

New England Stress Management Center

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978.494.2546**

The Mind Game Called and How to Play It

A Program of Cognitive Restructuring, and Relaxation

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**Marco Island Florida Men's Club
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Stress Management Plan of Action

- Listen to the behavior modification CD at least once a day – more if needed. Play it in your car.
- Listen to the relaxation CD at least twice a day to begin the program – when you wake up and before you go to sleep.
- Read the book *The Four Agreements* by Ruiz. It's available at the library and in all bookstores.
- If you have any question call me: 978.494.2546
- This program takes time, effort, and commitment. If you continue to do what you are doing now, you'll get what you're getting now. If you don't like what you're getting now follow these directions.
- Keep these directions with you until you establish a routine.

Introduction

Rule No. 1 is, don't sweat the small stuff.

Rule No. 2 is, it's all small stuff.

And if you can't fight or flee, flow.

**Robert Ellis, MD U. of
Nebraska Cardiologist**

Hans Selye, MD, the world recognized stress authority believed that stress "...plays some role in the development of every disease." While many researchers agree that such major events as a death of a loved one, loss of a job, financial problems, etc. contribute to stress. However, in a Time cover story article Wallis (1983) wrote that Psychologist Richard Lazarus of the University of California at Berkley is convinced that the everyday annoyances and hassles more than major events contribute to illness and depression. He cites Charles Bukowski's poem to illustrate his point:

*...It's not the large things that
send a man to the
madhouse...no, it's the
...continuing series of
small tragedies
that sends a man to the madhouse*

*Not the death of his love
But the shoelace that snaps
With no time left (p. 49)*

PERCEIVED STRESS SCALE Sheldon Cohen

The *Perceived Stress Scale* (PSS) is the most widely used psychological instrument for measuring the perception of stress. It is a measure of the degree to which situations in one's life are appraised as stressful. Items were designed to tap how unpredictable, uncontrollable, and overloaded respondents find their lives. The scale also includes a number of direct queries about current levels of experienced stress. The PSS was designed for use in community samples with at least a junior high school education. The items are easy to understand, and the response alternatives are simple to grasp. Moreover, the questions are of a general nature and hence are relatively free of content specific to any subpopulation group. The questions in the PSS ask about feelings and thoughts during the last month. In each case, respondents are asked how often they felt a certain way.

Evidence for Validity: Higher PSS scores were associated with (for example):

- Failure to quit smoking
- Failure among diabetics to control blood sugar levels
- Greater vulnerability to stressful life-event-elicited depressive symptoms
- More colds

Health status relationship to PSS: Cohen et al. (1988) show correlations with PSS and: Stress Measures, Self-Reported Health and Health Services Measures, Health Behavior Measures, Smoking Status, Help Seeking Behavior.

Temporal Nature: Because levels of appraised stress should be influenced by daily hassles, major events, and changes in coping resources, predictive validity of the PSS is expected to fall off rapidly after four to eight weeks.

Scoring: PSS scores are obtained by reversing responses (e.g., 0 = 4, 1 = 3, 2 = 2, 3 = 1 & 4 = 0) to the four positively stated items (items 4, 5, 7, & 8) and then summing across all scale items. A short 4 item scale can be made from questions 2, 4, 5 and 10 of the PSS 10 item scale.

Norm Groups: L. Harris Poll gathered information on 2,387 respondents in the U.S.

Norm Table for the PSS 10 item inventory

Category N Mean S.D.

Gender

Male 926 12.1 5.9

Female 1406 13.7 6.6

Age

18-29 645 14.2 6.2

30-44 750 13.0 6.2

45-54 285 12.6 6.1

55-64 282 11.9 6.9

65 & older 296 12.0 6.3

Race

white 1924 12.8 6.2

Hispanic 98 14.0 6.9

black 176 14.7 7.2

other minority 50 14.1 5.0

Perceived Stress Scale

The questions in this scale ask you about your feelings and thoughts **during the last month**. In each case, you will be asked to indicate by circling *how often* you felt or thought a certain way.

Name _____

Date _____

Age _____ Gender (*Circle*): **M F** Other

0 = Never 1 = Almost Never 2 = Sometimes 3 = Fairly Often 4 = Very Often

1. In the last month, how often have you been upset because of something that happened unexpectedly?**0 1 2 3 4**

2. In the last month, how often have you felt that you were unable to control the important things in your life?..... **0 1 2 3 4**

3. In the last month, how often have you felt nervous and “stressed”?
 **0 1 2 3 4**
4. In the last month, how often have you felt confident about your ability to handle your personal problems? **0 1 2 3 4**
5. In the last month, how often have you felt that things were going your way?
**0 1 2 3 4**
6. In the last month, how often have you found that you could not cope with all the things that you had to do? **0 1 2 3 4.**
7. In the last month, how often have you been able to control irritations in your life?..... **0 1 2 3 4**
8. In the last month, how often have you felt that you were on top of things?
 **0 1 2 3 4**
9. In the last month, how often have you been angered because of things that were outside of your control? **0 1 2 3 4**
10. In the last month, how often have you felt difficulties were piling up so high that you could not overcome them?**0 1 2 3 4**

Please feel free to use the *Perceived Stress Scale* for your research.

Perceived Stress Scale Scoring

Each item is rated on a 5-point scale ranging from never (0) to almost always (4).Positively worded items are reverse scored, and the ratings are summed, with higher scores indicating more perceived stress.PSS-10 scores are obtained by reversing the scores on the four positive items: for example, 0=4, 1=3, 2=2, etc. and then summing across all 10 items. Items 4, 5, 7, and 8 are the positively stated items. Your Perceived Stress Level was _____

Scores around 13 are considered average. In our own research, we have found that high stress groups usually have a stress score of around 20 points. Scores of 20 or higher are considered high stress, and if you are in this range, you might consider learning new stress reduction techniques as well as increasing

your exercise to at least three times a week. High psychological stress is associated with high blood pressure, higher BMI, larger waist to hip ratio, shorter telomere length, higher cortisol levels, suppressed immune function, decreased sleep, and increased alcohol consumption. These are all important risk factors for cardiovascular disease

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The PSS Scale is reprinted with permission of the American Sociological Association, from Cohen, S., Kamarck, T., and Mermelstein, R. (1983). A global measure of perceived stress. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 24, 386-396.

Cohen, S. and Williamson, G. Perceived Stress in a Probability Sample of the United States. Spacapan, S. and Oskamp, S. (Eds.) *The Social Psychology of Health*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1988.

A Stress Management Quiz

1. This is a multiple choice quiz choose the correct answer for each of the questions.

2. What is stress?

- a. It's something we can't control.
- b. It's the tension you feel when with you are faced with a new unpleasant or threatening experience.
- c. It's something that's bad for you.
- d. It's an automatic physical response
- e. All of the above

3. How does stress affect your behavior and physiology?

- a. It can make you hostile, angry, anxious, and depressed.
- b. It can give you headaches.
- c. It can give you soar muscles.
- d. Long term stress can contribute to ulcers, strokes, and heart attacks.
- e. All of the above.

4. What are the main sources of stress?

- a. School and work situations.
- b. Circumstances at home.
- c. Difficult personal relationships.
- d. Circumstances in your environment.
- e. All of the above.

5. What can you do to prevent being stressed?

- f. Eat right and get enough sleep.

- g. Don't read newspapers, magazines, watch news television, listen to talk shows.
- h. Make judicious use of your time – balance work and play.
- i. Don't suppress or repress your negative emotions - let them go.
- j. All of the above.

5. Are there special ways to manage stress?

- a. Learn to relax.
- b. Change your stress provoking behaviors
- c. Change the way that you react to stressful circumstances, events, and people in your life.
- d. Have a cup of coffee or a drink and a cigarette.
- e. All of the above.

6. What can you do when stress becomes unmanageable?

- a. Borrow a friend's Prozac.
- b. Tough it out – getting help is a sign of weakness
- c. Talk to your clergyman or a mental health counselor.
- d. See your physician.
- e. Do some cognitive restructuring.

The answers to the above quiz are quite obvious.

Positive and Negative Stress

It is *impossible* to avoid stress - its part of living and being human. However, not all stress is detrimental, there is *positive healthy stress*, e.g., being with a loved one, getting married, getting a job promotion, receiving a college degree, etc. It is interesting to note that an EKG reading shows a normal relaxed heart beat and then similar changes occur for either the emotion of fear or joy!

There is also *negative stress* and this type is unhealthy. This prolonged excessive stress comes from many different life sources: work, family life, unexpected change, natural catastrophe, loss of job, financial problems, sexual problems, to name just a few.

Positive and Negative Stress Coping Devices

People have a choice of coping with this kind of stress with negative or positive devices. Some of the more popular negative devices are: smoking, alcohol, drugs (legal and illegal), becoming a workaholic, etc. The more positive modalities are: meditation, autogenic, biofeedback, yoga, prayer or hypnosis and one of these along with exercise, good nutrition, and behavior modification can be an effective way to manage prolonged excessive stress.

Danger Signs of Stress

Recognize Your Stress Symptoms

At times your body is trying to tell you that the way you feel is caused by the stress in your life. Unfortunately, many of us don't recognize the symptoms when they occur. There are overt physical, emotional, and behavioral symptoms that indicate signs of stress. There are a few listed below: (Think about what symptoms you experience)

Physical Symptoms

Tight neck and shoulders
Increase in drinking and
Change in sleeping habits
Upset stomach
Headaches
High blood pressure
Fatigue
Cold and Sweaty hands
Excessive sweating
Constipation/Diarrhea
Nervous tics
Teeth grinding

Emotional Symptoms

Apathy
Anger
Fear
Lust
Pride
Grief

Behavioral Symptoms

Overeating
Reckless driving

Drug use (legal or
illegal)
Negativity
Eyestrain
Hostility
Forgetfulness

Selye (1956) in his book *The Stress of Life*, wrote that man's reaction to chronic stress has three stages - the alarm reaction, resistance and exhaustion. During the last two stages the body's immune system is weakened and the body is more prone to disease. Some of the more overt symptoms of these stages are: high blood pressure, skin problems, headaches, stomach disorders and tense and sore muscles. When these early symptoms are not recognized then it is possible for serious illness to develop.

Below are some of the observable danger signs of stress. (Selye, 1976, pp. 174 -175)

1. General irritability, hyper-excitation or depression.
2. Pounding of the heart.
3. Dryness of the throat and mouth.
4. Impulsive behavior and emotional instability.
5. The overpowering urge to cry or run or hide.
6. Inability to concentrate.
7. Feelings of unreality, weakness or dizziness.
8. Becoming fatigued.
9. Anxiety - being afraid but not knowing why.
10. Feeling keyed up.
11. Rambling, nervous ticks.
12. Easily startled.
13. High pitched nervous laughter.
14. Speech difficulties - stuttering, etc.
15. Grinding teeth.
16. Insomnia
17. Inability to sit quietly - hyper-mobility.
18. Increased perspiration.
19. Frequent urination.
20. Gastro-intestinal problems - indigestion, diarrhea, etc.
21. Migraine headaches.
22. Tension - missed menstrual cycle.
23. Neck and lower back pain.
24. Increase or decrease in appetite.
25. Increase in smoking, alcohol consumption or drugs (legal or illegal)
26. Nightmares.
27. Neurotic or psychotic behavior.
28. Accident-prone.

Seventeen Things You Can Do to Keep Yourself Stressed and Miserable

1. Depend on others to make you happy.
2. Your unhappiness is not your fault. Others make you unhappy.
3. Use “could of and should of” whenever you can regarding time, money, relationship, etc.
4. Always compare what you have with others.
5. Always be serious.
6. Be sure that you take responsibility for everything all of the time.
7. Never say no and try to please every all of the time.
8. Help others but don't let anyone help you. Especially don't help yourself – that's selfish.
9. Remember your own needs are unimportant.
10. If you get a compliment be sure to discount it.
11. Exaggerate everything anyone says.
12. Suppress your feeling by pretending to calm and cool.
13. Resist change to the death.
14. Strive to be absolutely perfect.
15. Don't live in the present. Always live in the future and the past
16. Always focus on the negative.
17. In the midst of great success always find a glimmer of disaster.

Stress: Self-Assessment

What Causes Stress Symptoms for Me.

- ___ I never have enough time.
- ___ I'm very competitive and I hate losing.
- ___ I hate being cut off in traffic.
- ___ I have personality clashes with others.
- ___ There is too much or too little work to do.
- ___ I feel I am unable to do my job adequately.
- ___ I worry or get angry about things I can't control
- ___ My kids, spouse get to me.
- ___ I'm lonely.
- ___ I never get my fair share.
- ___ My boss criticizes me or doesn't like me.
- ___ I don't like my boss or the people I work with.
- ___ So many exciting things happen to me that I am overwhelmed.
- ___ I hate my job.

What else?

(List) _____

Relaxation Needs Questionnaire

Check the clues in your body (tension) that indicate your need to relax.

1. Muscles feel tense and tight in the:
 - a)Jaw ()
 - b)Neck ()
 - c)Chest ()

- d) Shoulders ()
 - e) Stomach ()
 - f) Face ()
 - g) Other areas ()
2. You find yourself squeezing something tight. ()
 3. You scratch a certain part of your body. ()
 4. You move one leg up and down when your legs are crossed. ()
 5. You move one of leg when both feet are on the ground. ()
 6. You bite your fingernails. ()
 7. You clench your jaw and grind your teeth. ()
 8. You have trouble speaking. ()
 9. You tremble and shake. ()
 10. Your stomach feels that you are riding on a roller coaster. ()
 11. You feel like you might throw up. ()
 12. You sweat. ()
 13. Your heart beats fast. ()
 14. You feel or hear your heart pounding. ()
 15. Your face feels warm and flushed. ()
 16. Your skin feels cool and damp. ()
 17. You feel faint. ()
 18. You feel dizzy. ()
 19. You feel like you're going to choke. ()
 20. You feel like you won't be able to breathe. ()
 21. You find yourself breathing fast a heavy. ()

Negative Effects of Stress on Health

Stress is known as a causative factor in such illnesses as cancer, hypertension, ulcers, asthma, eczema, heart disease, gastritis, colitis, and esophagitis. Further it can manifest such symptoms as headaches, dizziness, fatigue, impotence, back and neck pain, weakness and anxiety. (Rossman, 1987, pp. 39-40); Miller, (1986, pp. 168-177); and Locke & Collogan, (1987, pp. 100-154).

The approach to stress management used in this seminar will be found in Tatarunis' book **Nobody Drives You Crazy, You Do** (2002).

Rules for Being Human

1. **You will receive a body.** You may like it or hate it, but it will be yours for the entire period this time around.
2. **You will learn lessons.** You are enrolled in a full-time informal school called life. Each day in the school you will have the opportunity to learn lessons. You may like the lessons or think them irrelevant or stupid.
3. **There are no Mistakes only lessons.** Growth is a process of trial, error, and experimentation. The failed experiments are as much of the process as the experiment that ultimately works.
4. **The lessons are repeated until learned.** A lesson will be presented to you in various forms until you have learned it. When you have learned it you can then go on to the next lesson.
5. **Learning lessons does not end.** There is no part of life that does not contain lessons. If you're alive there will be lessons.
6. **There is no better than here.** When your *there* has become *here*, you will simply obtain another *there* that again looks better than *here*.
7. **Others are merely mirrors of you.** You cannot love or hate something about another person unless it reflects something you love or have about yourself.
8. **What you make of life is up to you.** You have all the tools and resources you need. What you do with them is up to you. The choice is yours.
9. **The answers lie inside of you.** The answers of Life's questions lie inside of you. All you need to do is look,

listen, and trust.

10. **You will forget all of this.**

11. **You can remember it whenever you want.**

Anonymous

Symptoms of Inner Peace

1. A tendency to think and act spontaneously rather than fear based on past experiences.
2. An unmistakable ability to enjoy each moment.
3. A loss in the interest in conflict.
4. A loss in the ability to worry. (A very serious symptom)
5. Frequent overwhelming episodes of appreciation
6. Feeling a connectedness to others and nature
7. Frequent attacks of smiling. (Also very serious)
8. An increased susceptibility to the love extended by others and an uncontrollable urge to extend it.

Rules for Living According to George Carlin

1. Throw out nonessential numbers. This includes age, weight and height. Let your doctor worry about them. That is why you pay him/her.
2. Keep only cheerful friends. The grouch brings you *down*.
3. Keep learning. Learn more about the computer, crafts, and gardening, whatever. Never let the brain idle. "An idle mind is the devil's workshop." And the devil's name is Alzheimer's.
4. Enjoy the simple things.
5. Laugh often, long and loud. Laugh until you gasp for breath.
6. When tears happen. Endure, grieve, and move on. The only person who is with us our entire life is ourselves. **Be ALIVE** while you are alive.
7. Surround yourself with what you love, whether it's family, pets, keepsakes, plants, and hobbies, whatever. Your home is your refuge.
8. Cherish your health: If it is good, preserve it. If it is unstable, improve it. If it is beyond what you can improve, get help.
9. Don't take guilt trips. Take a trip to the mall, to the next county, to a foreign country, but **NOT** to where the guilt is.
10. Tell the people you love that you love them, at every opportunity.
11. **AND ALWAYS REMEMBER: Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take your breath away.**

Brief Biography

Dr. Tatarunis is the president of the Greater New England Academy of Hypnosis, Inc. The Academy completed its 35^h seminar year in 2015 and was approved for CE credits by the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists. The purpose of the seminars is to teach Anesthetist how to use hypnosis in their practice. In the past the Academy of General Dentistry, the American Psychological Association, and the Florida and Massachusetts Nurses Associations also approved the Academy for CE credits.

He has conducted these seminars throughout the United States, in Canada, England, and on cruise ships.. The Academy currently conducted seminars in Naples Florida from October through May and from June through September in Middleton, Massachusetts.

In 1984 he established the New England Stress Management Center. While the major focus of NESMC is stress management, nevertheless, weight loss, smoking cessation, chronic pain management, sports hypnosis, and working with cancer patients is also offered at NESMC. In 2002 his book: *Nobody Drives You Crazy, You Do!! A Stress Management Primer* was published. His first book that he co-authored: *Teaching Music in Today's Secondary Schools*, two editions 1975 and 1980, were published by Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Dr. Tatarunis holds a bachelor's degree in Music from the University of Massachusetts at Lowell, a master's degree in Education from Harvard University, and a doctorate in Education from Boston University. He received his initial hypnosis training with the Greater New England Academy of Hypnosis, studied imagery with Marty Rossman, M.D. and David Bressler, Ph. D., transformational fantasy with Rev. John Shafer, and advanced hypnotic techniques with Theodore X. Barber, Ph. D. and Sidney Rosen, M.D.

For 31 years he was a teacher and school administrator in the Massachusetts Public Schools. The last 26 years in Danvers where he was Director of Music, Media Services, Drama, and wrote the public relations for the school department. He was also an adjunct instructor at Emmanuel College, Berklee College of Music, Boston Conservatory of Music, and the University of Massachusetts at Lowell. He retired from education in 1984 and went into the stress management and hypnosis seminar business.

Dr. Al is available to conduct stress management workshops of any length of time for businesses, church organization, etc. There is no charge for the workshops.

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