



University of Idaho
Extension

COPING & STRESS MANAGEMENT

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CLASS OVERVIEW



Understanding
the different
types of stress

Learning
about Coping
Skills

Finding
Your Best
Self

Creating a
Stress
Management
Plan

HOW STRESSED ARE YOU?

Source: Headington Institute



Please note: this scale is not a clinical diagnostic instrument and is provided for educational purposes. It merely identifies some of the more common symptoms of stress. If you have any concerns about your state of emotional health, you should consult with a mental health professional.

INSTRUCTIONS: In the last month, how often has the following been true for you?

Write the number that fits your reality on the line before each question.

0 | Never 1 | Seldom 2 | Sometimes 3 | Often 4 | Always

- | | |
|--|--|
| ___ 1. I feel tired. | ___ 14. I use caffeine or nicotine more than usual. |
| ___ 2. I find it very hard to relax or "wind-down." | ___ 15. I feel overwhelmed and helpless. |
| ___ 3. I find it hard to make decisions. | ___ 16. I have nervous habits (e.g., biting my nails, grinding my teeth, fidgeting, pacing, etc). |
| ___ 4. My heart races and I find myself breathing rapidly. | ___ 17. I forget little things (e.g. where I put my keys, people's names, details discussed during the last work meeting). |
| ___ 5. I have trouble thinking clearly. | ___ 18. I have stomach upsets (e.g., nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, constipation, gas). |
| ___ 6. I eat too much or too little. | ___ 19. I am irritable and easily annoyed. |
| ___ 7. I get headaches. | ___ 20. I have mood-swings and feel over-emotional. |
| ___ 8. I feel emotionally numb. | ___ 21. I find it hard to concentrate. |
| ___ 9. I think about my problems over and over again during the day. | ___ 22. I have trouble feeling that life is meaningful. |
| ___ 10. I have sleeping problems (e.g., trouble falling asleep, trouble staying asleep, trouble waking up, nightmares, etc). | ___ 23. I am withdrawn and feel distant and cut off from other people. |
| ___ 11. I have trouble feeling hopeful. | ___ 24. I use alcohol and/or other drugs to try and help cope. |
| ___ 12. I find myself taking unnecessary risks or engaging in behavior hazardous to health and/or safety. | ___ 25. My work performance has declined and I have trouble completing things. |
| ___ 13. I have back and neck pain, or other chronic tension-linked pain | |

HOW STRESSED ARE YOU?



HOW STRESSED ARE YOU?

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INTERPRETATION GUIDELINES

0 – 25:

A score in this range suggests that you're probably in great stress-shape!

26 – 50:

A score in this range suggests that you may be experiencing a low to moderate degree of stress.

51 – 75:

A score in this range suggests you may be experiencing a moderate to high degree of stress.

76 – 100:

A score in this range suggests that you may be experiencing a very high degree of stress.

WHAT IS STRESS?



Stress is any type of change that causes physical, emotional or psychological strain. Stress is your body's response to anything that requires attention or action. It can be caused by perceived or real situations.

– World health organization

TYPES OF STRESS

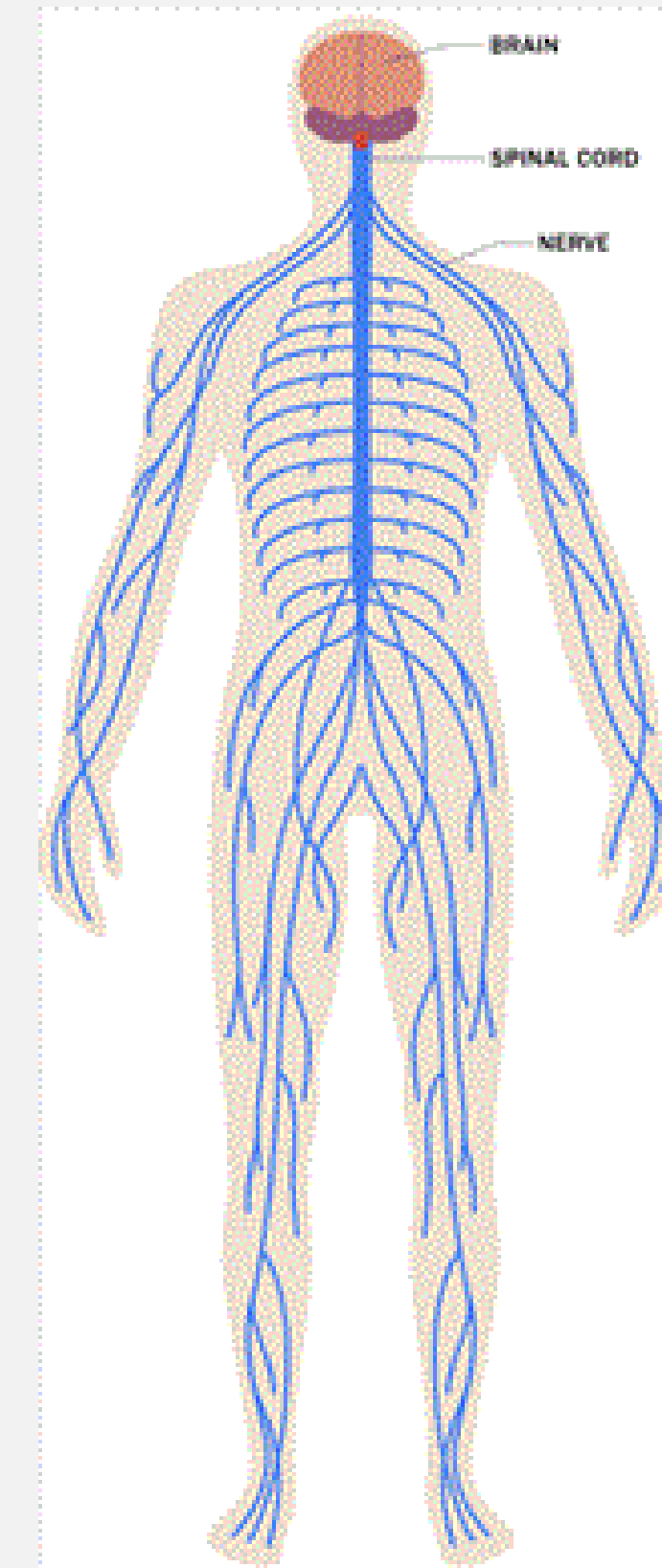


- Acute Stress: Short-term stress, can be positive or negative, most common type of stress
- Chronic Stress: Never-ending, long-term, seems inescapable
- Episodic Acute Stress: acute stress that becomes a way of life, creating more on-going stress
- Eustress: Fun & exciting stress, positive type of stress. It keeps you energized and is caused by adrenaline.

INTERNAL STRESS RESPONSE



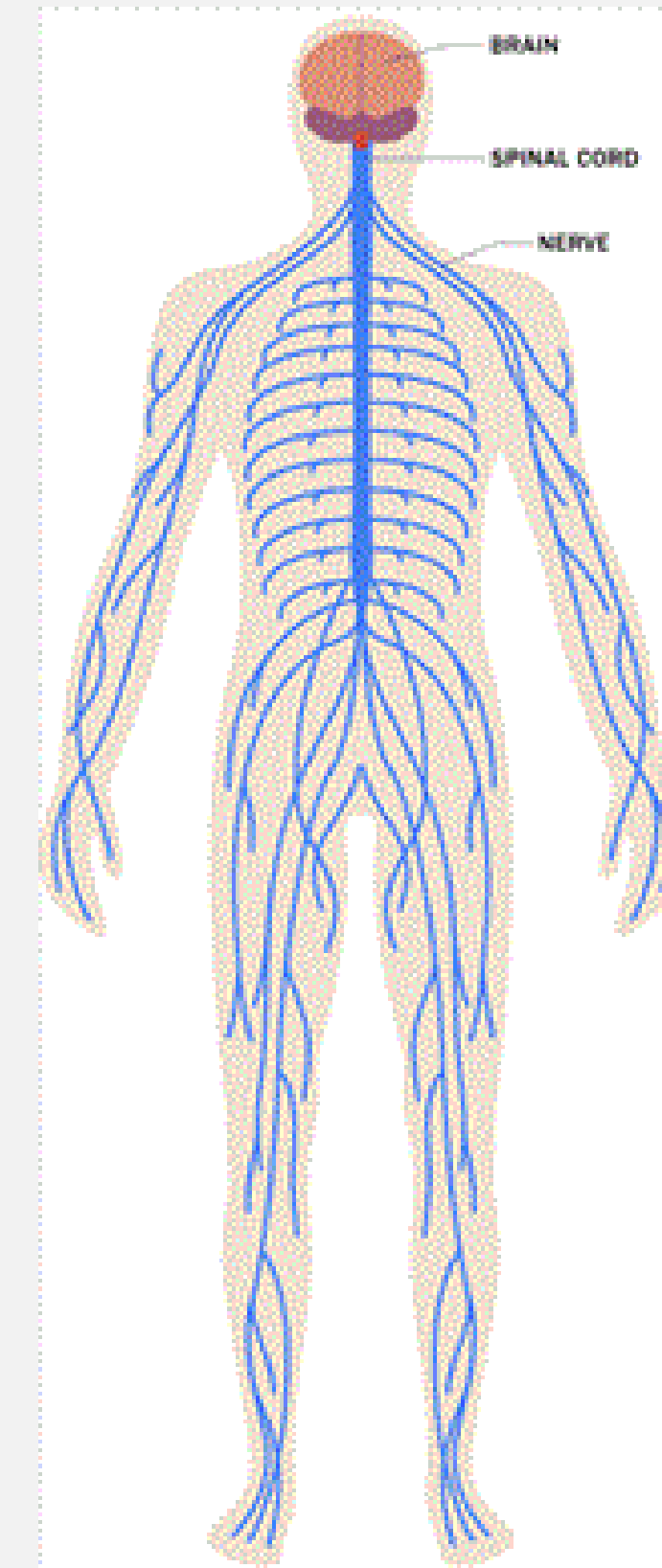
- Step One: A real or perceived stressor (trigger) occurs.
- Step Two: Your body reacts through the Sympathetic Nervous System. (Fight or Flight)
- Step Three: Adrenal glands release adrenaline, epinephrine, and cortisol.
- Step Four: These hormones cause heart to beat faster, breathing to increase, blood vessels to dilate, stomach issues, etc.
- Step Five: The stressor is “resolved” and the Parasympathetic system engages to calm down.



INTERNAL STRESS RESPONSE



- **Step One: A real or perceived stressor (trigger) occurs.**
 - You receive a “meet me in my office” text from your boss
 - You watch a video misinterpreting your actions and intentions on Social Media and falsely accusing you
 - Your child calls and tells you they’ve been in a car accident
- **Step Two: Your body reacts through the Sympathetic Nervous System. (Fight or Flight)**
 - Immediate reaction? Or Emotions?
- **Step Three: Adrenal glands release adrenaline, epinephrine, and cortisol.**
- **Step Four: These hormones cause heart to beat faster, breathing to increase, blood vessels to dilate, stomach issues, etc.**
 - Physical reactions or emotions?
- **Step Five: The stressor is “resolved” and the Parasympathetic system engages to calm down.**
 - How do you feel now? What does the calming feel like?



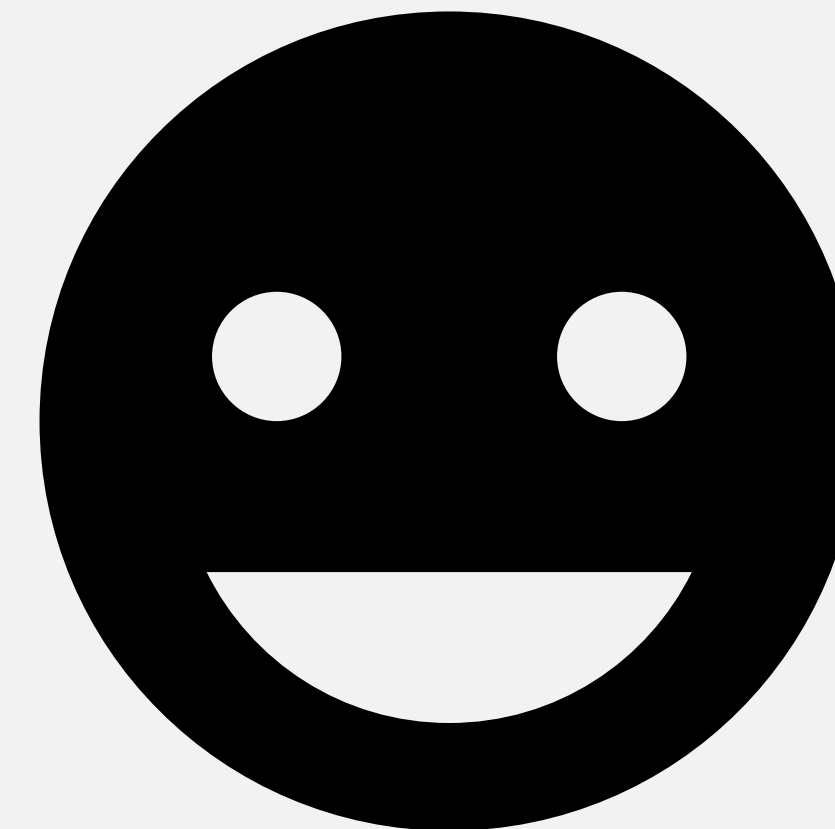
MANAGING AND COPING WITH STRESS



TYPES OF COPING



- **Problem Focused**
 - Addressing what is causing the stress & working to reduce that
- **Social Focused**
 - Seeking support to reduce stress by talking to and navigating the stressor with others
- **Emotions Focused**
 - Focusing on the emotions associated with the stressor and reducing negative emotions associated with it
- **Meaning Focused**
 - Using strategies to find meaning of and reason for the stressor; adding meaning to the stressor



TYPES OF COPING



1. Your car isn't working right so you take it to the mechanic to get it fixed.
2. You have a coworker you disagree with often and talk to your supervisor about how to manage the relationship.
3. A family member is sick, and you need to care for them, but you can't miss today's agenda at work. You analyze your values and realize it is more important to be with your child, so you stay home.
4. Your extended family changed vacation plans and made it difficult on you and your family to attend. You look at why that is stressing you out and realize the lack of communication is making you feel angry. You try to understand why the communication didn't happen and give grace to them.
5. Your aging parent is showing signs of cognitive decline but refuses to see a doctor. You talk to some of your friends who are in the same situation and learn some strategies to help.
6. A community agency comes asking for money in a very tight budget year. You want to help this agency but also need to be fiscally responsible. You crunch numbers, talk to your constituents and colleagues, and realize how important it is to you to fund this agency.

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- Addressing what is causing the stress & working to reduce that

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ACTIONS WE CAN TAKE TO COPE



- **Physical Actions**
 - Things we can physically do to calm our bodies stress response & reduce stress symptoms
- **Social Actions**
 - Things we can do to connect with others and increase positive symptoms
- **Intellectual Actions**
 - Things we can do help build self-esteem and confidence
- **Mindful Actions**
 - Things we can do to slow down and focus on the moment



PHYSICAL COPING SKILLS



Progressive
Muscle
Relaxation

Breathing

Being
Outside &
Nature

Movement

SOCIAL COPING SKILLS

Expressing
gratitude

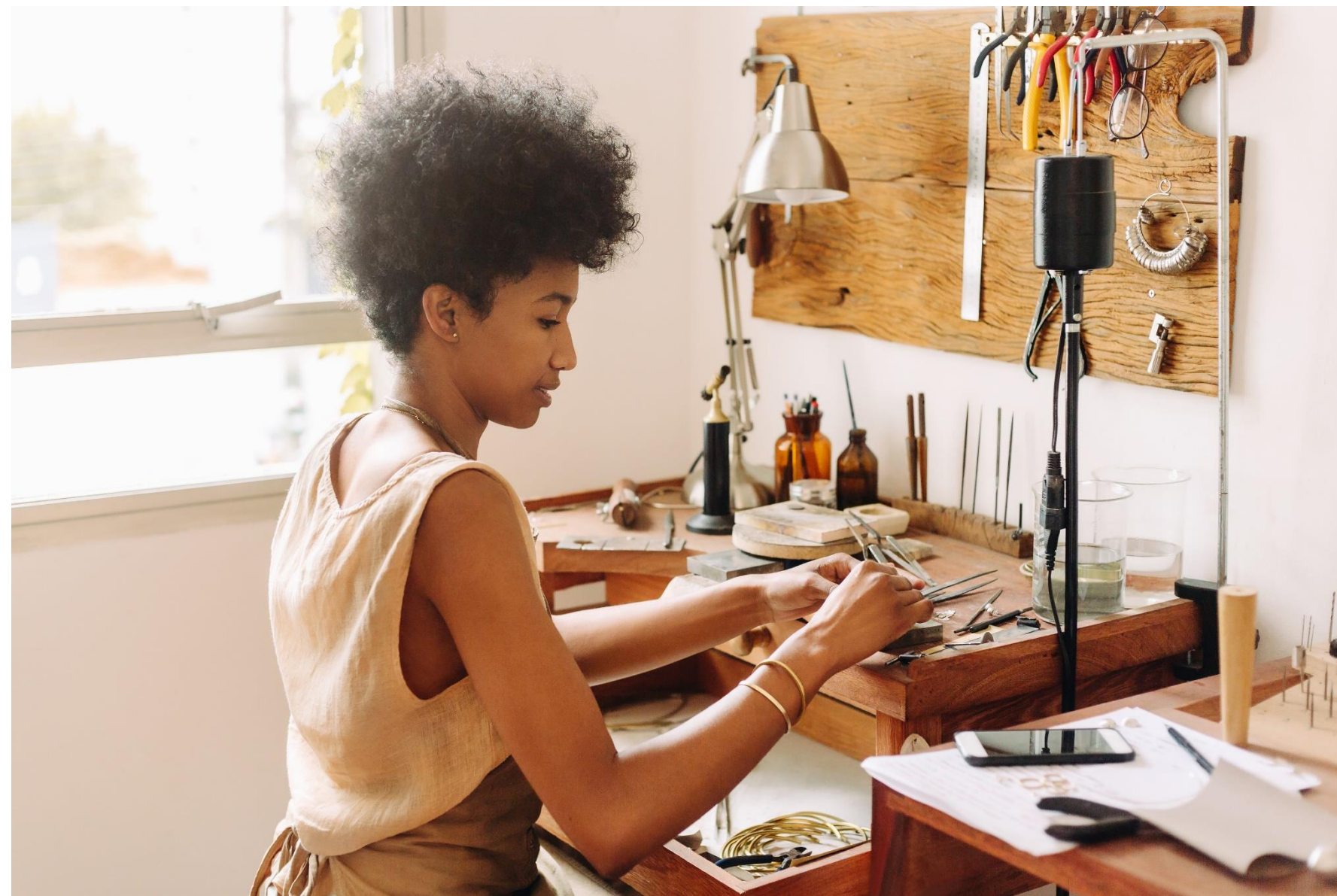
Having a
conversation
with a friend



Laughter

Service

INTELLECTUAL COPING SKILLS



Creating
something
new

Learning
something
new

Saying a
“mantra”

Writing

MINDFULNESS COPING SKILLS



Focus on the
present

Meditation

Practicing a
“pause”

Visualizations
& self-talk

HOW DOES COPING HELP US?



Better health

More patience

Happier mood

Tolerate stress

Minimize stress

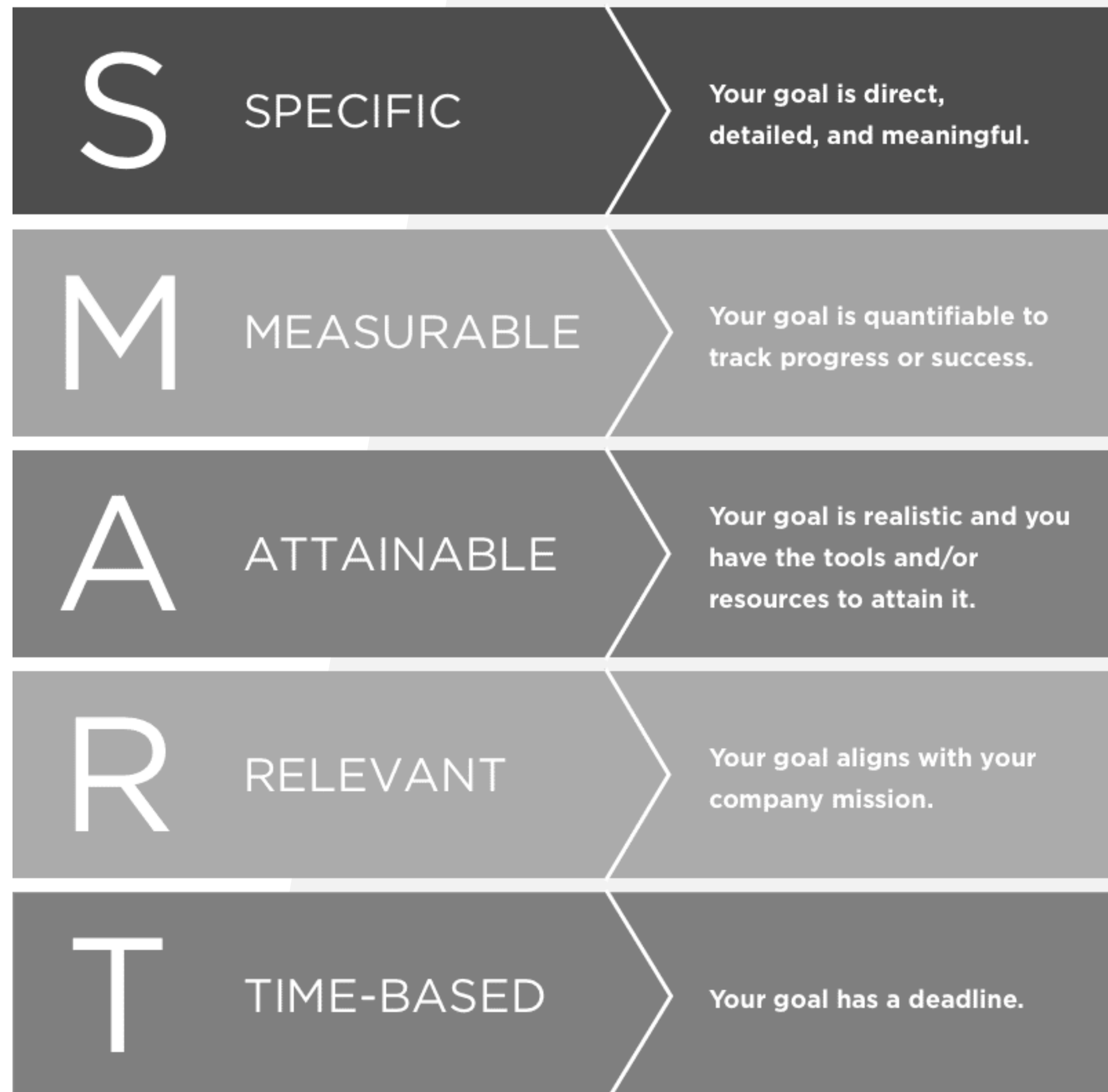
Deal with stress

Increased resiliency

AND MORE....

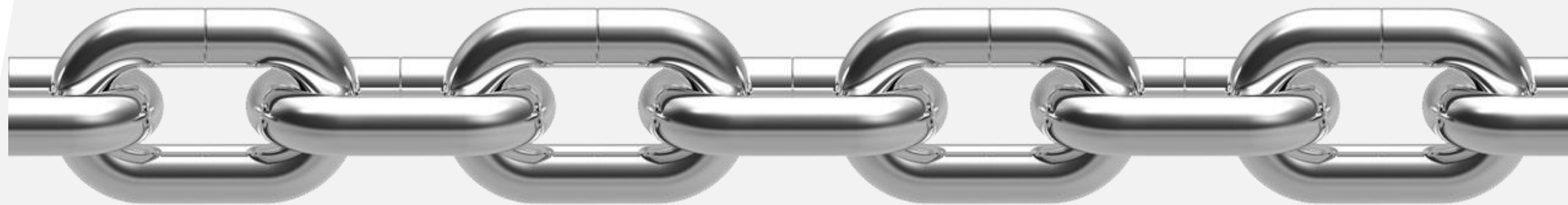
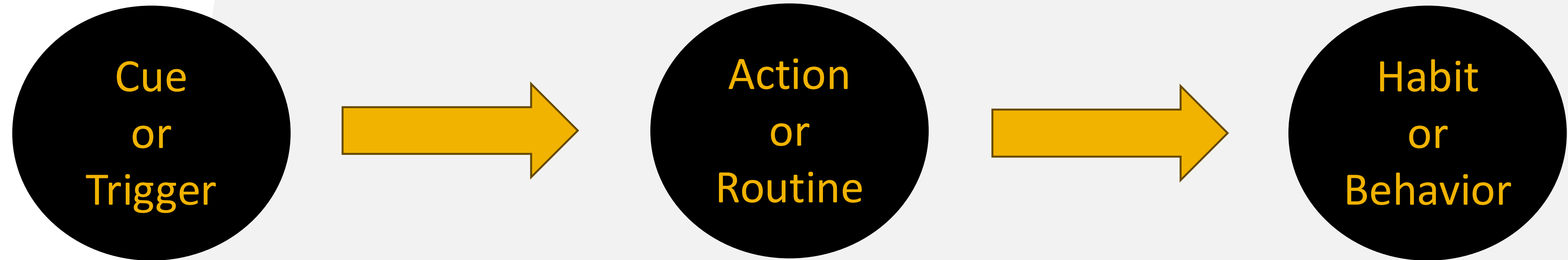
Coping is defined as the thoughts and behaviors mobilized to manage internal and external stressful situations. – National Institute on Health

HOW TO SET A GOAL?



- Example: Jonny is 51, and his doctor recently told him he needs to start exercising. His doctor suggested he try for 150 minutes a week. Jonny wants to set a goal to start exercising. He likes to walk and sets the goal to walk 3 times a week.
- Is this a SMART goal?
- What could he change to make it “smarter”?

GOAL SETTING & HABIT FORMATION



FINDING YOUR BEST SELF



- Before we can implement stress management, we need to know what that looks like.



WHAT IS MY RAFT?



(W)ORK LIFE

RELATIONSHIPS

ACTIONS

FEELINGS

THOUGHTS



Alter

What things can I change during my day to decrease my stress?

Avoid

What situations, conversations, or activities can I reasonably avoid to decrease my stress?

Accept

What things do I need to accept as a part of my life that will reduce my level of stress?

Add

What things do I need to add into my life that will reduce my level of stress?

FOUR A'S OF STRESS MANAGEMENT



ALTER	AVOID	ACCEPT	ADD

Jane is 45 years old, married with 3 older kids, her father is aging and has a surgery coming up. She's got a lot of work projects going on requiring her to spend more hours at the office at a variety of different times. She is feeling really stressed out with her life and needs some help.

FOUR A'S OF STRESS MANAGEMENT



ALTER	AVOID	ACCEPT	ADD
The way I prioritize work tasks	Email notifications on my phone	I am not everyone's best friend	Daily walks with my family
My office's physical environment	Taking out my laptop at home	I cannot fix ALL the problems	Making sure to eat breakfast each day BEFORE work

CLASS OVERVIEW



Understanding
the different
types of stress

Learning
about Coping
Skills

Finding
Your Best
Self

Creating a
Stress
Management
Plan