



HEALTHMASTERS 

A PREPARATION
GUIDE
FOR BUILDING UP
YOUR RESILIENCE
for the upcoming training session

jan 12th draft

THE RESILIENT MIND

...the key to reducing stress

FOUR WAYS TO BUILD RESILIENCE TO BE YOUR BEST SELF

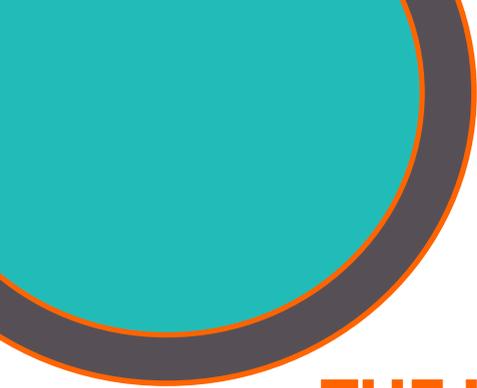
#1 **HEALTHY OR UNHEALTHY**
STRESS
DO YOU KNOW THE DIFFERENCE?

#2 **DE-ESCALATION – AN**
ADVANCED TECHNIQUE
to help calm you down

#3 **Reduce**
YOUR STRESSORS
by managing your desires

#4 **HOW REJUVENATION**
INCREASES OUR ABILITY TO
TOLERATE HARD STUFF





THE UPSIDE

and

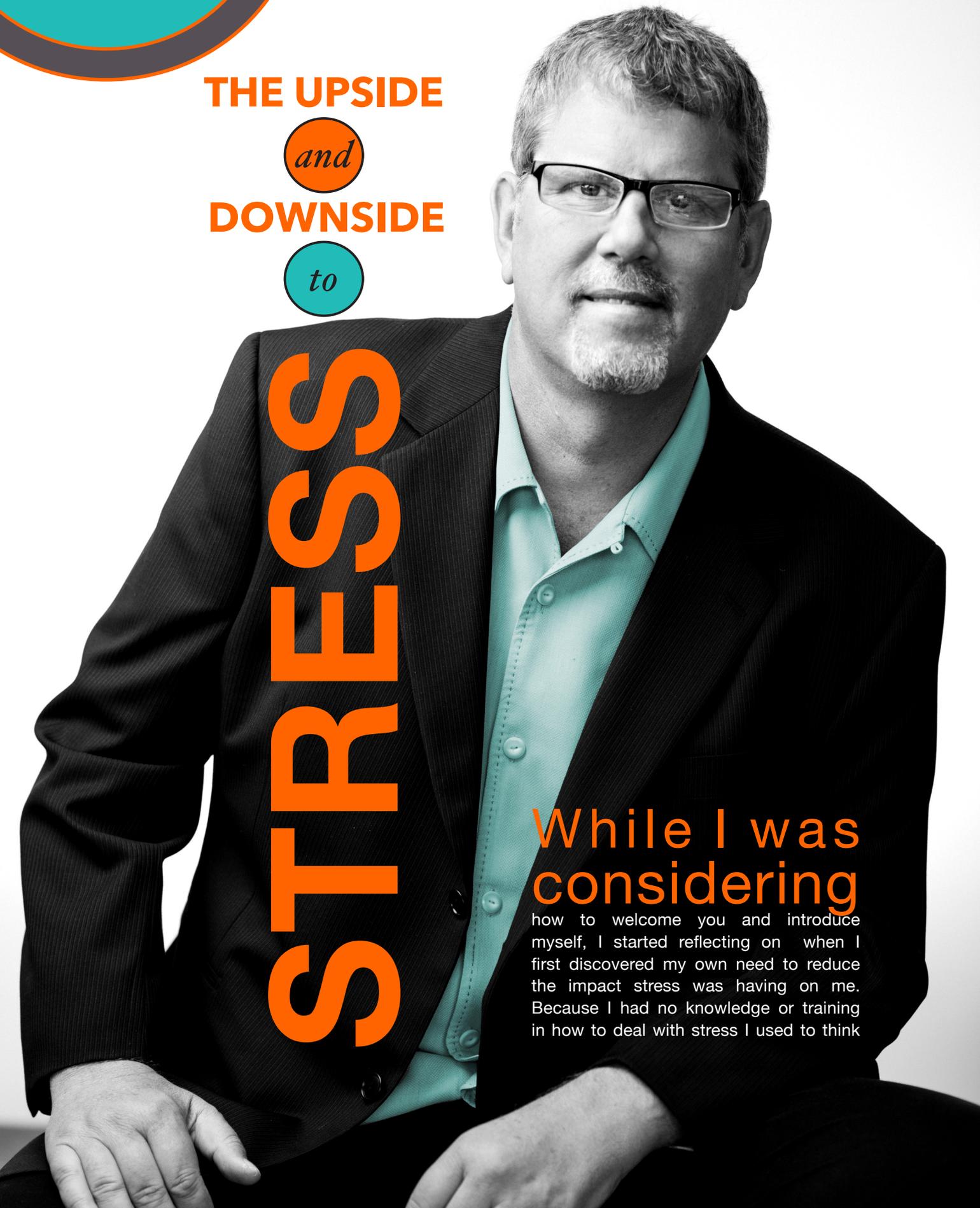
DOWNSIDE

to

STRESSES

While I was considering

how to welcome you and introduce myself, I started reflecting on when I first discovered my own need to reduce the impact stress was having on me. Because I had no knowledge or training in how to deal with stress I used to think



it was bad and caused by all the hard stuff in my life. So, I focused all my energy on trying to make my circumstances better, in hope of eliminating stress. But no matter how hard I tried, nothing worked. It got to the point where stress was affecting things like my mental health, relationships and work performance. I was becoming less tolerant and more irritable over the smallest things and eventually starting experiencing anxiety. I was becoming desperate. Looking back, this state of desperation became the catalyst that motivated me to reach out for help. It was the beginning of an important process for me.

Stress Free Fantasies:

Many people daydream about living a life absent from stress-i know i once did. But the reality is that stress walks beside us every moment of our lives. Yes, stress takes the occasional nap, but, like an eager-to-play toddler, it eventually awakens. One of the great ironies is that a stress-free life is incompatible with living. Still, it is possible to reduce the spike of pain that comes from stress. In the season of my life when I struggled with stress, I learned two fundamentals principles:

#1 STRESS HAS AN UPSIDE: Kelly McGonigal, and a team of stress experts at Stanford University, propose that, although we know unhealthy levels of stress can make us vulnerable to illness and relationship fractures, we fail to recognize that — in the right doses — stress can help us. McGonigal suggests that if we change our perception of a stressful event, we will not only reduce the pain that stress produces, but we'll also become more effective and boost our physical and psychological performance.

#2 RESILIENCE REDUCES STRESS: Resilience refers to our capacity to deal with hard stuff when it comes at us. We all know people who seem to keep their cool in hard times. The only difference between them and others is that they have greater resilience. The more resilience we have, the better able we are to avoid becoming overwhelmed and debilitated by the hard stress. So, build your resilience to reduce the impact of stress.

The Possibility of your succeeding at reducing unhealthy levels of stress depends on two key factors:

#1 Your readiness to change

#2 Whether you receive training and support to develop the new skills you need.

In the last decade, data collected from several thousand people who have taken The Resilient Mind Program show that almost any person — regardless of their situation — can learn how to reduce the impact that stress has on them, if they are ready to change and if they have the training. Our team is committed to providing you with the training and support using the most advanced research on managing stress, and when you couple this with your own readiness to change, you can be confident of success. Read on to discover what readiness to change consists of.

Sincerely

** Your Naked Trainer*

and the clinical team at Alive

** What's a Naked Trainer?*

Throughout history the greatest influencers have had a common trait: they experienced both great pain and success. The term Naked Trainer comes from Kim's life experiences of hardship and success and his ability to articulate them through his vulnerability. Our team at Health Masters is confident that Kim's 30 years in working to help people overcome hardship will help reduce the impact of stress in your life .

Build Resilience

A Readiness to Change Evokes a Growth Mindset

In the last decade the frontiers of brain science have been making significant claims about people's ability to change their beliefs and psychological functions which are at the root of stress. Prior to this a widespread societal belief was held that our brains were mostly hard wired: meaning like the color of our eyes, unable to change. The research of Dr Norman Doaish published in his book "The Brain That Changes Itself" gives numerous empirical evidences as to how people are succeeding at reversing the effects of stress, mental illness, addiction and other challenges.

Building resilience within our psychology has many similarities to weight loss, if you eat the right food and less of it, with a small amount of exercise, the body's response mechanism reacts and presto-weight loss occurs. Changing our psychological functions is typical to weight loss, if we commit to a process of training and support, success can be achieved. Yet the biggest obstacle is the commitment.

When our team began to study data from people who were succeeding at overcoming the negative effects of stress we discovered a key factor in these people was a readiness to change which created what experts called a growth Mindset.



I'm just beginning to learn how to build up my resilience—I can't believe I waited so long.



Resilience helped me have a healthier perception ABOUT STRESS

...to be your **best self**

The Power Of The Mindset

A mindset is a person's attitude towards themselves and others, the surrounding world and their belief that change for themselves is possible.

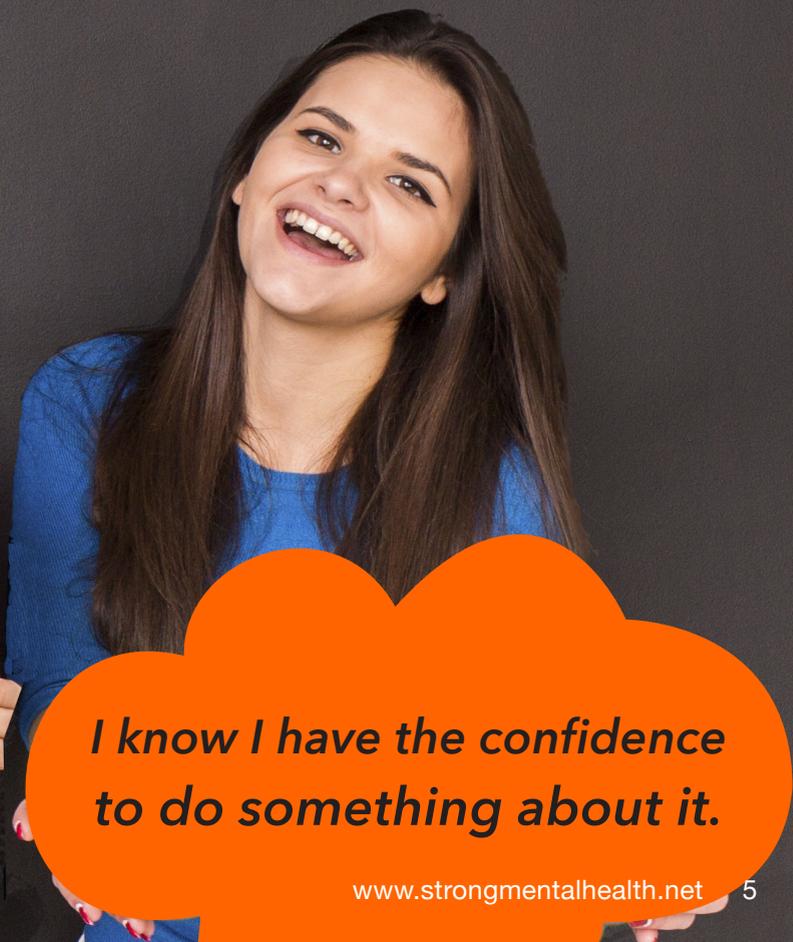
#1 Fixed Mindset: is a belief that change isn't possible or even needed. It limits a person's potential for growth and improving their lives. The fixed mindset becomes established in us for many reasons which we discuss in the next pages.

#2 Growth Mindset: is where change is seen as possible and beneficial. This person has the humility and courage to become teachable and receive feedback as they follow a system of training that works to begin the incremental process of changing their beliefs and perceiving situations differently.

Lets continue moving forward as you turn the page to evaluate your readiness to change.



After two months, I have
reduced my stress 27%.
I'm now going after more.



I know I have the confidence to do something about it.

HOW READY IS YOUR READINESS TO CHANGE?

To help you evaluate your readiness to change let's look into the life and day of 4 people who at one time had high stress levels but a low level of readiness to change, but for different reasons shifted themselves into a high a high level of readiness to change. See if you related to any of these:



BRENT's stress was at an all time high with emerging health issues and a growing relationship fracture in a new marriage. He was stuck in some issues at work that he could not get past and his wife's relationship with her mother was driving him crazy. He signed up for the Resilient mind program but missed the first session and did not trust the process. When interviewed he said that his stress was so high that he could not focus on the program. In 2015 his stress had grown to an even higher level, signed up for the program and this time demonstrated a higher level of readiness to change. When asked what made him ready here is what he said: i knew that i was hanging onto unhealthy perceptions and unhealthy attitudes towards people that i had to let go of-and i finally knew i was ready

WHAT STOPPED READINESS TO CHANGE: Blind spot to personal issues

WHAT BROUGHT ABOUT READINESS TO CHANGE: realization that he had to change his perceptions



SHIVANI new deep down she needed to join the Resilient Mind Program but her fear of looking past the surface of her stress stopped her. When asked if she would sign up for the telephone version using an alias name where you meet on a teleconference call with a group she reluctantly said yes. But as she went through the program her fear of the exercises kept her in a low state of readiness to change. The next time her employer offered the program she decided to call a Health Master counselor to learn why fear always seems to stop here from stepping and trying new things. After two sessions Shivani's readiness to change allowed her to make it through the full 7 weeks program successfully.

WHAT STOPPED READINESS TO CHANGE: Fear of change

WHAT BROUGHT ABOUT READINESS TO CHANGE: Gain awareness of fear by talking about it



AMMAR had high stress levels but every time it became unmanageable, he would just medicate his pain by smoking marijuana which immediately brought relief at least during the first two years. Then he found himself needing to smoke it more often and add alcohol to bring the same level of relief. When he attended The Resilient Mind with some co-workers his need to reduce his stress was not high because he found relief in the two substances. But later that year his employer started drug testing which catapulted him into a high state of readiness to change. He valued his job and wanted to keep it but knew if he were to quit using he would have to learn new skills to deal with stress.

WHAT STOPPED READINESS TO CHANGE: The use of Pot and alcohol

WHAT BROUGHT ABOUT READINESS TO CHANGE: Fear of losing his job



JUDY was raised in a house where high stress was the norm. Both parents demonstrated a high level of stress all through her youth and even as an adult. So when she went through the Resilient Mind program the first time she never had a mis-believe that she could ever imagine living a life free from stress. Her parents and siblings all seemed to use a get-tough-and-suck-it-up approach to dealing with stress. So throughout the process she doubted any of the skills could help her. Then one day one of her children brought home a piece of art and it showed mom's face red and when she asked why red, her daughter said cause you always stressed-and her husband agreed with her. After talking to the Health Master counselors she was evoked to learning to become less stressed in fear that she would pass this down to her kids as her parents gave it to her.

WHAT STOPPED READINESS TO CHANGE: Could not believe change for herself was possible

WHAT BROUGHT ABOUT READINESS TO CHANGE: Seeing her children and husband suffer

WHAT BENEFITS WOULD CHANGE BRING

Think about how your life would be better if you were less stressed. Check the boxes of those items related to stress that you would notice improvements in if you were able to reduce your stress level:

When you see the positive differences in your life that will happen once you make lasting change happen, your commitment level to this process will increase, and your success rate will skyrocket. Focus on what you will be gaining, and the time and energy you will be investing in a better life will motivate you to continue the journey. Soon, you too will be a 'Stress Master!'

#1 Physical Symptoms:

- Fewer Headaches
- Fewer stomach issues
- Less muscle tightness or pain
- More energy
- Better sleep

#2 Cognitive Symptoms:

- Better focus & concentration
- Increased creativity
- Regaining sense of humor
- Better decision-making
- Fewer mistakes at work

#3 Emotional Symptoms:

- Decreased anxiety
- Decreased tearfulness
- Increase in happiness
- Decreased annoyance
- Increased patience level

#4 Behavioral Symptoms:

- Decreased smoking/drinking/eating
- Decreased arguing
- Decreased criticizing
- Increased productivity at home
- Increased activity levels

#5 Write down how you perceive your readiness to change:

IN THE FOLLOWING PAGES LETS REVIEW

4 INITIATIVES TO REDUCE STRESSES IMPACT:

- #1 Healthy or Unhealthy stress...do you know the difference
- #2 De-escalate...an advanced technique to help calm you down
- #3 Reduce your stressors by Managing your desires
- #4 How Rejuvenation increases your ability to self care

HEALTHY OR UNHEALTHY STRESS

DO YOU KNOW THE DIFFERENCE?

STRESS IS THE BODY AND MIND'S WAY OF RISING TO TO THE CHALLENGE.

Although we may not know how it actually works, on a personal level, we know what stress is. It's one of those "I know it when I see it" sort of things. Typically, we ignore or avoid our stress. Then something tough happens. That's when we become aware of stress: when we feel overwhelmed.

This doesn't have to be so, though. We can learn to minimize the painful effects of stress. We can even use it as an ally to help improve our lives.

LET'S CONSIDER TWO THINGS:

- 1) A stressor is a situation or an event, such as a traffic jam or barking dog...while stress is actually your response to that situation or event.
- 2) In the right amounts, stress is a positive and motivating force that gives you that boost you need to perform your best. Alternatively, too much stress makes us anxious, angry, and exhausted...unable to perform at all.

Imagine Wile E. Coyote, a stressor, chasing the Road Runner. The stress response is the release of energy-producing hormones and more blood-flow to the muscles in the Road Runner's body. If not for this stress response, the Road Runner wouldn't be able to outrun the coyote. And we all know what will happen if Wile E. catches the Road Runner.

When we experience the right amount of stress, we feel energized, ready to accomplish great things. Our goal in life shouldn't be to get rid of stress. Instead, we want to create a life filled with the right amount of stress. Too much of anything isn't good.

The graph on the top of the next page shows our relationship with stress. To feel our best, do our best, we need certain amounts of stress in our lives. Although the optimal amount of stress may be different for each of us, stress affects us all the same.

All stressors, whether seen as being good e.g. getting a promotion, or seen as bad e.g. getting laid off, increase our stress levels. True, some things feel more stressful than others, but it's the cumulative effect that determines if we move into the Unhealthy Stress zone.

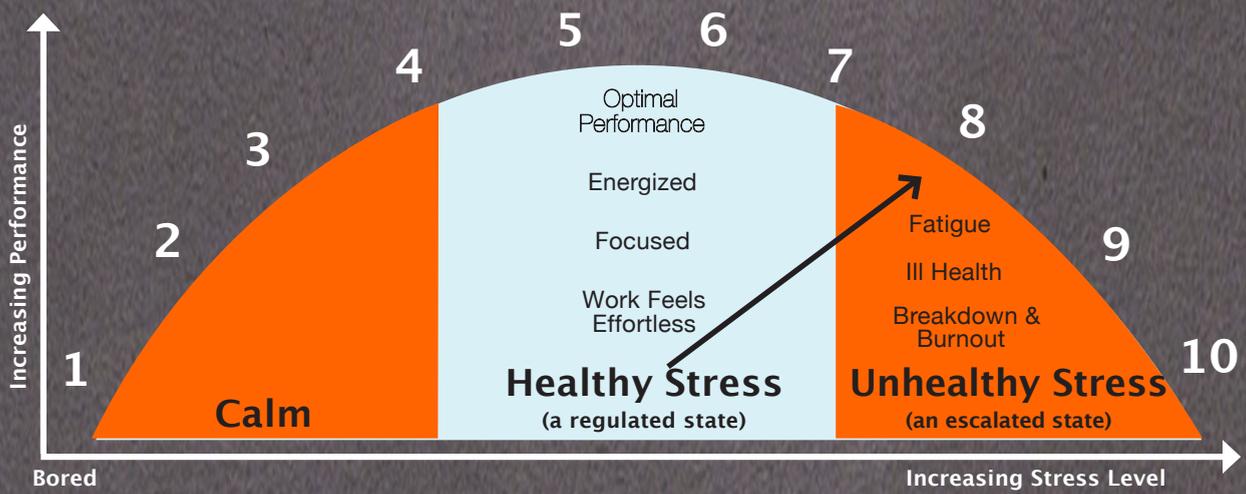
If we experience too much stress, we may move into the "Unhealthy Stress" zone. When we're in this area, we feel overwhelmed. Remaining there can be physically unhealthy. If we can, we try to return to a healthy level of stress by engaging in things that reduce our stress. (which we will learn in the lessons)

You might think that being stress free would be a good thing. Consider the left side of the curve, however. It's clear that a completely stress free life would leave you bored and unmotivated. Think of waking up in the morning—no one is at their best at that moment. So we drink some coffee and begin thinking of the day ahead or watch the news. In other words, we engage in activities that move us into the Healthy Stress zone. That's when we're ready to take on the world.

The key to handling stress is knowing that healthy and unhealthy stress are two sides of the same coin. But it isn't a coin we want to flip and leave the outcome to chance. Stress is the body and mind's way of rising to its peak performance. Such knowl-

edge eliminates chance and minimizes stress' impact on you. Furthermore, increased awareness of what's going on can alert us when our levels of stress are moving closer to the Unhealthy Stress zone. This awareness can play an important part in taking important steps in reducing our stress. After all, how can you change something if you aren't aware that there is something needing changing?

The Yerkes–Dobson Human Performance and Stress Curve



THIS GRAPH represents our relationship with stress. To feel our best, do our best, we need certain amounts of stress in our lives. Although the optimal amount of stress may be different for each of us, stress affects us all the same.

When I first compared the stress I was experiencing to this scale, I made a deliberate decision to make changes in my life.

The second method to reducing stress is

DE-ESCALATION – AN ADVANCED TECHNIQUE to help calm you down

When things begin to pile on us, e.g. our spouse begins placing demands on us at the same time that our employer is placing demands on us...and we still have all of those other things that have to have to be done, the resulting stress can escalate us, moving us much closer to the Unhealthy Stress zone. We may, even, find ourselves in the Unhealthy Stress zone. This is perfectly normal. It's part of being a human being.

When my caveman ancestor found himself face-to-face with that sabre-tooth tiger, I can guarantee you that he got pretty escalated. But getting escalated helped him stay focused and, because of energy-boosting hormones, have the energy to execute an effective escape plan... something that he apparently was successful at or I wouldn't be here sharing these thoughts.

Becoming escalated and moving into the Unhealthy Stress zone isn't the problem. It's when we spend the bulk of our time there, or, even worse, we remain there—that's problematic. There is no compelling reason why we need to spend a lot of time in an escalated state. All we need to do is to de-escalate and return to a regulated state i.e. the Healthy Stress zone.

If you want to minimize the time spent in the Unhealthy Stress zone, the first step is to visualize your life as such. Achieving that life, however, is a process. Change doesn't happen overnight. It takes commitment. It requires a change in how you see and respond to the stressors in your life. This takes time. It may also mean falling flat a few times. But, with practice, with dedication, with time, you can learn the skills needed to de-escalate and make them second nature.

Before learning to de-escalate, there are two things that need to be incorporated into the process:

- + You need to **BELIEVE** that de-escalation is possible. This may be your biggest challenge. You may believe that it's normal to go through life in an escalated state. It's not. Do you believe there's nothing that you can do about your stressful feelings. Not true. If my caveman ancestor hadn't de-escalated, he would have eventually found himself weakened and vulnerable to predators. Everyone on this planet can learn to de-escalate.
- + You need to become **AWARE**. We are always moving around



Becoming skilled at de-escalating was slow at first—but today it's become a great asset to my mental well-being.

on that curve in Figure A. You need to become sensitive to when you are moving out of a regulated state. By becoming aware of changes in your stress levels, you will be able to begin using de-escalation techniques when you find yourself moving into the Unhealthy Stress zone.

The following techniques are simple in concept. They redirect your attention away from the stress and work at reversing your stress response so that you don't feel overwhelmed or out of control. Thousands of people have learned to use these tools effectively. In fact, a recent study demonstrated that there was an 82% success rate of returning to a regulated state from an escalated state when using these techniques. Remember, though, it will take time, practice, patience, and commitment.

- 1. CHECK-INS:** Social support systems have, for a long time, been determined to be effective at helping reduce one's level of experienced stress. Turning to an empathetic friend or a Health Master Mentor can help you de-escalate in two ways: 1) It allows you to vent that excess energy instead of keeping it bottled up inside; 2) Your friend or Mentor can help you to look at your stressor from another perspective. As you learn to be aware of your own level of stress, regular check-ins can help you develop that awareness and, perhaps, help you begin reducing your stress before it becomes overwhelming.
- 2. ABRAHAM'S BREATHING:** Focusing and controlling your breathing is one of the quickest and most powerful ways to re-center yourself. It is a preliminary step to meditation, prayer, rhythmic breathing, and plays an important role in exercising like cardio.
CLICK THIS LINK TO WATCH A VIDEO.
- 3. CARDIO:** Research has been demonstrating the connection between physical activity and mental health. Engaging in physical activity can play a major role in maintaining good mental health. As a technique for de-escalation, cardio activity, e.g. walking, jogging, swimming, bicycling, etc., can be extremely effective by: 1) Enabling you to vent excessive emotion and energy; 2) Shift your thoughts away from the stressor and to your body, i.e. the here and now.
- 4. MEDITATION/PRAYER:** Meditation and prayer have been used for thousands of years throughout the world. Clearing one's mind, shutting off that nagging voice, is a sure way of helping you to de-escalate.

Note: there are many other ways to reduce stress but in the group sessions we will focus on mastering these four

#3

Reduce

YOUR STRESSORS

BY MANAGING YOUR DESIRES

BETTER
MARRIAGE?

NEW CAR?

LOSE WEIGHT?

By focusing on more realistic goals I had fewer unmet desires and less stress.

EARN
MORE
MONEY?

NEW HOUSE?



When we are feeling

overwhelmed and stressed out, what's actually going on inside of us? Many times, our emotions and our feelings of stress are interconnected. Have you ever wondered where our emotions come from? Emotions are often rooted in our desires. Desires are powerful motivators. They are things that we want to have happen in our lives, but we don't fully control. This can cause us stress. When we understand the link between our desires and our stress, we can begin the process of reducing many of the stressors we have in our lives.

Let's begin by accepting the fact that we can't exist without desires. When we wake up, feeling groggy, we want a shower and a cup of coffee. Those "wants" are desires. If we're so depressed that we want to crawl into a hole and hide, that's still a desire! When our desires are met, we generally experience pleasant emotions. But unmet desires can be sources of stress, moving us toward the Unhealthy Stress zone.

This stress, however, is self-made. It is a result of having desires that can't be met at this time. Perhaps they can never be met. When we acknowledge that we hold unreasonable desires, ones that can't be fulfilled, a powerful secret is revealed. By identifying these unmet desires that act as stressors in our lives, we can take steps to change them into realistic goals which can be met. And the great thing about this is that not only do we reduce our stress, but we get the bonus of experiencing greater amounts of pleasant emotions.

Check out how your desires have the power to reduce stress or increase it.

Jeff, a salesperson, needs to land an account to get a promotion he wants. On Friday, when his month-end report is due, he's also giving a presentation to a potentially big client. Jeff has two desires that are competing for his energy: 1) He desires to make the sale to get the promotion; 2) He desires to be a good employee and get his report done. Jeff realizes that, because of his limited resources if one desire is met, the other one will be unmet. Jeff decides to focus on realistic goals. He talks to his boss, admitting that, in the limited time, he can't simultaneously do both successfully. His manager lets Jeff defer his monthly report for a week. Jeff is now able to finish the presentation and practice it with a work colleague. He's feeling confident, prepared, and his stress level has decreased.

Jennifer is a single mother of two and works at a nursing home. Her mom, who usually watches the kids during the day, has been having some health problems recently. Each morning, Jennifer feels stressed because she doesn't know if her mom will be up for babysitting and Jennifer can't afford to miss shifts. She desires reliable child-care, but she can't afford full-time daycare. Realizing it's not fair to rely on her mom for babysitting all of the time, Jennifer focuses on some realistic goals. Exploring various options, she makes arrangements with her neighbor to watch the kids when her mom isn't feeling well enough. Also, the community centre daycare has drop-in space for when Jennifer's mom and neighbor aren't available. Jennifer's early morning stress has been reduced.

Becoming aware of our desires, and admitting the limitations of our resources to fulfill those desires, is the first step to setting realistic goals. These realistic goals are ones that we can control. Try it yourself - you have only your stress to lose!

HOW REJUVENATION INCREASES OUR ABILITY TO TOLERATE HARD STUFF

Each day when we awaken, we begin to take on the world. We go about engaging in our daily tasks as well as whatever else might be thrown our way. All this activity uses and consumes our pool of resources.

Unfortunately, this pool isn't infinite. With the passing day, the amount of resources at our disposal begins to diminish. The more activities we engage in, the greater the decline in our resources. This decline can be accelerated by activities that use large amounts of our resources. Toxic things, e.g. a fight early in the morning with your partner, are particularly huge drains upon our resources. The more the resources at our disposal are drained away, the less likely we will be successful at doing what we need to do. This decline in performance can be a source of stress itself. Also, as the resource pool dries up, we become more susceptible to stressful events.

Fortunately, these resources are a renewable commodity. By engaging in some practical, simple-to-do behaviors, we can reduce the rate at which the pool drains. We can also easily and quickly rejuvenate...and even increase...our resource supply. All we need to do, using the parlance of our grandparents, is to live right.

If we consistently practice these rejuvenating behaviors, we can increase our capacity for handling stress. Let's face it: stress is a part of our lives. The greater our capacity, the more stress we can handle without worrying about moving into the Unhealthy Stress zone.



Engaging in more self-care, increased my capacity to deal with life's challenges.

...continue to page 15

Each of these initiatives have been tried and tested TO EVOKE REJUVENATION:



EXERCISE:

We have known for a long time about the relationship between physical health and exercise. The more that you exercise, the greater your reserves for engaging in physical activity. The fact is, regular exercise is not only good for venting the excess energy that comes with stress, it is a great way for increasing our capacity to handle stress.



REST:

Although there are individual differences, adults need approximately 6–8 hours of sleep each day. Research indicates that most adults get far less sleep than is needed. Not only is sleep important, but so is taking restful breaks. Our ancestors did not get up early in the morning and go full tilt until bedtime. They took breaks to rejuvenate. Rest, whether it is sitting quietly, calming one's thoughts, or it's actual sleep, plays a critical part in "recharging our batteries."



PROPER DIET:

The old adage is "we are what we eat." If we eat garbage, well, what do we expect our lives to turn out to be? A good diet is critical in maintaining adequate energy levels.



PRACTICE SPIRITUAL ACTIVITY:

Anybody can engage in this. In its most general sense, this means living a life that is connected with the world around you. It means smelling the flowers in the gardens you pass on the way to work. It means hearing the bees buzz, seeing the birds fly, watching the squirrel run up the tree. Practicing spiritual activity means reaching out with your heart and your mind and connecting with the life surrounding you and with the earth beneath you. It means, instead of struggling against the world, you practice dancing with the world.



CONNECT WITH PEOPLE:

Even though significant, close relationships have been shown to play a sizeable role in reducing stress, more superficial relationships show benefits as well. In other words, even joining a bowling league can help you rejuvenate. Although significant others can help us regulate ourselves and engage in healthy practices, there is a direct benefit from being socially connected. It's just good for us and can be a powerful source for rejuvenation.

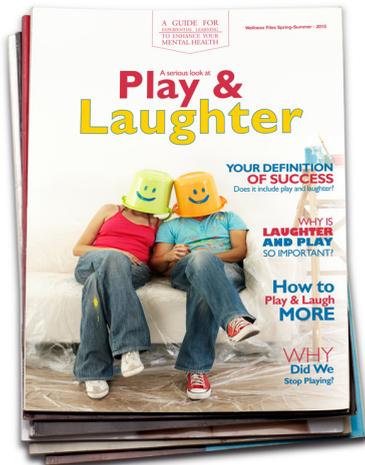
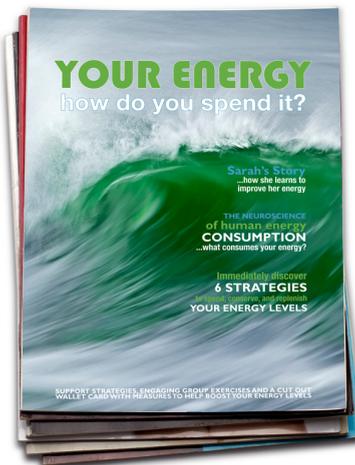
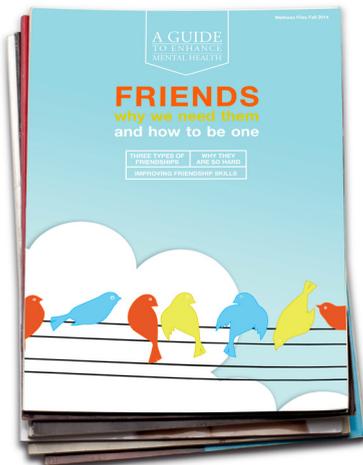
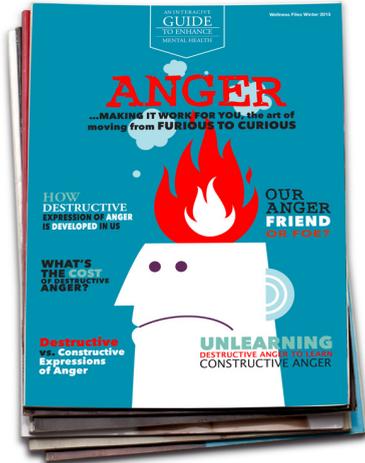
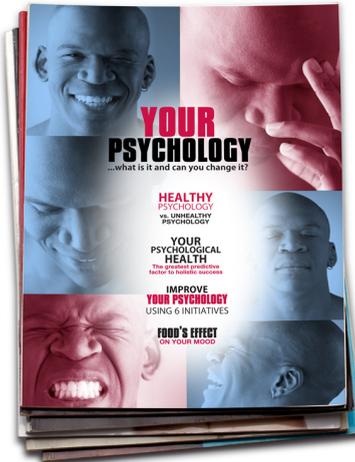
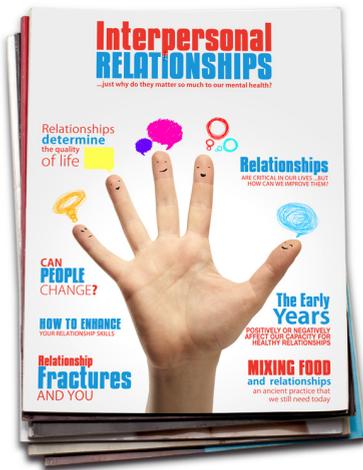


REDUCE SCREEN TIME:

The technology of the 20th and 21st centuries have created a remarkable world. There are so many benefits, e.g. educational, recreational, etc., that technology has given us. But too much of anything can be bad. Too many people spend too many hours in front of a screen. The bright light, the television shows, the games, all of that electronic activity results in overstimulation, draining our resources and interfering with our ability to get a good night's rest. Limiting the time in front of the screen can be a remarkable source of rejuvenation.

RELATED RESOURCES TO BUILD YOUR RESILIENCE

Building-up and maintaining resilience should be high on your list of values. What you value, you will maintain. Commit to reading these other guides located at www.strongmentalhealth.net/our-product/



REACH OUT: 25% of people who take the resilient mind program reach out to a Health Master counselor. To learn more how a counselor can help you visit: www.strongmentalhealth.net/support.

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