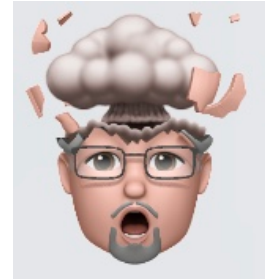
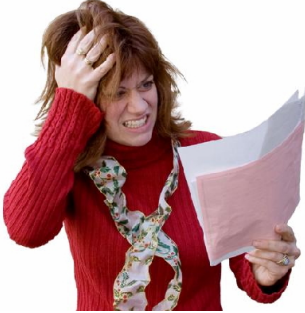


# STRESS

## What it is; What Causes Your Stress

### Stress Management



These days, we could probably all say the same thing. It is quite common in our current time to feel 'stressed.' But what is this thing we call STRESS? And perhaps more importantly, what can we do about it?

Stress in general terms is a force that acts on something and causes changes. Physically, stress is the force bends metal, breaks the pencil, yanks you forward when your dog chases the squirrel.

Mostly we think of stress as something that causes worry, anxiety, or the need to 'fix' something in our lives. Sometimes, we may want to reduce stress, because it can become overwhelming, or out of control.

My sense is that stress reduction is about lifestyle changes, and those can hard, and just as overwhelming. I used to joke that to reduce stress, one should move to a South Pacific island, but I wonder if stressful conditions would follow me there too these days.

So, I recommend **Stress Management** as a better (more practical) alternative.

### Managing Stress with a Stress Antidotes Strategy

#### Some Steps to Take

#### 1. Identify what causes you Stress

These differ from one person to another; make a list; these are your personal **stressors**

#### 2. Decide which of these you can change

For example: if relationship is one, is breakup or divorce a do-able option?

#### 3. Prioritize Your List

What is most important, most stressful?

A blue-bordered box containing a list of seven empty checkboxes for identifying stressors.

When I've done this process with groups as a workshop, this is where folks are most depressed. So I change the focus to more positive things. if there is interest, I may offer the workshop as an online webinar

## STRESS ANTIDOTES

**Stress Antidotes** are those things (activities) which you see as having the opposite effect to things that stress you out. For me some include: reading a good book; gardening, good music.

**MAKE A LIST:** and be creative, include the ordinary and the outrageous; surprise yourself

**CHOOSE FIVE:** Hopefully you have more than 5; if not add some more. Pick five favorites that are most effective in balancing out your stress, giving energy or elevate your mood.

**Finally MAKE A PLAN:** The key to managing stress is creating an Action Plan. That might mean posting your list of Stress Antidotes where you see it regularly; commuting doing a stress antidote regularly; working with a coach or therapist. If it helps to write and post your plan, do that. Add a reward for sticking with the plan. Review and revise when necessary

*You may find other strategies for Stress Management which work for you; this has worked for me and those I have coached. Your feedback about another approach would be great to add to my tool kit, so please feel free to let me know. **PROVIDE FEEDBACK***