

## Dealing with Stress

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Apostolic Christian  
Counseling and Family Services  
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*Psalm 27:1-3*

- 1 The Lord is my light and my salvation;  
whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength  
of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?*
- 2 When the wicked, even mine enemies and  
my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh,  
they stumbled and fell.*
- 3 Though an host should encamp against me,  
my heart shall not fear: though war should  
rise against me, in this will I be confident.*

## How to Apply this Information

- The information in this presentation will apply to everyone at one time or another.
- First, note how it applies to you.
- Second, note how it applies to your spouse.
- Third, note how it applies to others you come into contact with in your life.

**Stress**  
st<sup>t</sup>ress      Stre<sup>S</sup>s  
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**Stress**      **Stress**  
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## Stress

"I'm late; oh, no!"

"I have too much to do and not enough time to get it all done!"

"I've never done that before. How do I do it? They will think I'm a baby."

"I'm just not feeling well; how can I keep going?"

"Three more couples are coming; how can I stretch the food to have enough for everyone?"

"Oh dear! Beet juice right in the front of my white blouse and I don't have time to change!"

"A car accident? Was he hurt?"

## Stress

Your body tenses.

Your heart beats faster.

Your breathing is shallow.

Your mind starts racing from one "what if" to another.

Your hands get shaky.

You drop things easily.

Have  
you  
been  
there?

### What do you do?

1. You take a deep breath.
2. Your “thinker” starts thinking.
3. “Lord, Thou knowest what is best; please guide me.”
4. “Now what would my mother do?”
5. “OK, I can do that, and I can do that.”
6. “Thank you, Lord. Please help me keep going.”

### Stress

- Stress is the body’s response to demands placed on it.
- It is with us all the time.
- Comes from many sources both internal and external.
- Can be motivating, challenging, exciting.
- Can be exhausting and distressing.

### Common Misconceptions about Stress

- We always know we are under stress.
- Stress affects only those who have high-pressure lives.
- Stress is caused by events that happen to us.
- The only way to cope with stress is to remove the stressor.

### Dealing with Stress: A Balancing Act

**Healthy living takes balance in four areas:**

**Biological:** eating, sleeping, exercise, relaxation, and medical check-ups

**Emotional:** Sharing feelings, healthy thinking, dealing with stressors as they come, writing in a journal, etc.

**Relational:** maintaining healthy boundaries, good communication and conflict resolution skills, support/anchor people

**Spiritual:** quiet time with God for reflection, direction, and inspiration. Community with others of like faith.

### Being Proactive Towards Stress

- Know yourself and your personal limits. Your personality affects how you deal with stressors.
- Work with your husband on defining what your role as an Elder’s wife is an isn’t.
- Be aware of your own emotional needs to be liked and approved.
- You may need to make changes in your life in order to break out of patterns that aren’t working.

## Being Proactive Towards Stress, (cont'd)

- Use stress management techniques of relaxation, deep breathing, etc.
- Develop outlets of having fun/hobbies. Make this a priority in your life.
- Work to not take things personally and do not over-identify with your role.
- Find healthy peer support – other Elder's wives can help in many ways.

*“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.”*

*Matthew 6:33-34*

## Types of Stress

Why You Need to Know What Kind You Have

## Types of Daily Hassles

- Daily hassles are the irritating, frustrating demands that occur during everyday living, work, and relating with others.
- Inner concerns
  - Ex. Feeling conflicted over what to do.
- Financial concerns
  - Ex. Concerns about owing money.
- Time pressures
  - Ex. Too many things to do and can't get them done.

Holm and Holroyd, Behavioral Assessment, Vol. 14, pp. 465-482, 1992

## Types of Daily Hassles

- Work pressures
  - Ex. Job dissatisfaction and/or dealing with a difficult boss.
- Environmental hassles
  - Ex. Worry about crime.
- Family hassles
  - Ex. Worry about one's children.
- Health hassles
  - Ex. Concerns about illness and medical treatment.

Holm and Holroyd, Behavioral Assessment, Vol. 14, pp. 465-482, 1992

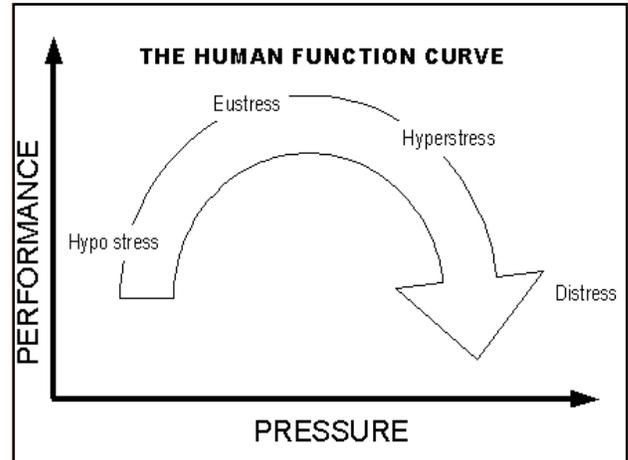
## Daily Hassles vs. Major Life Events

- For over two decades research has shown that daily hassles accumulate to produce more psychological and physical issues than do major life events.
- While this doesn't mean that major life events aren't stressful, it does mean that the accumulation of stress from life can “sneak up” on us.

Kanner, Coyne, Schaefer. (1981) Journal of Behavioral Medicine, 4(1), pp. 1-39.

### I Peter 5:8-10

8. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:
9. Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.
10. But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.



### Hypostress

- Occurs when we are not challenged enough, have set our expectations too low, or are being lazy.
- Over time it leaves us bored, unfulfilled, without a sense of mission and purpose; mindless activities.

### Eustress

- “Eu” means ‘well’ or ‘good.’
- Refers to the optimal amount of stress which helps promote health and growth.
- Provides us with a challenge and a mission, but doesn’t overwhelm us.
- Uses our skills, focus and can be hard work, however, we also feel energized by our involvement in the tasks and accomplishing something.

### Hyperstress

- Significant stress and strain.
- Occurs from time to time in the course of normal life.
- However, it can only be sustained for a short time before negative effects occur physically, emotionally, relationally, and spiritually.

### Distress

- Increasing deterioration of functioning in all areas.
- Harm to one’s body, emotions, relationships, and spirituality occurs and becomes more serious the longer it goes.
- Burnout, compassion fatigue, etc.

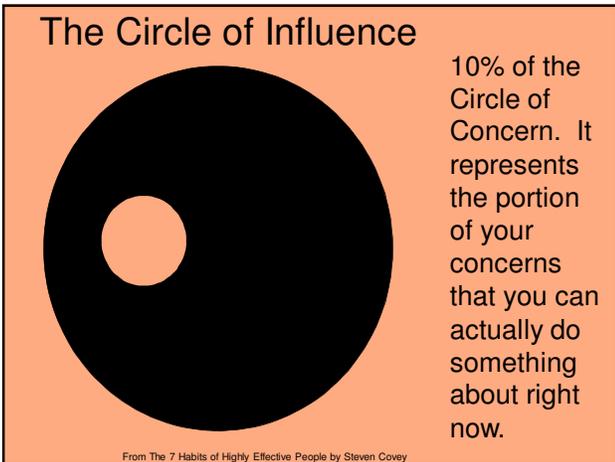
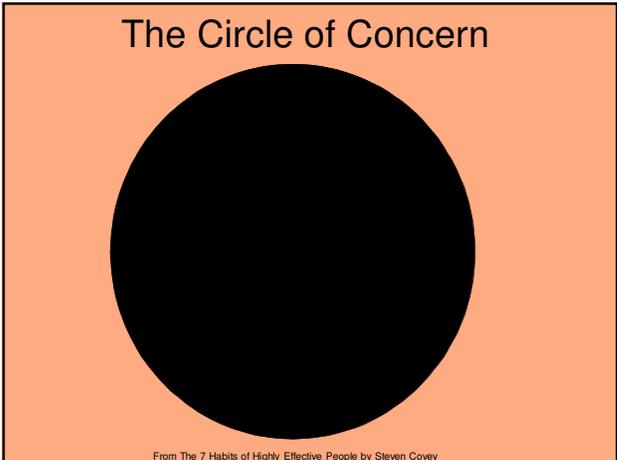
10. Panic Anxiety	
9. High distress	<i>Red Zone = High Tension</i>
8. Moderate distress	
7. Distress	
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6. High tension	
5. Unpleasant tension	<i>Yellow Zone = Caution</i>
4. Tense	
-----	
3. Relatively calm	
2. Relaxed	<i>Green Zone = Calm</i>
1. Calm	
0. Wonderfully calm	

### Red, Yellow or Green: It Matters

- The higher our tension level, the more opportunities Satan has to get an advantage with us. Think about it:
  - In what zone are you more likely to say something you regret later?
  - In what zone are you more likely to do something impulsive and not care about the consequences.
  - In what zone are your emotions more likely to “run the show” rather than you being in submission to the Holy Spirit?

### Psalms 37:3-7

- Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.
- Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.
- Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.
- And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday.
- Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.



### Circle of Concern vs. Circle of Influence

- Many people spend 90% of their time in the 90% they cannot control.
- This leads to stress, anxiety, feeling out of control, difficulty letting go.
- The goal is to spend 90% of your time in the 10%

## Skills for Coping with Stress

*“Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established.”*

*--Proverbs 16:3*

## Skills to Calm Your Body

- **Physical Exercise:** Research has shown that aerobic exercise is particularly helpful for reducing anxiety sensitivity.
- **Watch What You Eat:** Reducing or eliminating caffeine; increasing fruits and vegetables, etc.
- **Practice Good Sleep Habits:** Go to bed and rise at consistent times.
- **Reduce/Eliminate Unnecessary Stress**
- **Take Deep Breaths:** 5-7-8
- **Relax Your Muscles:** Learn relaxation skills

## Skills to Calm Your Mind

- **Learn to understand your self-talk**  
– *Proverbs 23:7: “For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he.”*
- **Avoid catastrophizing**
- **Review comforting Scriptures**
- **Use calming/coping thoughts**
- **Sit quietly and meditate on the Word and the Lord’s peace**
- **Use Biblical imagery:** For example, focus your mind on God and the beauty of His creation using the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm
- **Listen to hymns and calming music**
- **Reduce unnecessary noise and distractions**

## Skills to Calm Your Spirit

- **Seek first the Kingdom of God:** focus on things that have eternal value rather than on things that only have meaning in this present life (Matthew 6:33-34).
- **Pray:** Make your stress, worries, and requests known to God (Phil. 4:6; 1 Peter 5:7)  
– *Psalms 118:5-6, “I called upon the Lord in distress: the Lord answered me, and set me in a large place. The Lord is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?”*
- **Focus your thinking:** Think about the things listed in Phil. 4:8

## Skills to Calm Your Spirit

- **Meditate:** Be attentive to Jesus' presence and hear his Word.  
– *Luke 10:39, “And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word.”*
- **Praise God:** Worship Him for who being worthy of our faith and trust.  
– *Psalms 56:3-4, “What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee. In God I will praise his word, in God I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.”*
- **Put emotions in perspective:** Remember the Word is true even when our feelings don't confirm that!