

## Appendix C

### De-stressing Ourselves

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### Stress...Nature-Nurture Integration

How’s your cortisol doing? Stress (distress) and cortisol are virtually synonymous and cortisol can be found coursing through our veins in every organ in the body. It has been shown<sup>1</sup> that stress, whether real or imagined, increases the level of cortisol in the body, which results in a reduced immune system response to disease by reducing the number, activity and life of lymphocytes, which fight disease.

Technically, here’s how it seems to work. Sensory information and memories trigger emotions and rational reactions that cause the hypothalamus to send a signal to the adrenal cortex that triggers the CYP17 gene to produce an enzyme that converts cholesterol to cortisol. Cortisol then switches on the TCF gene, which produces a protein that suppresses interleukin-2 (a chemical that makes white blood cells ever-vigilant for germs), thus reducing the lymphocytes and making us more susceptible to disease. There’s short-term cortisol stress (momentary increases in cortisol) caused by natural primary emotional reactions. There’s long-term cortisol stress (cortisol build-up over time) leading to an unhealthy state of distress, which we need to control—but how?

One would assume that if we reduce our cortisol buildup we could reduce our stress and avoid distress. We might also assume that if we reduce our

cholesterol we could reduce the amount available to make cortisol. Unfortunately, cholesterol is plentiful and available to the genome responsible for manufacturing cortisol—the *body* is in control.

Sensory information that triggers memories that cause emotional reactions affects the level of cortisol in the body. Since we can't trigger emotions without learned emotional memories stress is learned—the *mind* is in control.

In reality, the entire stress/distress cortisol syndrome is a coordinated effort by the entire body and mind to deal with life and has no central control. Thus, to reduce stress that can build up to distress, the best thing to do is avoid the kind of things that create distress, which can be classified into three types of stress.

### Three Types of Stress

When we encounter the normal amount of daily stress, our reactions involve our total natural personality: learned plus genetic, emotional plus rational. If excessively stressed, called distress, we become a “prisoner of our strongest style and emotion.” This makes us act inappropriately in most situations and causes pain and suffering for everyone around us. The bottom line is “if we don't reduce our stress we won't be able to finesse our personality to get the most out of life.”

*Normal* stress gives us the drive to do what we don't want to do, for example, the stress of meeting deadlines with our decisive director style. Distress just gets in the way of what we want out of life, for example, when we have a regretful angry outburst that upset our loved ones. Most stresses are minor and subside immediately or within a reasonable period. For example, remember the last time you bumped your “funny bone,” causing intense physical stress that quickly faded away; or the last time somebody cut you off, causing mental stress that quickly faded away. Examples of long lasting daily stress are: virus infections, setbacks at work and financial problems. There are also very profound stresses, for example, the loss of a family member through relocation, disability or death.

Stress is simple to understand; yet vast and complicated when we try to get a handle on it. Actually, stress and distress are simple to understand since 95 percent of it involves three principles:

- ❖ There are three types of stress: *mental*, *chemical* and *physical*.
- ❖ Stress is cumulative, becoming distress when excessive.
- ❖ Stress is genetic—distress is learned.

*Mental* stress is anything emotionally or rationally conceived that adversely affects our health and well being. *Chemical* stress comes from the foods we eat and drink and the contaminated air we breathe. *Physical* stress comes from invading organisms, physical injury or anything that affects the body that is neither mental nor chemical in nature. The three stress categories are broad and each can have many subcategories, but they are adequate to identify *your* stress, allowing you to reduce it for a calmer, more fulfilled, better finessed life with those you love.

## Our “Stress Bucket” and “Stress-O-Meter”

There are many books on stress and distress and how to deal with them; this appendix cannot replace that wealth of experience and information. This appendix can though, make you aware of the stressors in *your* life; that conscious awareness can help you reduce them.

The most important aspect of stress is that it's cumulative; we accumulate stress (and thus cortisol) throughout the day. Naturally accumulated mental, chemical and physical stresses appear and disappear momentarily, making us more or less distressed from moment to moment to deal with life as nature intended. We can think of stress as accumulating in a "Stress Bucket"—we fill this stress bucket with mental, chemical and physical stress throughout the day, week or year, even throughout our lives. Most of our stressors are natural, coming and going as needed, but some are chronic, such as a chronic disease, permanent physical injury or strong negative emotional memories—these keep the stress bucket mostly full. When the stress bucket *overflows*, we become distressed and are susceptible to mental and physical illnesses. We can never empty our stress bucket, but we can keep it from overflowing by identifying and reducing our stressors.

For example, if we have allergies we must avoid the foods or environments we're allergic to. If we are distressed because we have little money and many bills to pay, we need to have a brighter outlook, assume all will be well, and think of ways to generate that money instead of being distressed over not having it. If we are stressed from lack of sleep we should take a nap or get a few long nights of uninterrupted sleep—this seems too simple, but it works!

We should try to reduce our stress as much as possible, to keep our stress bucket from overflowing. We can alleviate certain types of mental, chemical and physical stress within a matter of minutes or hours; some stresses require days or weeks to alleviate. Some stressors, such as rehabilitation from a severe accident or illness, may require months to alleviate. And some stressors such as the loss of a family member take years to alleviate.

Prolonged distress shows up in the use of our strongest style, followed by a physical or mental breakdown. We all have though, a built-in "Stress-O-Meter" that alerts us to pending distress, we just need to determine what it is. For example, before I gained control over my stressors I had a four-step Stress-O-Meter. 1) When my stress bucket was full, I excessively used my strong director style. 2) As my stress bucket started to overflow, my sinuses stuffed up along with the excessive use of my director style. 3) As my stress bucket overflowed, my jaw joint (TMJ) became painful along with the stuffy sinuses and excessive use of my director style. 4) If my stress bucket were gushing, I would get eczema along with TMJ pain, stuffy sinuses and the excessive use of my director. My natural Stress-O-Meter helped me to realize that I needed to back off, appraise the situation, identify, and reduce my stressors.

We all have our own Stress-O-Meter; we just have to figure out what it is. For example, I have a friend who first shows excessive use of her strongest socializer style, then experiences eczema, then stuffy sinuses and finally colitis. Another friend shows only excessive use of her analyzer style when becoming distressed and then shows a twitch in her right eyelid when her stress bucket is gushing. Another friend shows excessive use of his director style at first and then a red patch on his forehead when distressed. We are all different and our family and friends can probably help us determine our unique Stress-O-Meter.

Once aware of our distress through excessive use of our strongest style or physical manifestations, we can identify our mental, physical, and chemical stressors and then alleviate them. This will cause our stress bucket to stop overflowing and allow us to take control of our personality and our physical and mental health.

Since we all have a certain level of cortisol in our system, some more than others, we go through life with a partially full stress bucket and increase or decrease our bucket's level throughout the day, overflowing it at times and causing distress. The stress filling our bucket is sometimes obvious, but it can be insidious. Unlike obvious stress, such as financial disaster, insidious stress can creep up on us and take control without our realizing it. These insidious "little stresses" include: being cut off on the ride to work; the rude wait-person at lunch; that slight pain in our lower back; the tuna fish sandwich that we're sensitive to; the boss wanting to see us, but we don't know why; and the countless other little everyday stresses that fill up our stress bucket and cause it to overflow.

But, as long as we know that, our stress bucket is continuously filling and emptying throughout the day with large and small stresses we can monitor that stress accumulation with our Stress-O-Meter and do something about it before it becomes distress.

Listed below are examples of the three types of stress. The list is by no means exhaustive, but it does identify our daily stressors. At the end of each physical, mental and chemical stress section there is a place to list *your* prioritized physical, mental and chemical stresses. Knowing your most common stresses in each category is very important since they mostly fill your stress bucket daily. Thus, when your stress bucket overflows, you can identify and reduce the stresses affecting you, resulting in a happier and healthier life.

## Identifying Our *Mental* Stressors

Mental stress is any stress created by a rational thought or emotional outburst; the most common mental stresses are:

**Pecking order:** Having others ordered us about is the most stressful thing in our lives as one study<sup>1</sup> conclusively shows. Thus, the more people we have above us (parents, bosses, etc.) having a say in what we do the more distressed we will have, especially if we are strong directors or if we are using our director style. We could work for ourselves, but then our customers would be our bosses. The only way to get around this is to stay connected (avoid disconnection) with our bosses. This will reduce the implication that they are not happy with our work; and when they are, they will constructively tell us so that we can respond in an appropriate manner. Refer to Appendix D and Chapter 4 to better understand this concept.

**Financial:** This is the most common type of mental stress, especially for analyzers. Although it is usually short-term stress, lasting days to months it can be devastating if we have many financial obligations and few financial resources. Lack of financial wherewithal cuts to the very core of our being by denying us the life-style we covet. If we are having problems paying our bills or living the kind of life we desire, we are probably experiencing this type of mental stress. Think about a time in your life when you experienced financial distress, how devastating it seemed at the time and how much it distressed you, even though it was eventually resolved. If you can balance your assets with your liabilities, as discussed in Chapter 6, you can get around this type of distress.

**Personal Loss:** This is a devastating type of long-term mental stress: it refers to the loss of a loved one, through death, divorce or abandonment. When it occurs, we go through numerous stages of loss, usually over a two-year period, before this stress subsides. If we experience this loss at a very young age, through the loss of one or both parents, we can be scarred *emotionally* for life, living our lives with an overflowing stress bucket. Personal loss may also include possessions, such as the loss of savings/investments, a car, home, etc. If you have experienced this kind of loss, think about it and how much it distresses you; should it happen again, try to avoid thinking about its consequences and say to yourself “that’s life; no guarantees!”

**Obligations:** This kind of stress drives us to complete tasks we promise or are paid to complete, but find it difficult to complete. We experience this stress all day long, from minor obligations, such as promising to pick up something at the market, to completing a complicated time-consuming project for our boss or client. Reflect upon your daily obligations, the stress they cause and what you might realistically do to better schedule yourself to resolve them and avoid stressing yourself.

**Family:** There is always natural conflict between the many personality patterns within a family (see Chapter 10 on compatibility) that we can't avoid. For example, it's difficult for parents not to be authoritative and discipline their children when required. It's difficult for children not to be jealous of each other and vie for their parent's attention. It's difficult for parents to deal with the constant noise, bickering, mess, loss of sleep and lack of personal time when rearing children. This is all part of being in a family and it *is* stressful. If we recognize these stresses as they occur and put them in perspective, we can lessen their stress and improve our family life. If you have a family, you are well aware of these stresses, but you might want to think about the ones that stress you the most and try to get past them through understanding and compromise. It also helps to use "The Relationship Game" in Appendix-D.

**Male-Female:** This is one of the oldest types of stress. Today it is fueled by the many publications we read, TV shows we view, and friends we have with unsatisfying relationships with the opposite sex. Whether male or female we all want the same things out of life. We all want love and we all want to be respected for ourselves and what we accomplish, nothing more and nothing less. But we don't always get what we want, which causes us to blame it on the opposite sex. If we are having relationship problems, we are probably experiencing this type of stress—as we mature it tends to lessen. Think about your relations with the opposite sex. If they distress you, you need a more realistic perspective on how to positively interact with the opposite sex—a better self-image would help.

**Self-Image:** This type of stress occurs when we don't love and respect ourselves. If you feel such stress, seek out those who can help you feel better about yourself and avoid those who don't. Many believe that if we know that our parents love us that we will have a good self-image and that if we think they don't, we won't. This is not easy to think about, for many of us

feel that they do love us—well maybe. The fact is your parents always did and always will love you, whether connected or disconnected!

**Excitement:** This refers to the good stress we feel when things go very well for us and we are "on top of the world." We are very emotional and excited at such times and "don't know what to do with ourselves." This hidden stress overflows our stress bucket making us only use our strongest style, which may negate the joys we are experiencing. For example, if our strongest style is director we may become arrogant, alienating those around us thus destroying our excitement. It is important to realize that when we are in a highly excited state of mind that it is stressful and can backfire on us. Think of the last time you were very happy and excited, didn't it cause you to excessively use your strongest style?

**Unfulfilled Strongest Style:** We experience this stress when we have not fulfilled the purpose of our strongest style. Analyzers feel a strong need to unerringly proceed on a task, but haven't. Directors feel a strong need to attain a nagging result, but can't. Relators feel a strong need to maintain relationships, but the other person avoids reconnection. Socializers feel a strong need to interact with others, but nobody is available. Think about it for a moment; think about when you felt uneasy about things in general and how much better you felt after fulfilling the purpose of your strongest style.

**Overly used Strongest Style and Symbiotic Emotion:** We experience this stress when we excessively use our strongest style to attain its purpose, knowing that it is inappropriate much of the time. Unfortunately, the stress caused by the need to use our strongest style less causes more distress and the need to use it more. This is compounded by the excessive expression of our strongest emotion and thus, its symbiotic style, creating a series of symbiotic cycles that is hard to break. Think of the last time you were distressed from overusing your strongest style and emotion: didn't that knowledge distress you even more?

**Job or School:** We feel this stress when we are unsuccessful in our chosen profession or if we dislike the work we do or the environment in which we do it. The same applies to education stress in students whose job it is to learn. We also experience this type of stress when our work is unfulfilling; if so, we should change jobs if it is the only solution, although, change is stressful.



**Life Change Units:** If we have too many changes in our lives over a twelve-month period, it creates distress. This is especially true with strong analyzers and relators, who are stressed by even minor changes. The chart on the right is an updated version of a Life Change Units Test (developed over a half-century ago by Dr. Holmes). Test yourself; if you test high—over 250 life change units in the past year—you are definitely distressed by excessive life change units. Some strong analyzers or relators are excessively stressed when their total is over 150.

**Guilt:** If we have strong guilt we experience guilt stress much of the time—this is common in us strong relators and analyzers. We have little control over our false feelings of doing something wrong, especially if we are distressed, which exacerbates the guilt. The only defense is to realize that our guilt is excessively strong and try to ignore it as much as possible. Reducing the total stress in our stress bucket always helps. Do you think

Life Change Units	
(circle the units that apply to you in the past 12 months)	
Death of your spouse or child .....	100
Divorce.....	73
Marital separation .....	65
Death of close family member.....	63
Jail term .....	63
Personal injury or illness .....	50
Marriage.....	50
Fired at work .....	47
Marital reconciliation .....	45
Retirement .....	45
Change in health of family member.....	44
Pregnancy.....	40
Sex difficulties .....	39
Gain of new family member .....	39
Business readjustment.....	39
Change in financial state (+ or -) .....	38
Death of a close friend.....	37
Change to different line of work .....	36
More or less arguments with spouse.....	35
Break up of a long-standing relationship .....	34
Mortgage or loans over \$100,000 .....	31
Foreclosure of mortgage or loan .....	30
Change in responsibilities at work.....	29
Son or daughter leaving home .....	29
Troubles with in-laws .....	29
Outstanding personal achievement.....	28
Spouse begins or stops work .....	26
You begin or end school .....	26
Change in living conditions .....	25
Revisions of personal habits .....	24
Trouble with your boss.....	23
Change in work or working conditions.....	20
Change in residence .....	20
Change in schools .....	20
Change in recreation.....	19
Change in church.....	19
Change in social activities.....	18
Mortgage or loan less than \$100,000 .....	17
Change in sleeping habits.....	16
Change in number of family get-togethers .....	15
Change in eating habits .....	15
Vacation (13 per vacation) .....	_____
Christmas (holiday season).....	12
Minor violations of the law (11 per ticket).....	_____
Total of All Life Change Units for Year	

that you are an excessively guilty person? Ask those who work and live with you, it's usually obvious to them if you are.

**Mental Disease:** If we suffer from a mental dysfunction that is stressing our lives we are probably not able to identify and alleviate this stress. This falls out of the "normal" use of our personalities into the abnormal use and requires professional help.

The above mental stresses provides a reference for prioritizing (1, 2, 3, 4) *your* two to four most powerful mental stresses. You must know your strongest mental stresses to reduce your overall stress, keep your cortisol level down, and keep your stress bucket from overflowing. Once identified, you must create the memories (see Chapter 15) that will consciously, then unconsciously, reduce these stressors.

**Priority of *mental* stresses that plague you**—list from most stressful (1) to less stressful (4):

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_

## Identifying Our Chemical Stressors

Chemical stress affects "sensitized" (allergic) people most, but even non-allergic people can be sensitive to certain foods, chemicals or inhalants and should evaluate the possible chemical stressors below. If you suspect that you may be sensitive to certain foods, read about "The Allergy Addiction Syndrome"<sup>2</sup>, which severely affects about 25 percent of the population and has some effect on the other 75 percent.

**Inhalants Allergy:** This occurs when we are allergic to the usual dogs, cats, pollen, ragweed, mold and mildew, dust and other natural substances we may inhale into our sinuses and lungs. It's easy to determine whether our environment effects us since the "allergy seasons" severely affect us. For example, in the northeast United States the inhalant allergy season is typi-

cally from mid-May to mid-July, when the tree and grass pollen proliferates. Your area of the country will have its own allergy season. The allergy symptoms are a runny nose, itchy eyes, clogged sinuses, etc. It is difficult if not impossible to avoid the stress of the allergy season, but by keeping our stress buckets from overflowing by reducing our *other* stresses, we can usually reduce the cortisol and thus increase the lymphocytes in our system to better deal with the allergens.

**Toxic Inhalants:** This occurs in people who are allergic to the natural inhalants noted above. The toxic substances are household cleaning agents, nail polish, glue and any product with a heavy chemical vapor. The reaction to inhaling these substances may be an overall weakness, nausea, euphoria, asthma, eczema or other more severe reactions, such as anaphylactic shock. We must avoid these inhalants once detected or when we know that someone will use them, for example, when someone is about to apply nail polish.

**Food Sensitivity:** This is probably the most severe type of chemical stress for sensitized (allergic) people, but it also affects non-allergic people. If we have inhalant allergies, we usually have food allergies. Foods are graded as to their allergy potential: very high allergy potential (VHAP), moderately high allergy potential (MHAP) and very low allergy potential (VLAP). Typical VHAP foods are chicken eggs, most fish (especially canned fish) and shellfish, corn (and corn oil, syrup and other corn products), wheat (and wheat products), and deep-fried junk foods. Peanut butter is a VHAP food that causes shock or even death in some people. Typical MHAP foods are alcohol, chocolate, caffeine (in coffee, black tea, soft drinks, etc.), milk (and milk products), sugar, pork (and pork products), green beans, green peas, potatoes, soybeans (and soybean products), tomatoes, orange juice and strawberries. This is not an exhaustive listing, but accounts for most of the very high and moderately high allergy potential foods commonly consumed.

**Yeast Infestation:** This is as debilitating as an infectious disease and is potent enough to affect every organ in our bodies. Yeast lives in our stomach and intestinal walls and in other openings in our bodies. It lives on carbohydrates and thrives on sugar-foods; its by-products are toxic. When the yeast dies, it goes through a "yeast die-off cycle." It embeds itself in the walls of our stomach and intestines, and in dying, gives off potent chemicals that are absorbed into our bloodstream and affect most of our organs, especially the endocrine glands, responsible for our protection and healing. If

you numerous physical problems take a test<sup>3</sup> to determine whether yeast may be your main problem—at one time it was mine. The reference also contains a four-stage Yeast Elimination Diet to remove the yeast and the severe distress it causes.

**Substance Abuse:** This refers to the chemical stress caused by using, or withdrawing from, drugs such as weight-loss drugs, "uppers" or "downers," tobacco, alcohol and other more potent controlled drugs. You are chemically stressing your body if you use such drugs, for example, the use of alcohol to help reduce the mental stress of a busy, stressful day can be counteracted by the chemical stress that more than four drinks per day can cause.

**Priority of chemical stresses that plague you**—list from most stressful (1) to less stressful (4):

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_

## Identifying Our *Physical* Stressors

Physical stress stems from many sources and includes all stresses not classified as mental or chemical. Examples of physical stress are listed below. Check off suspicious stresses and prioritize your daily physical stresses at the end of this section.

**Chronic Diseases:** We usually know if we have these problems and if we have them, we are trying to keep them under control. But sometimes we don't know that we have them and they can be stressing us, especially later in life. It is best to have a complete medical check-up if you think that you may have any of these kinds of problems.

- ☐ Head/neck problems: migraine and other headaches, head and neck muscle pain, T.M.J. pain or dysfunction, etc.
- ☐ Neural diseases: epilepsy, seizures, numbness/ tingling, etc.
- ☐ Eye problems: pain, pressure, light sensitivity, etc.

- ☐ Ear problems: pain, noise, dizziness, nausea, balance, loss of hearing, etc.
- ☐ Nose/sinus problems: obstruction, stuffiness, runny nose, etc.
- ☐ Throat problems: sore throat, swallowing difficulties, persistent coughing, etc.
- ☐ Breathing problems: asthma, tuberculosis, wheezing, shortness of breath, coughing up blood, etc.
- ☐ Back/shoulder/extremities problems: aching muscles, cramps or weakness in arms or legs, stiffness, etc.
- ☐ Bone problems: arthritis, joint swelling or back pain, etc.
- ☐ Heart problems: coronary heart disease, high blood pressure, chest pain, angina, heart murmur, palpitations, etc.
- ☐ Urinary problems: urgent, painful or frequent urination, blood in urine, kidney infection or stones, bladder infection, etc.
- ☐ Stomach and intestine problems: ulcers, pain, heartburn, nausea/vomiting, constipation, diarrhea, gall bladder disease, intestinal disease, etc.
- ☐ Endocrine problems: lack of ability to heal or fight off infection,, etc.;
- ☐ Liver problems: sclerosis, hepatitis A/B, etc.
- ☐ Pancreatic problems such as diabetes, loss of energy, etc.
- ☐ Blood problems: hemophilia, anemia, clots, stroke, etc.
- ☐ Skin problems: eczema, itchy, oily, or dry skin, etc.
- ☐ Dehydration caused by insufficient water and potassium intake
- ☐ Other problems: cancer, HIV+ and others

**Acute Diseases:** Even the healthiest of bodies can be taken over and distressed for days by infectious diseases. When stressed by a cold or infection, staying home can take care of it, making it pass quickly, Echinacea helps. If instead, we mask the symptoms with drugs and conduct our daily routines, the stress is still there and it will probably increase due to a depressed immune system from excessive cortisol. If a cold or infection is starting to attack us, we should realize it from our "usual" sub-clinical symptoms (such as "an uneasiness," increased or decreased diet, lack of energy, etc.). Early recognition can alert us to take steps to keep the infection from spreading and thus, reduce the long-term stress that could last days, weeks or longer.

**Acute/Chronic Pain:** This has many causes and most are listed above. We humans adapt to whatever over time; we have daily pains that we take for granted, but they still stress us! The pains may be from old injuries and may not be great enough to overflow our stress bucket, but enough to keep it

mostly full. Taking an accounting of every part of our body can identify this suppressed pain—doing something about it is also helpful.

**Oral Dysfunction:** This may come from oral problems such as T.M.J. dysfunction, poor occlusion, and dental disease (root canals, gum disease and caries). These types of stress may be ever present and unknown to us, until they cause pain. Even in the sub-clinical stage, they can be causing us stress and we may never realize it. It is best to have a thorough oral exam by a dentist if you suspect a problem; routine cleanings are highly recommended.

**Lack of Sleep:** THIS IS A BIGGIE! Sleep is an important aspect of daily health and well being because it affects the two parts of metabolism: catabolism (breaking the body down during the day) and anabolism (building the body up when sleeping at night). In the deep phases of sleep, we manufacture the hormones, etc., required to operate our bodies; if we don't get enough deep sleep, we may be deficient in them. If we receive adequate, restful sleep, our anabolism will build up our bodies, allowing us to meet the physical challenges of a new day.

**Injuries:** When we experience a minor injury it reduces normal function of the injured area, which may distress us for days or weeks. If we have a serious accident that causes constant pain or dysfunction, it can distress us our entire lives. We should take inventory of our injuries and when they act up realize that they are causing us stress and do something about it.

**Excessive Body Fat:** If we are highly overweight or obese (more than 20 percent over the "healthy" weight for our sex, height and frame), we are stressing our bodies in many ways. We stress our muscles, joints, heart and every cell in our body and can lead to diabetes and its repercussions. If we are obese, we should shed our fat if we want to reduce this stress.

**Lack of Exercise:** Our bodies require some form of exercise to stay healthy and help reduce many types of physical stress. A daily or weekly strength exercise schedule can help keep our structural muscles strong, keeping our spine strong and healthy. It is also important to do aerobics at least three days a week to help keep our heart within its "target range". A moderate exercise program helps reduce the physical stresses listed above. A strenuous daily program is not necessarily better; if we lay off it for a while we will experience *withdrawal stress* from the drop in endorphins.

**Lack of Nutrition:** Proper nutrition is essential if we are to reduce physical stress. Stress caused by lack of proper nutrition is usually a "hidden" stress. The body cannot respond to its daily rigors if we fill it up with junk. It's true, we can abuse our bodies with poor nutrition and we will adapt, but by our mid-thirties our body starts telling us "I'm not going to take this any more and you'd better take better care of me or else I'm not going to work for you any more." There are many philosophies of *good nutrition*, but most people not out for the buck usually agree that the food pyramid gives healthy advice. If you have special nutritional requirements, you should follow them. Also, what we like to eat may not be very good for us, stressing us out, as noted in the section on chemical stress above.

**Dehydration:** Dehydration can cause us to feel weak with constant headaches due to a lack of fluid intake and an improper potassium/sodium ratio. We all get too much sodium (<2400 milligrams is healthy) and need >4000 milligrams of potassium every day along with 64-80 ounces (8-10 glasses) of fluids (water, juices, tea, coffee, etc.) per day. Sixteen ounces of orange juice/day will give 20-25% of fluids plus 900 mg of potassium.

**Radiation Exposure:** Most of us think that electromagnetic energy has no effect on us because we do not live near high-voltage lines; this is not true! An electric clock two to three feet from our head at night gives us more electromagnetic radiation than living near a high voltage tower—replace it with a battery operated clock. Exposure to the sun can cause overheating of the body and radiation poisoning of the skin—avoid excessive exposure. We also hear a lot about Radon radiation in our homes and places of business. If we suspect this is a problem, we should use a Radon detection system to measure it and then reduce the Radon if it is excessive. Radiation stress is not typically a problem, but if it is, it may be a big one and something must be done about it.

**Priority of physical stresses that plague you**—list from most stressful (1) to less stressful (4):

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_

Now that you know the main mental, chemical and physical stressors that cause you to lose control of your personality, do something about them! The control you get back will make your life more fulfilling than you ever thought possible, and you will live that more fulfilling life longer.

Use the following procedure to reduce your distress through your awareness:

1. Be aware that you are distressed.
2. Reflect on your most potent mental stressors and decide whether they are making you distressed; if so, talk yourself out of them.
3. Reflect on your most potent chemical stressors and decide whether they are making you distressed; if so, remove them from your life.
4. Reflect on your most potent physical stressors and decide whether they are making you distressed; if so, deal with them.

The above procedure makes you aware of your stressors and gives you the choice to reduce them or not. Using “Mind-Set” (see Chapter 14) can also help reduce your cumulative mental stressors, reducing the possibility of distress, but the best way is to eliminate the stress through a healthier life or by resetting your memories as discussed in Chapter 15.

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3. John Parks Trowbridge, M.D., and Morton Walker, D.P.M., *The Yeast Syndrome*, (Bantam Books)