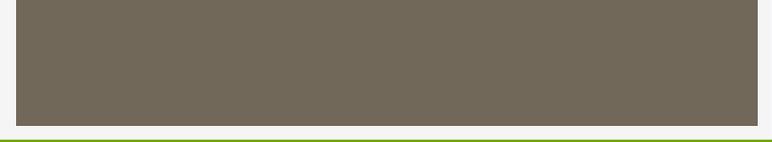
When

Demands

Exceed

Resources



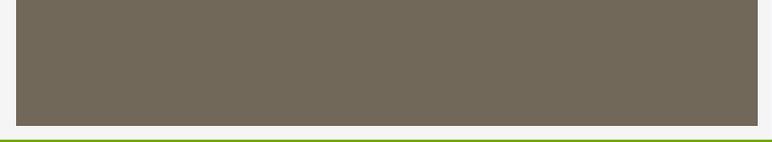


Stress...

is an *everyday* fact of life

- You cannot avoid stress.
- Stress is any change to which you must adapt.
- Day-to-day living presents even the most well-managed with a continuous stream of potentially stressful experiences.
- But all stress is not bad. In fact, some is not only desirable, but also essential to life.
- Whether the stress you experience is the result of a major life change or the cumulative effect of minor everyday worries, it is how you respond to these experiences that determines the impact stress will have on your life.





# You experience stress from four basic sources

## (1) *The environment*

Weather, noise, traffic, and pollution

## (2) *Social stressors*

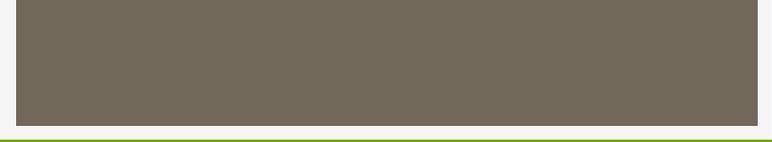
Deadlines, financial problems, job interviews, presentations, disagreements, demands for your time and attention, and loss of loved ones

## (3) *Physiological*

The rapid growth of adolescence, menopause in women, illness, aging, accidents, lack of exercise, poor nutrition, and sleep disturbances all tax the body

## (4) *Your thoughts*

Your brain interprets and translates complex changes in your environment and body and determines when to turn on the “emergency response”

- 
- **Stressor:** Event
  - **Belief:** Reaction
  - **Activation of Mechanism:** Outcome

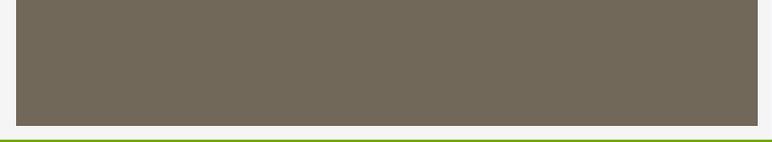
$$\mathbf{E + R = O}$$

Stress management involves the discipline of observing situations and redefining them as non-stressful.

**Remember:** Stress is a person's perception of an event.

So, before we continue,  
what's happening in YOUR world?  
Step One: Holmes Rahe Stress Inventory





## Step Two: The Double ABC-X Model

A – Stressor

Aa – Stressors

B – Resource

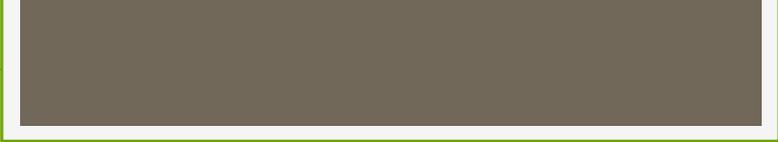
B – Resources

C – Perception

Crisis? Yes or No

C – Perceptions

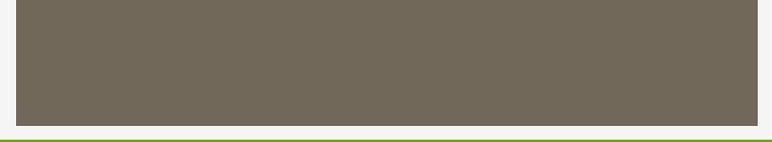
Adaptation – Mal or Bon



## Thoughts About Inventory and Double ABC-X Model

Holmes Rahe Stress  
Inventory...

Double ABC-X Model...



# Five Great Stress Resistors

- Optimistic yet realistic outlook
- Open communication
- Focused attention to priorities
- Openness to learn and try new ways to increase effectiveness
- Healthful, balanced lifestyle

But...

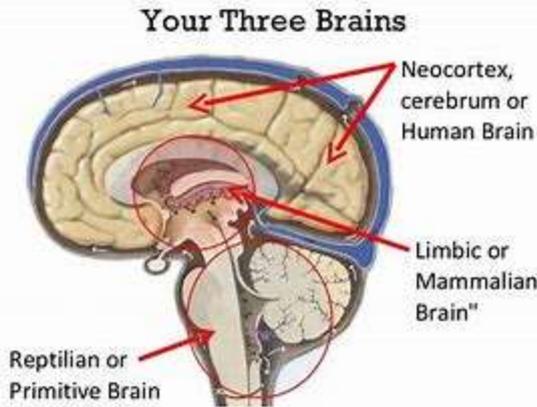


How you interpret and label your present experience and what you predict for the future can serve to relax or stress you.

Stress researcher Richard Lazarus has argued that stress begins with your appraisal of a situation. You first ask how dangerous or difficult the situation is and what resources you have to help you cope with it.

Anxious, stressed people often decide that:

- (1) An event is dangerous, difficult, or painful; and
- (2) They don't have the resources to cope.

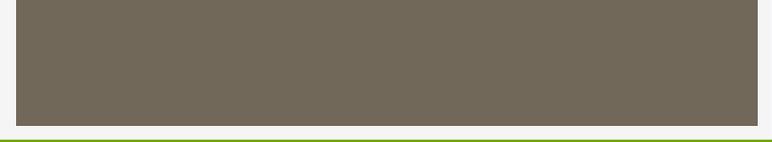


## “Fight or Flight”

The “fight or flight” response is a series of biochemical changes that prepare a person to deal with threats of danger.

Primitive man needed quick bursts of energy to fight or flee such predators as a saber-tooth tiger.

These days, when social custom prevents you from fighting or running away, this “emergency response” is rarely useful.

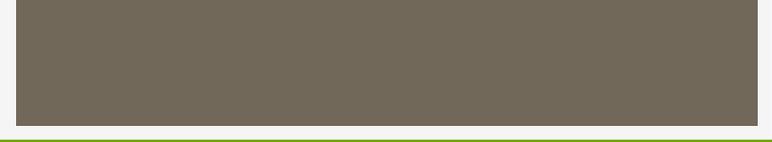


Hans Selye, the first major researcher of stress, was able to trace exactly what happens when the body experiences a “fight or flight” response:

Any problem, real or imagined, can cause the cerebral cortex (the thinking part of the brain) to send an alarm to the hypothalamus (the main switch for the stress response, located in the midbrain).

The hypothalamus stimulates the sympathetic nervous system to make a series of changes in the body.

- ❑ Heart rate, breathing rate, muscle tension, metabolism, and blood pressure all increase.
- ❑ Hand and feet get cold as blood is directed away from the extremities and digestive system into the larger muscles that can help the person fight or run.
- ❑ The individual experiences butterflies in his or her stomach.
- ❑ The diaphragm and anus lock.
- ❑ Pupils dilate to sharpen vision and hearing becomes more acute.



While all of this is going on,  
Something else happens that can have  
long-term negative effects if left unchecked.  
The adrenal glands start to secrete corticoids  
(adrenaline, epinephrine, and  
norepinephrine) which inhibit digestion,  
reproduction, growth, tissue repair, and  
the response of the immune and  
inflammatory systems.

In other words, some very important functions that  
keep the body healthy  
begin to shut down.

The same mechanism that turned the stress response on can turn it off. This is called the *relaxation response*.

As soon as an individual decides that a situation is no longer dangerous, the brain stops sending emergency signals to the brain stem, which in turn ceases to send panic messages to the nervous system. Three minutes after the danger signals are shut off, the “fight or flight” response burns out. Metabolism, heart rate, breathing rate, muscle tension, and blood pressure all return to their normal levels.



# Where are you most vulnerable?

Major areas of stress:

- Psychological
  - Optimism
  - Self-confidence
  - Worthwhile goals
  - Realistic self-expectations
  - Creativity
  - Purposeful vision
- Situational
  - Organization
  - Balanced lifestyle
  - Supportive relationships
  - Assertiveness skills
- Physiological
  - Re-energizing
  - Healthful diet
  - Affective and love
  - Moderation
  - Routine exercise

Ask yourself:

In which area am I most vulnerable?

What can I do to increase my personal hardiness?

# Types of Stress

- Good Stress

The victor (optimist) says,

“I manage my life.”

“This is a challenge.”

“There is a way.”

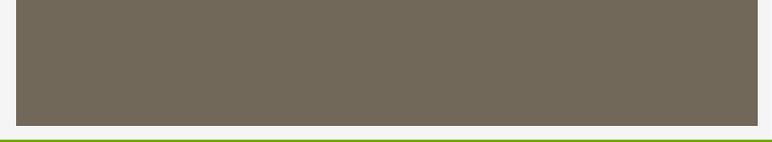
- Bad Stress

The victim (pessimist) says,

“They are doing this to me.”

“Why does this always happen?”

“I am helpless.”



# Tactics for Dealing with Stress

## **Know Your Goal...**

The goal of stress management is not merely stress reduction. (Life without stress might be boring.) While stressful events and stressors are usually seen as being negative, they can also be positive.

Distress or negative stress occurs when you perceive that the challenge facing a person is dangerous, difficult, painful, or unfair and that he or she is concerned that he or she lacks the resources to cope with it.

It is possible to increase the ability to deal with distress by integrating into everyday life positive activities.

## **The Goal is Stress Management.**

Stress management involves finding the right types and amounts of stress, given the individual's personality, priorities, and life situation, so he or she can maximize his or her performance and satisfaction.

# Schedule of Recent Experiences

Here are some ways to use the Schedule of Recent Experiences (Life Change Index [Holmes and Rahe's inventory]) to maintain your health and prevent illness.

- ❑ Remind yourself of the amount of change that has happened to you by posting the Index where you can easily see it.
- ❑ Think of the meaning of each change for you and try to identify some of the feelings you experience.
- ❑ Think about ways that you can best adjust to each change.
- ❑ Take your time when making decisions.
- ❑ Try to anticipate life changes and plan for them well.
- ❑ Pace yourself. Don't rush. It will get done.
- ❑ View accomplishments as part of daily life rather than as a "stopping point" or a "time to let down."
- ❑ Be compassionate and patient with yourself. It is not uncommon for people to become overwhelmed by all the stress in their lives. It takes a while to put into effect coping strategies to deal with stress.
- ❑ Acknowledge what you can control and what you cannot. When possible, choose what changes you take on.
- ❑ Incorporate stress management techniques.

# Stress Management Techniques

- Body Awareness

The ability to recognize how your body reacts to the stressors in your life can be a powerful skill. Your body registers stress long before your conscious mind does. For example, muscle tension is your body's way of letting you know that you are under stress, and body awareness is the first step toward acknowledging and reducing stress.

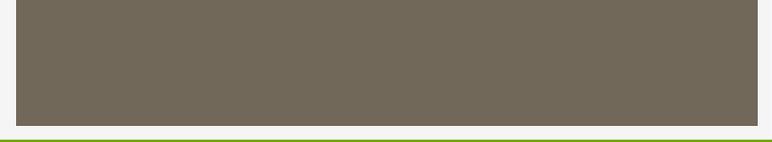
Consider preparing a Stress Awareness Diary:

<i>Time</i>	<i>Stressful Event</i>	<i>Symptom</i>
8:00	Alarm clock doesn't go off; you are late	Slight headache
11:00	Child curses staff	Anger, tight stomach

## ○ Breathing

Breathing is a necessary part of life that most people take for granted. With each breath of air, you obtain oxygen and release the waste product carbon dioxide. Poor breathing habits diminish the flow of these gases to and from your body, making it harder for you to cope with stressful situations. Improper breathing contributes to anxiety, panic attacks, depression, muscle tension, headaches, and fatigue.





## ○ Visualization

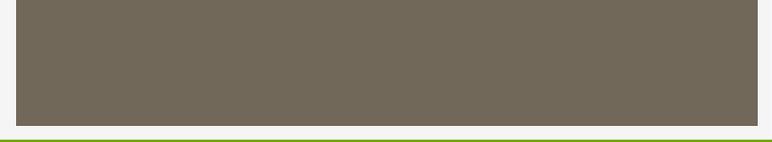
Everybody visualizes. Daydreams, memories, and inner talk are all types of visualization. Visualizations can be harnessed and consciously employed for bettering the individual and his or her life. Visualizations, or mental sense impressions, that a person creates consciously can train the body to relax and ignore stress.



## ● Thought Stopping

Thought stopping can help a person overcome the nagging worry and doubt which stand in the way of relaxation. Explore and list stressful thoughts. Then close your eyes and bring into your imagination a situation in which the stressful thought is likely to occur. Try to include normal as well as obsessive thinking. In this way, you can interrupt the stressful thoughts while allowing a continuing flow of healthy thinking. In place of the obsessive thought, make up some positive, assertive statements that are appropriate in the target situation.

For example, if you are afraid of flying, you might say to yourself, "This is a fantastically beautiful view from way up here." Develop several alternative assertive statements to say to yourself since the same response may lose its power through repetition.

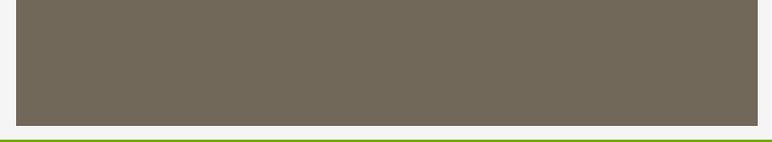


## ● Refuting Irrational Ideas

Almost every minute of your conscious life you are engaging in self-talk, your internal thought language. These are the sentences with which you describe and interpret the world. If the self-talk is accurate and in touch with reality, the person functions well. If it is irrational and untrue, then you experience stress and emotional disturbance.

Evaluate your self-statements against these six rules or guidelines for rational thinking:

1. It doesn't do anything to me.
2. Everything is exactly the way it should be.
3. All humans are fallible creatures.
4. It takes two to have a conflict.
5. The original cause is lost in antiquity.
6. We feel the way we think.



To refute irrational ideas:

1. Write down the facts of the event as they occurred at the time you were upset.
2. Write down your self-talk about this event.
3. Focus on your emotional response.
4. Dispute and change the irrational self-talk.
5. Substitute alternative self-talk.

- Stress-coping Thoughts

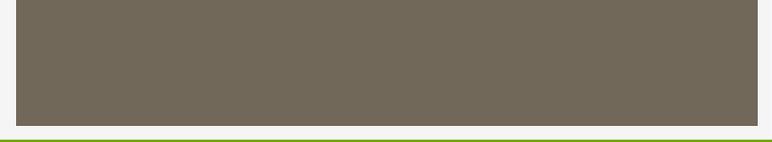
1. Preparation

2. Confronting the stressful situation

3. Coping with fear

4. Reinforcing success



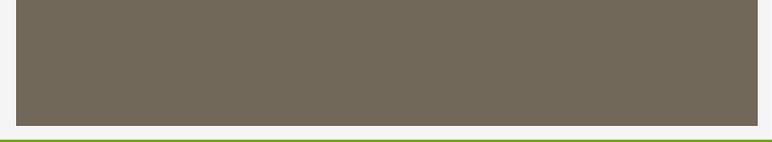


- Goal Setting and Time Management

Most people approach the subject of time management with one major question: How can I get more done in less time?

Problems associated with ineffective time management:

- ❑ Constant rushing
- ❑ Frequent lateness
- ❑ Low productivity, energy, and motivation
- ❑ Frustration
- ❑ Impatience
- ❑ Chronic vacillation between alternatives
- ❑ Difficulty setting and achieving goals
- ❑ Procrastination



In order to get a handle on time, a person must:

1. *Clarify values*

Determine what's important. Rank those values from the most to least important.

2. *Set goals*

When considering goals, ask: Is this a goal I really want to devote a lot of time and energy to accomplish? Is this goal consistent with my highest value? Is this goal achievable? Is this goal positive? Are my goals in balance?

3. *Develop an action plan*

An effective plan includes: a well-thought out and specific goal; a description of all the resources needed and how they will be accessed; the proper order of each step to be taken; progress monitored; possible procrastination causes determined and addressed; as well as, rewards/incentives to be utilized.

4. *Evaluate how time will be spent*

Keep a time inventory for at least three days. Then evaluate the log. Ask: Which of the activities on the log are in line with values and goals? Star them. Which of the activities are not in line with values and goals? Circle them. Are any values being violated by any of the activities on the log? Mark them with an "X." Are some values and goals being neglected or ignored?

5. *Combat procrastination*

6. *Organize time*



## ● Job Stress Management

The classic symptoms of job burnout include pessimism, increased dissatisfaction, absenteeism, and inefficiency at work. Every job includes some built-in difficulties to/for which the worker is paid to adjust. But job difficulties alone do not cause burnout.

It is the worker's lack of control over his or her job situation that leads to uncertainty, frustration, reduced motivation, and eventually burnout.

# Conquer Burn-out

## The Stages of Burn-out

- Level One: Honeymoon  
Counter: Be realistic about tasks at hand.  
What can I realistically accomplish in the time I have?
- Level Two: Real-life Realization  
Counter: Re-clarify expectations and goals  
Break tasks into small tasks – solve them as they occur  
Find ways to adapt – bend do not break. Be bamboo!
- Level Three: Self-doubt and Blame  
Counter: Get perspective  
How bad is it really?  
Get the facts  
Share your feelings with others to check if you are on target
- Level Four: Giving Up  
Counter: Take time out/off to take care of yourself  
Get professional help  
Rejuvenate regularly  
Put routine in place

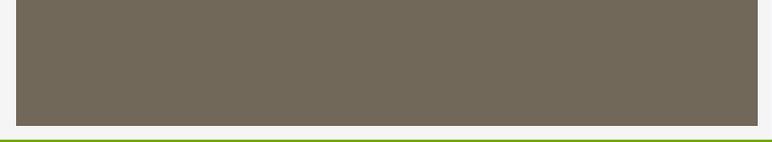


## ○ Nutrition

Eating right is a learned skill and not something that just comes naturally. Ten steps to positive eating:

- ❑ Cut back on fats.
- ❑ Avoid too much sugar.
- ❑ Limit sodium intake.
- ❑ Eat a variety of foods.
- ❑ Eat more complex carbohydrates.
- ❑ Attain or maintain your ideal weight.
- ❑ Avoid or limit caffeine.
- ❑ Avoid alcohol.
- ❑ Take a multivitamin daily.
- ❑ Eat frequent, calm meals.





## ● Exercise

Exercise is one of the simplest and most effective means of stress reduction. Vigorous exertion is the natural outlet for the body when it is in the “fight or flight” state of arousal. Exercise returns your body to its normal equilibrium by releasing natural chemicals that build up during the stress response.

Types of exercise:

- Aerobic

- Stretching

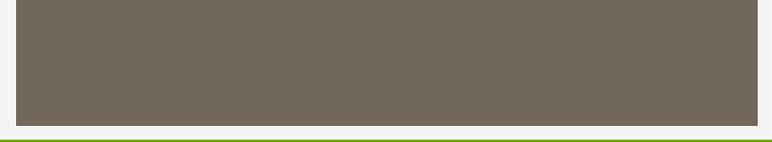
- Toning

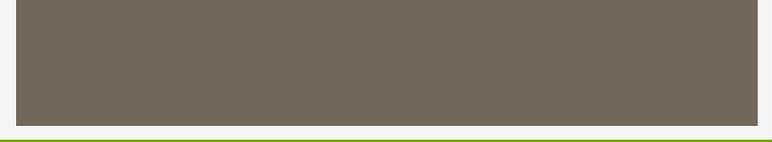
Develop your own exercise program

- Overcome barriers

- Choose the best type of exercise for you

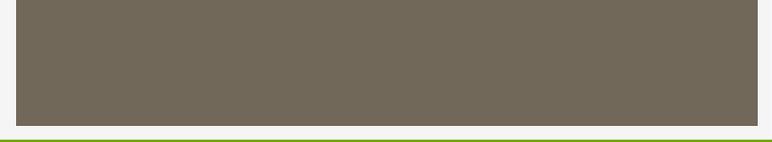
- Establishing goals

- 
- Laughter and encouragement
  - Recreation, leisure activities, and vacations
  - Music
  - Say “No,” manage conflict, beat procrastination, solve problems.
  - Prayer and Reading the Word of God



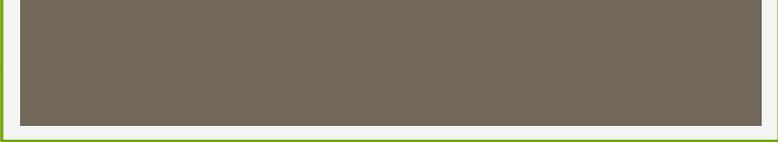
*Summary Thoughts:*  
**The Six Rs for Stress  
Management**

- Responsibility  
You are in control; establish priorities, say “No” (without guilt)
- Reflection  
Know your stress triggers, be aware of stress symptoms, check your balance in life
- Relaxation  
Do something good for you, schedule “worry time,” schedule time out
- Relationships  
Maintain supportive relationships, manage your relationships, improve your relationship with yourself
- Refueling  
Eat a balance diet with high fiber, low salt, and low cholesterol; be aware of poisons: caffeine, fats, nicotine, processed foods; drink water
- Recreation  
Laugh, have fun, enjoy life



# The Serenity Prayer

God, grant me the Serenity  
to accept the things I  
cannot change;  
Courage to change  
the things I can;  
and Wisdom to  
know the difference.



Questions?

Comments?

Last Thoughts...

P.S. Seeking assistance is NOT a sign of weakness. It is a sign of strength.



For Additional Information or  
Assistance, Feel Free to  
Contact the Presenter:

Janie Jones Taylor, PhD, LMFT  
Regional Director  
CareNet Counseling East  
108 Oakmont Drive  
Greenville, NC 27858  
252.355.2801, Ext. 29

