

Welcome to Day 1 to lessen stress

Start with understanding stress, and the basic A-B-C way to react to stress

What is stress?

In science, it is how much load (weight) a structure can hold without breaking. Emotionally, for us, that means how much we can handle emotionally, although that is hard to measure. Jesus used the term burdens and wants to help us with our load (Matthew 11:28)

What causes stress?

Inner and out pressures that pull on us cause stress. The causes are called stressors, while stress refers to our emotional reaction, especially unmet needs or situations out of our control.

If you want some free help, please join this email sequence and you will receive free information every few days. This will include how to be aware of stressors, different ways to respond, tips to reduce stress, stress busters, self pep talks, action steps, and ideas to change your perspective/attitude.

Not all stress is the same. Some stress can even be good for you. Understand the different types.

There are four main types of stress

1. **Eustress** is good for us. It is a positive reaction to stressors that motivates a person. It releases adrenaline and noradrenaline hormones. For example, thirst motivates a person to get a drink.
2. **Distress** is a negative reaction of trying to create a balance. A person needs to convert distress to eustress or use techniques to cope with distress. A person can change the stress of a job loss into a challenge to seek a better career.
3. **Hypertress** is an excessive amount of stress that causes harm, often in physical illness such as hypertension, anger, rage, depression, grief, or fatigue.
4. **Hypostress** is too little stress when a person is unchallenged and bored. This can lead to low self-esteem and depression. If life is too easy a person may spend hours watching mindless TV shows.

Be aware of your responses to stressors

- Physical responses, such as trouble breathing, butterflies, or desire to flee
- Self-talk that is defeating or increases stress
- Tension build-ups
- Interpersonal conflict reactions

Stressors are what triggers tensions, like an alarm going off, jolting us to respond. Stressors should make us

Pause,

Pray, and

Plan strategies to cope

ABC reaction to stressors

Develop a habit of recognizing stressors and then calm down and think before reacting.

Acknowledge the problem

Break it down

Change it to a goal (eustress) to turn it from a problem to a challenge.

Think of one step toward reaching the goal. Try it

What is one thing stressing you now?

Break it down

1. What are the problems within that stress such as what is needed to fix it?

2. What emotions is it causing, and what is someone doing to create or add to the stress?

For example, my day of many breakdowns, goals included staying calm and trusting God that it can all be fixed, getting a new car battery, cleaning up the mess, fixing the toilet, and redirecting children to a different bathroom. And possibly showing children how to avoid overflowing the toilet.

Change the stress to a goal

For each part of the stress such as a broken toilet, you can change it to a goal. That would be to repair it. Then list what is needed to reach the goal, including if you need to find someone to help fix it, or check online on how to do it yourself. Then take action.

Do one step toward reaching the goal.

Then do another and another until the problem is solved.

If you cannot solve something that day, choose to accept it will take time and plan workarounds like making sure everyone can get to a working toilet.