The Well-Balanced Professional:
Resilient and Relaxed

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"Out of my way! I'm late for that lecture on 'The Importance of Relaxation'!!!"

Our Focus

➢ **What is resilience?**

➢ **What is the stress response?**

➢ **How does chronic stress impact the body, mind, and performance?**

➢ **What is the relaxation response?**

➢ **What techniques will make me relaxed, alert and resilient?**

WILLIAM M. HABERMEHL
County Superintendent of Schools

Norms for Our Learning Community

➢ Be present.

➢ Demonstrate mutual respect.

➢ Listen to understand.

➢ Be open to new ideas.

BEAR FACTS   by Burke

"Hey, slow down! You're running around like a bunch of humans!"

Stress by the Numbers

40	70	$300 Billion	52	76
Percentage of Americans who say they lie awake at night because of stress	Percentage of Americans who are stressed about work	Annual cost to businesses due to employee stress	Percentage of Americans who are worried about their health	Percentage of boomers who are worried about money

Oz, 2011

Resilience: A Personal Journey

Process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, and significant sources of stress.
It means "bouncing back" from difficult experiences.
It's about having flexibility and balance in your life.

Resilience Factors Can Be Learned

➢ Caring, Supportive Relationships ← **Primary factor**

➢ Make realistic plans and carry them out
➢ Positive view of yourself and confidence in your strengths and abilities
➢ Communication and problem solving skills
➢ Manage strong feelings and impulses

Source: American Psychological Association. *The Road to Resilience.*

Social Support Network

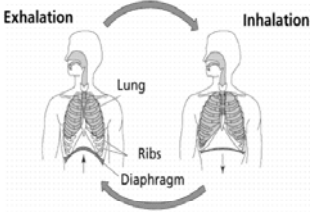
➢ Emotional
➢ Informational
➢ Practical

Prevent Stress Before It Starts

1. Identify and eliminate stressors
2. Commit to the positive: avoid self-destructive ways
3. Keep lists
4. Immunize yourself through exercise, relaxation techniques, thought management
5. Plan your day each morning
6. Plan your future: more control, less stress

Epstein, 2011

Stressful or Relaxing Breath?

➢ Breathing patterns affect stress levels

➢ Shallow chest breathing associated with stress

➢ Deep diaphragmatic breathing linked to relaxation

➢ Focusing on breath can trigger relaxation and release body toxins

Biodots: A Skin Thermometer

➢ Generally when stressed the skin becomes cooler.

➢ Become aware of stress that we don't consciously register

➢ Liquid crystals that change color in response to changes in body temperature.

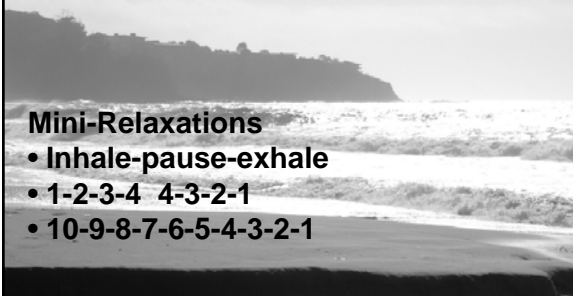➢ The color measures the level of stress physiology.

Biodots
What The Colors Mean

BLACK	▓	87 F	- Very Tense
AMBER OR BROWN	▓	89.6 F	- Tense
YELLOW	▓	90.6 F	- Unsettled
GREEN	▓	91.6 F	- Involved
TURQUOISE	▓	92.6 F	- Relaxing
BLUE	▓	93.6 F	- Calm
VIOLET	▓	94.6 F	- Very Relaxed

Color approximations and general interpretations of stress

BREATHE DEEPLY

Mini-Relaxations
• **Inhale-pause-exhale**
• **1-2-3-4 4-3-2-1**
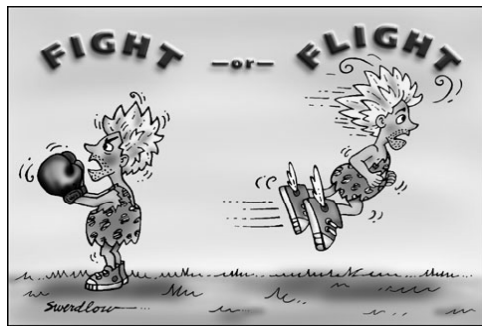• **10-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1**

Yum!!

Stress has always been with us.
It can keep us safe and alert to danger.
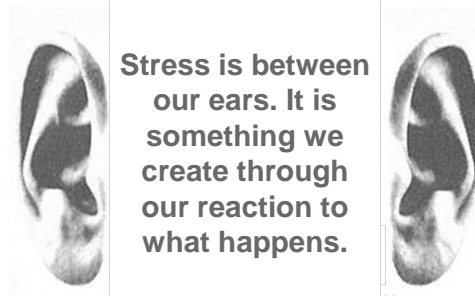
Stress Response
The perception of a threat to the physical or psychological well-being and the perception that the individual's responses are inadequate to cope with it.
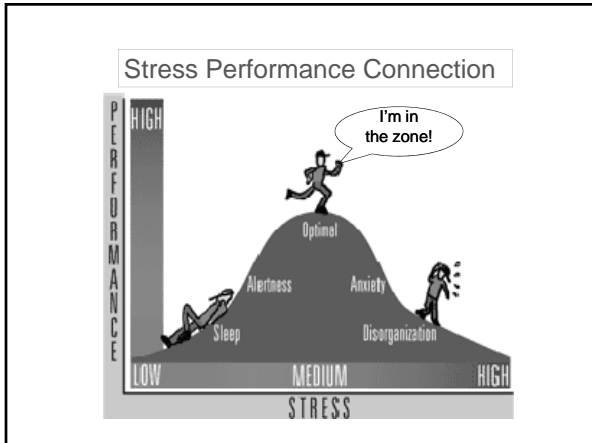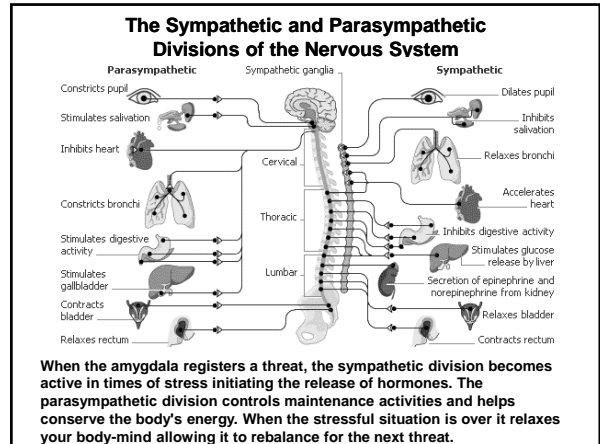
-Benson Henry Institute for Mind-Body Medicine

FIGHT —or— FLIGHT

Swerdlow

When stressed your body goes into action.

Stress is between our ears. It is something we create through our reaction to what happens.

The Sympathetic and Parasympathetic Divisions of the Nervous System

Parasympathetic — Sympathetic ganglia — Sympathetic

Constricts pupil — Dilates pupil

Stimulates salivation — Inhibits salivation

Inhibits heart — Relaxes bronchi

Cervical

Constricts bronchi — Accelerates heart

Thoracic — Inhibits digestive activity

Stimulates digestive activity — Stimulates glucose release by liver

Stimulates gallbladder — Lumbar — Secretion of epinephrine and norepinephrine from kidney

Contracts bladder — Relaxes bladder

Relaxes rectum — Contracts rectum

When the amygdala registers a threat, the sympathetic division becomes active in times of stress initiating the release of hormones. The parasympathetic division controls maintenance activities and helps conserve the body's energy. When the stressful situation is over it relaxes your body-mind allowing it to rebalance for the next threat.

Stress Performance Connection

PERFORMANCE (HIGH / LOW)

I'm in the zone!

Optimal
Alertness — Anxiety
Sleep — Disorganization

STRESS (LOW / MEDIUM / HIGH)

What makes a good parent?

The #1 essential parenting skill is the ability to provide love and affection.

Can you guess what the #2 essential parenting skill is?

Epstein, 2010
Scientific American Mind

Parents ability to manage stress was a good predictor of the quality of their relationship with their children.

60%-90% of all doctor's visits in the U.S. are for stress-related disorders.

Source: Benson Henry Institute for Mind Body Medicine, Boston, MA
Center for Disease Control (CDC) 2010

How Much Does Chronic Stress Age Your Body?

How much faster did the stressed women (with a chronically ill child) age than their official chronological age on their license?

a) 6-12 months
b) 1-3 years
c) 3-10 years
d) 9-17 years

Eric Jensen, Brain Discoveries Workshop, Sept. 2010

My Resilience Plan

My stress triggers are…

To keep my mind and body healthy I plan to….

Physical Stress Warning Signs

Headaches	Irritable bowel syndrome
Insomnia	Menstrual distress
Sleep disturbances	Nausea
Low back pain	Loss of appetite or overeating
Fatigue	Heart palpitations
Sexual problems	Hypertension
Cold hands and feet	Asthma attacks
Neck and shoulder pain	Frequent colds and flu
Indigestion	Frequent low grade
Cardiovascular Disease	Infections

Source: Benson Henry Institute for Mind Body Medicine, Boston, MA

Cognitive and Emotional Signs of Stress

- ❑ Memory problems
- ❑ Inability to concentrate
- ❑ Poor judgment
- ❑ Seeing only the negative
- ❑ Anxious or racing thoughts
- ❑ Constant worrying

- ❑ Moodiness
- ❑ Irritability or short temper
- ❑ Agitation, inability to relax
- ❑ Feeling overwhelmed
- ❑ Sense of loneliness and isolation
- ❑ Depression or general unhappiness

Source: Benson Henry Institute for Mind Body Medicine, Boston, MA

The good news is that you have choices about how you can prevent and respond to life stressors.
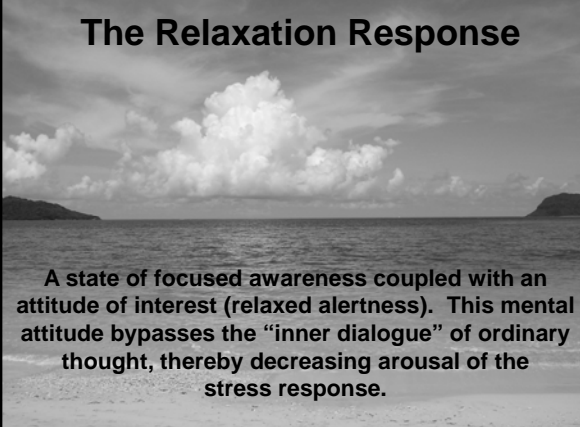
How do you cope with stress?

Take time to be by yourself…
you coming out pretty soon, mom?
ED FISCHER

The Relaxation Response

A state of focused awareness coupled with an attitude of interest (relaxed alertness). This mental attitude bypasses the "inner dialogue" of ordinary thought, thereby decreasing arousal of the stress response.

The Relaxation Response is the Opposite of the Stress Response

Stress	CHANGES	Relaxation Response
All Increase	Metabolism Heart Rate Blood Pressure Breathing Rate Muscle Tension	All Decrease

Source: Benson Henry Institute for Mind Body Medicine, Boston, MA

Benefits of the Relaxation Response

➢ Decreases stress and anxiety
➢ Reduces muscle tension

➢ Quiets the mind
➢ Improves sleep

Source: Benson Henry Institute for Mind Body Medicine, Boston, MA

➢ Increases ability to focus
➢ Gets us out of our conditioned responses

➢ Promotes creative problem-solving

Two Basic Elements for Eliciting the Relaxation Response

✓ Passive, nonjudgmental mental attitude
✓ Repetition of a simple mental or physical stimulus such as breathing, a word, phrase, image, movement

o Optional: a comfortable position and quiet environment

Source: Benson Henry Institute for Mind Body Medicine, Boston, MA

"WHEN are you going to Learn to Relax?"

Focus on Your Breath
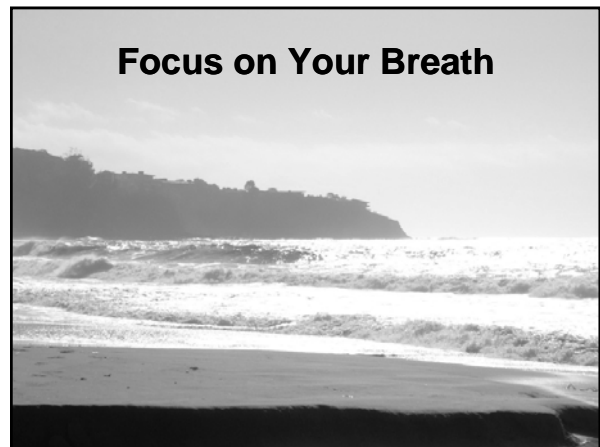
Relaxing Breath
4-7-8

Powerful!

- ➤ Touch tongue tip to ridge of tissue above front teeth.
- ➤ Begin with exhale through your mouth noisily around your tongue, pursing your lips outward.
- ➤ Inhale through nose quietly to count of 4.
- ➤ Hold breath to count of 7.
- ➤ Exhale slowly to count of 8. Repeat.
  - *Important: exhale 2x longer than inhale.*
  - **Weil, 2005**

There are many ways to elicit the relaxation response including:

**diaphragmatic breathing
yoga
walking
mindfulness
tai chi
progressive muscle relaxation
guided imagery
knitting
swimming…**

Stress Busters

Listen to Calming Music

Read a good book

Laugh

Play sports or exercise

Take a walk

Yawn and Stretch

Breathe

Talk with a friend

Make music

Sit quietly

Draw

Picture yourself in a beautiful place

Relax in a comfortable spot

Play with your pet

**In what situations do you want to remember to use relaxation techniques?
What would you do?**

My Resilience Plan

My stress triggers are…

To keep my mind and body healthy I plan to….

Nothing erases unpleasant thoughts more effectively than concentration on pleasant ones.
-Hans Selye

Imagery

➢ Creating thoughts and pictures using your mind and all of your senses.

➢ Imagery is not just visualization.

➢ All thoughts and images created by the mind affect the body.

Source: Benson Henry Institute for Mind Body Medicine, Boston, MA

Close your eyes and imagine each of the following sensations.
Which do you connect with most?

➢ The smell of fresh-baking bread
➢ The feeling of swimming on a hot day
➢ The sound of sea gulls
➢ Your favorite dessert
➢ The taste of a lemon
➢ The sight of a beautiful garden, ocean, or mountain

Being Grateful Can Make You Happier

❖ Count up to 3 blessings each day.
❖ Thank someone you may take for granted.
❖ Keep a record of how often you say thank you and try to double it in a week.
❖ Send someone a thank you e-card.
❖ When you awake, think of one thing you are grateful for.

My Resilience Plan

My stress triggers are…

To keep my mind and body healthy I plan to….

What is Your Stress-Management IQ?

Find out how well you:
• Manage sources of stress
• Practice relaxation techniques
• Manage thoughts
• Prevent stress from occurring

Go to: http://mystressmanagementskills.com/ and get your personal profile

Remember to Practice

Stress is automatic, but relaxation is voluntary and takes practice.
It's best to practice before you get really stressed.

I can not, and should not, be cured of my stress, but merely taught to enjoy it.
Hans Selye, 1950