

Angel Books

Good News E-Letter for Families



Editor Jennifer Gouldie
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What is Stress?

Stress is an organism's response to a stressor such as an environmental condition or a stimulus. Stress is a body's way to react to a challenge. According to the stressful event, the body's way to respond to stress is by the sympathetic nervous system which results in the Fight-or-Flight response. Stress typically describes a negative condition or a positive condition that can have an impact on an organism's mental and physical well-being. (Wikipedia)

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7 Stress Reducing Tips for Mom

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Plan your meals. Choose meals that your family likes. There is no point spending your time making a meal your family does not like. You feel frustrated with their complaints and then nobody is happy. Face it during this season of life you may not be eating gourmet! ⇒ Make double the amount one night so the next night you can have the same meal two nights in a row. Leftovers never killed anyone! ⇒ Use paper plates at least once a week. ⇒ Do 1 load of laundry per day. This eliminates the dreaded 'laundry day'. Family members can help to put away their own clothes. Remember: Teach them how! 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Pick age appropriate jobs for your family members to help with around the house. Be sure to have concrete consequences for them if the task is not completed. Remember: Know when to give them grace! ⇒ Take the time to teach your family members how to do jobs around the house. If it is not done correctly you just waste your time having to do the job over. Don't expect them to just know how to do the job. ⇒ Try to schedule appointments, classes, errands, etc., on the same day. The day may turn out to be a crazy one but in the long run you will be glad not to be running around every day of the week.
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Transforming Stress to Strength

Everyone reacts differently to stress. People's needs are also very different under stress. This is why it is important for you to pay attention to what your response is to stressful events. Once you are aware, then you can decide if your automatic responses are healthy or not. Sometimes your response might not fit the circumstance, sometimes your response might just be an old habit or sometimes your response might not fit who you are right now.

When you are under stress, you are the only person who knows what you really need. You are also the best person to meet your needs. If you don't know what your needs are, how can you possibly begin to satisfy them so that you can heal and move forward?

My first response to stressful events is to jump on the bike or treadmill and make sure I get my heart rate up into my target zone, even if it is only for 5 minutes. It literally reduces the stress hormone cortisol and clears my head. Depending on how stressful the event is, this also helps me keep things in perspective and quite often I come up with ideas for possible solutions.

This however was not always the case, it has taken me years to replace old 'unhealthy' responses to stress and I plan to spend the rest of my life learning new 'healthy' ways to respond. A few months ago I started watching a video by Deepak Chopra and Tara Stiles called, "Yoga Transformation", which has a lot of great information, insights and tips at the end of the DVD. It has taught me some new ways to deal with stress. I am a huge fan of yoga because it builds my physical, mental, emotional and spiritual strength.

I was thrilled to discover one day that I could watch the video and get the benefits even if I couldn't do the physical part. This makes me smile; because I've heard fitness instructors on television for years telling their viewers to get off the couch and do the exercises.

By watching the video I am getting the mental, emotional and spiritual benefits created by the relaxing music and scenery. Our muscles have a 'memory' so the simple act of observing the slow, gentle movements of the yoga poses, reminds my own muscles of the strength stored in them. It is like visualization for my muscles.

At the end of this video there is a 15 minute meditation which Kelly and I have been doing right before going to sleep. We have found that it helps us go to sleep quicker and we also have a deeper sleep. We sometimes have to go through it twice, but it is worth it. If you decide to try this meditation, I'd recommend you make sure you are completely ready for sleep – teeth brushed, pajamas on, lights off or low, etc.

Can you do this without the video? Absolutely! Get ready for bed, turn on some relaxing music, and follow these instructions for creating a meditative state: watch your breath flowing in and out through your nose, really focus on the air going in and out; don't try to control your breathing just watch its' natural progression. If your thoughts pull you away just bring your attention back to your breathing. Another method is to tighten and relax your muscles starting at the top of your head and working your way down to your toes.

Make sure you are patient and kind with yourself as you learn new ways to cope with the challenging journey of being 'human.' As Deepak Chopra says, "The highest form of human awareness is the ability to observe yourself without judging yourself."

By Wendy Collier B. Ed.



Top Causes of Stress in the U.S.

	Cause	Factors
1	Job Pressure	Co-Worker Tension, Bosses, Work Overload
2	Money	Loss of Job, Reduced Retirement, Medical Expenses
3	Health	Health Crisis, Terminal or Chronic Illness
4	Relationships	Divorce, Death of Spouse, Arguments with Friends, Loneliness
5	Poor Nutrition	Inadequate Nutrition, Caffeine, Processed Foods, Refined Sugars
6	Media Overload	Television, Radio, Internet, E-Mail, Social Networking
7	Sleep Deprivation	Inability to release adrenaline and other stress hormones

What is Your STRESS Response?

Making more money is not the only way to build financial security. Like everything in the universe there are equal and opposite parts.

The other half of finances is saving money. I have always been a smart shopper. Until a few years ago, I didn't realize what an important part of our financial security that was. By doing research for large purchases and buying things on sale, I was actually decreasing the out flow of money. This resulted in the incoming flow being more than the outgoing flow.

For many people shopping has become a habit, a distraction from a stressful life and even an addiction. The first step to saving money is to "Stop Shopping." Here's why; shopping reduces negative stress hormones by releasing positive hormones so it feels really great.



Unfortunately it's a temporary solution and soon will follow "buyer's remorse." Did you need another pair of shoes? Did you need another power tool? Did you need the newest mp3 player even though the other one still works? Do the kids really need another toy or game?

Pay attention to when you are shopping and ask if it is something you really need. Then ask yourself the most difficult question of all. What stress and emotions are happening in my life

right now that I need to deal with?

Put the items back on the shelf. Go home. Go for a walk and think about the stress and what you can do to handle it. Treat yourself to a bubble bath or time to read a magazine or book.

If you are unable to put the items back on the shelf, make sure you can get a full refund. Take your purchases home. Try everything on, and then put the bags in the closet.

The next day, once the shopping "high" is over, try everything on. Then, ask yourself do I really need this or is there something else I could put that money towards that would bring more joy into my life, like a vacation.

This will break the cycle of any unnecessary purchases and give you back power over your financial future!

You've just taken a major step towards financial security and changed a destructive stress reaction. You have also discovered some new, healthy ways to respond to stress. Good on you Mate!

By Wendy Collier B. Ed.



One Minute Stress Busters! FOR KIDS

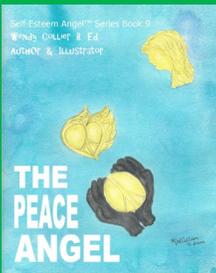
- * Just breathe! Pay attention to your breathing, many of us hold our breath or breathe very shallow when we are stressed.
- * Affirmations – say a positive phrase to yourself over and over and over: "I trust, I have faith."; "I am a good person."; "I am strong."; "And this too shall pass."; "I can handle this."
- * 10 deep breaths are not enough – breathe in through your nose, pause then blow out through your mouth expelling all the air and the negative energy goes with it, too.
- * Walk it off – down your hallway, up and down the stairs, around your block or park.
- * Stretch your neck, shoulders, legs, arms– it only takes a few to get your blood pumping which dilutes the stress hormone running through your throbbing veins.
- * Look up, look way up and ask... "Really?"
- * My favorite Power-UP! Question: "What can I DO to handle this?"
- * Look at the sky and the clouds passing by – there's a lesson in everything that happens.
- * Look at the photos of your family and friends.
- * Draw or trace a picture to engage your right brain.



By Wendy Collier B. Ed.



**Chocolate Goo-o-o-d,
Stress Baa-a-ad! Eat a
SMALL piece of choco-
late - it boosts your feel
good hormone
serotonin.**



Available Now!

The Self-Esteem Angel and Little Angel Madison test their landing skills as they embark on a journey to help Rose find and keep peace. The two Angels use some very interesting and creative ways to capture Roses' attention. As you journey through The Peace Angel you will hear how to overcome fear and worry as Rose and her Angel friends share their experiences and ideas. Little Angel Madison and Rose learned the skills to achieve peace-of-mind and now they are able to achieve their goals and dreams!

"Our family just loved the book The Peace Angel. The author uses real life examples of fear and worry and then gives great ideas to help you work through them. As a person that has suffered with worry I really wanted my children to have skills to live in peace. The Peace Angel made our entire family look at worries/fears in a whole new way. We have been able to work through things using the ideas in the book and we have ultimately achieved Peace!"
-JG

Follow the link below to buy THE PEACE ANGEL now!

[Amazon.com/The Peace Angel](https://www.amazon.com/The-Peace-Angel)

Paperback? If you'd like this book in paperback email us info@angelbooks.ca.

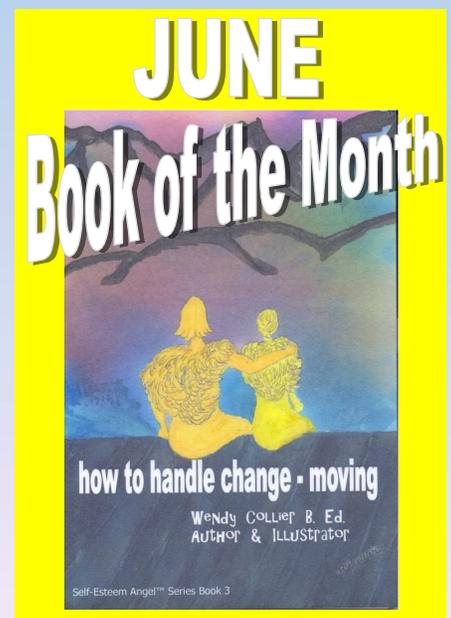


Would you like a spot of tea?

My personal plan for dealing with stress effectively:

- Make yourself a cup of chamomile tea; it has natural calming effects and no caffeine.
- Read anything you can put your hands on – book, magazine, back of the cereal box, this newsletter – it will get your brain focused on something else.
- Listen to music – better yet sing along even if you have to make the words up.
- There is power in the phrase “comfort food” – cook or bake something you enjoy.
- Clean (groan), organize a drawer, do laundry, anything around the house. I know it is hard to believe, but housework and fixing things around the house will help you feel productive and allow you time to process what's happened. I've recently started saying 'thank you' as I dust and appreciate my furniture.
- Plan a vacation to anywhere, even if you can't afford it right now. Look at photos of past vacations and recall the positive memories.
- Write in a journal – writing helps you clear your head of the circular thinking that happens when you are stressed and releases your emotions.
- Watch a comedy – make sure it makes you laugh out loud.
- Bubble baths are always a good way to wash away stress or soak in a bath with Epsom salts – the salts will ease the muscle strain in your neck and shoulders where we carry stress.
- Tell a friend or family member – talking it out releases the negative energy and can give you perspective.
- Do the lifestyle checklist and abundance book – every time we get back to doing this we always say “why do we ever stop?” Our week is 100 times better, it is truly amazing!
- Draw, paint or do crafts to give your mind a break, this engages your right brain.

By Wendy Collier B. Ed.



What's Causing YOU Stress at Work?



Tips on How to Handle IT

Job pressure is rated as the number one cause of stress in the US. Add to this that the number two cause is money, including loss of job and you have to think this is a really big issue for most people. So, what causes workplace stress and job pressure? There are many factors, some of which are obvious and some, not so much. These are not in any particular order and will be different for everyone.

You may not be suited to the job you have. All jobs have difficult and have less pleasant parts to them, but if you struggle every day to get out of bed and face your workday, then you may not be suited to the work you are doing. If this is the case, then it is time for a change. You may be able to find something more suitable within the company you are with or it may be time to move on altogether.

Improper or inadequate training will also cause extra stress as you will make unnecessary mistakes that are not your fault. This is something you will have to address with your boss. It is important to either get more on the job training, or attend courses or conferences to increase your knowledge and skills.

It may be that you have a poor boss. Not everyone is cut out to be a boss, even though they may hold that position. They may be overbearing, overly critical, not supportive of you, or even verbally abusive at times. This can be an extremely uncomfortable situation as it is something that you will need to address with that person, or even with that person's boss, depending on the situation. If it is a situation where you are being verbally abused, this is very serious and needs to be reported to your supervisor's boss. If it continues, then again it is time for a change. In cases where the boss is overbearing or you feel criticized, rather than coached then a conversation with your boss is appropriate. If this doesn't help, and you want to keep your job, then you may be able to limit your exposure to them by communicating through memos and e-mail.

Another major cause of stress is the fear of losing your job. This may be out of your control if the company is going through major downsizing and is cutting positions, or is being sold. In this case, you need as much information as you can get about the situation. You may be able to get assurances that your position is safe. If it appears that a job loss is in fact imminent, the sooner you know, the better prepared you can be to start looking for something new. In some cases, your fear may be unfounded and due more to a lack of confidence in your abilities. If this is the case, then open and frequent communication with your boss is in order. Ask for regular feedback on your performance, and pay close attention on your annual performance reviews.

Unreasonable job expectations can also cause major stress in the workplace. This could be a temporary situation where your department has lost key employees. In this case, open communication and regular review of job priorities with your boss is important. It could also be a more permanent situation, where the corporate culture is to keep a lot of pressure on their employees to do more with less. In this situation, you need to assess whether the extra stress is worth the compensation you receive.

If you feel you are being inadequately or unfairly compensated, this can be very stressful as well. Doing some research into what other companies are paying for similar duties will be a good starting point to determine how your compensation stacks up. If this shows that you are being underpaid, then you need to take your research and have a discussion with your boss to see if the company will change their compensation package. If you feel your coworkers are being paid more for the same work you are performing, again this needs to be addressed with your boss. If there are no good reasons (usually performance issues) for this discrepancy and the company won't make it right, then again it is time to start looking for another job.

Coworkers can be a major stressor as well. There are whole books written on this subject. The problems can range from simply having annoying coworkers that don't really do any harm, to the unacceptable situation of workplace bullying. The starting point is to try and get perspective on the situation and then come up with a solution.

Good luck and happy de-stressing!

By Kelly Collier CMA, B. Comm

Reason #701 to build your self-esteem:

So you'll have the courage to find your way through the health care system.