Why are we so stressed when life’s never been better?

Introduction

It is no surprise that times have been changing and so have people. One thing you always hear about from everyone is how stressful everything is. This idea always causes so much confusion in me because I understand and identify with most of those people that are stressed but the part that puzzled me is my observations of the world. In this article together we will be trying to gain a deeper understanding of why people are so stressed out nowadays and what we can do to fix it. Along the way I will share my personal experiences, my outlook on the situation and how I manage stress.

What is Stress?

Stress is when the body increases the levels of cortisol in the bloodstream. This is a feature that is present in almost all animals and serves as a survival mechanism to signal to the body that it has found itself in an uncomfortable and dangerous situation. However, for humans it is very different, see we have a higher level of cognitive capacity. What does this mean? This means we can anticipate stressors which is a doubled edged sword. On the one hand it can help with preventing something catastrophic like being eaten by a bear because we can realize much earlier than other animals. But this also means that we spend more time in a stressed state.

Me thinketh

As I said earlier in the introduction stress is very puzzling to especially Americans being stressed. We literally have the least stressful life achievable, yet we manage to always find something to be stressed about. I noticed this because I’ve spent a lot of time with people from Central America and I thought to myself as they shared their stories with me. “These people live stressful lives and have very little money in their countries, yet they are noticeably happier.” My take on this comes from two concepts I learned a lot from and find very comforting. This past tax season I worked with my godmother at her tax preparation firm and during my time there I gained so much experience and learned a lot about life as well. Sometimes when I encounter very complex subjects in life I like to step back and observe. While working with my aunt one of the very first things she taught is accounting is all about checks and balances, everything must equal zero. If you think about it life is very much like this. I believe the reason people in America are becoming more stressed is because our lives are so easy, we literally have nothing to worry about. But that gets boring, so the brain finds little stupid things to worry about and blow them out of proportion. One thing that has helped me with stress is physical fitness and I’m going to explain how it checks all the boxes of the concepts we have discussed in this article. From a primitive perspective exercise is beneficial, historically the strongest humans were the hardest to take food from. Working out makes you stronger so boom checks that box one less thing you must worry about. This is one of my favorite ways to work around things. By the way I like to make ideas easier to digest and solving problems one by one. Another stressor is aging, as you age the body becomes less and less functional. If you exercise say 3-4 hours a week you are doing something that has proven to reduce the effects of aging. As I was saying with accounting, all balances must equal to zero. Your body literally needs some amount of stress to function properly and in exercising you are doing so in a safe way that improves your well-being.

Conclusion

In this article I wrote we have covered what stress is, my view on the whole situation, how I deal with stress and my explanation. If there’s one thing, I want my audience to take away from this article, it is that your mind is a very powerful computer, and you must learn to program it to work for you and to make it yourself to other people. Stress can either control you or you can use it as a superpower that gives endless motivation. I also want my audience to know and remember that you are never alone, people all go through the same things, but I will say just like coding it never gets easier you just get better.

Stay solid mane!

# Artifact #2

**Charles Balderas on the *“The Way to Wealth”* by Benjiman Franklin**

For my final web development project, my plan is to make a website to help me be the type of guy I always wanted to be as a kid. However, as I’ve done more research, I’m noticing that it’s not as fun as I thought it was going to be, and the product is not as engaging as I wanted it to be. I do like that I have the freedom to research whatever I want, which I do enjoy. But I have a very short attention span and maybe that’s why I’m losing interest. Mentioning my attention span, this week I want to share about a book I read. I was in the library looking around for some material to start learning Mandarin. As I was looking around, I stumbled into the technology and finance section. These happen to be topics that I am very passionate about recently so once again my attention span gets me and I spent some time flipping through the books.

The book I want to share my opinion about today is “*The Way to Wealth*” by Benjamin Franklin. This book grasps my attention because it was small and short. The design of the book also tugged at me to investigate further; it’s a leather book with gold lettering. But what finally convinced me that it was something worth reading was the fact that it was about wealth. So, I thought to myself “my god, what a great book this must be.” Short, about money and written by none other than the man on the hundred-dollar bill. Who knows more about money than the guy on the hundred.

First, things first. There were some things in this manifesto, as he likes to call it, that I liked and there were also things that I didn’t like. One thing I found very admirable was the purpose behind the commission of this manifesto. From my understanding Benjamin Franklin wrote this essay to educate us simpletons that don’t have quite as much ram in our brains as he does. I think people that take initiative in this manner are very important for our progression as a species. What I didn’t like about this same purpose is that he comes off as if he thinks he is better than most people and this was evident by the way he referred to his servants. In his manifest he sees as though he is doing his servants a favor by being himself. So, yeah he’s a bit of a prick but I guess he does have the merit to back it up. The entire thing is written in old English just as he would’ve wrote it, this made it very difficult to understand. The good thing about the book is that it had captions that explained his point in modern English. In this essay the main gist of the teachings are to do business and make wise decisions. More specifically he touches on not being so trusting of business partners. He argues that the state of lives is one’s own fault. He emphasizes this by stating that if you wake up early and are always working hard you will never suffer. While there is a large amount of truth in what he is saying I don’t think he realized the privilege he had as a rich studious white guy. The part that really got me thinking was the message he was sharing because as I read, I thought to myself this is all stuff I already know. This made me think either this guy is giving very cliché advice, or he is the originator for this advice and it was so revolutionary that everyone in the modern world heard about it and passed it on to every generation.

Which brings us into our next point of observation question. What was the significance of this piece of writing? To that I would answer, this essay has had so much influence on the American people that at this point the teachings in this writing are almost second nature to us. I have been around so many different people and I would say that Americans are some of the most frugal, antisocial, and materialistic people around. Americans are mostly associated with things like obesity, fancy cars, big houses, and entitlement. I think this comes from the knowledge that was being spread at the time by the more influential people like Benjamin Franklin and the founding fathers.

Another question a reader might ask is how this has anything to do with the goal of my project. My project is loosely themed around personal wellness. In our journey to become the best versions of ourselves we can learn a couple things from this piece of writing. An observation I have made is as things sit in life they are very one side or the other. Like Benjamin Franklin’s point of view. His teachings are very me, me, me money, my country and we cannot argue this outlook can clearly be associated with growth it also has unintended consequences. Studies have been published for years now, we all have seen the of how Americas are so sad all the time and we have all the psychological hiccups. But if we zoom out even further and observe less prosperous countries for example Mexico or Africa. AN example I can vividly remember is one time as a 3rd grader we watched this documentary of how people from the African bush could literally not comprehend suicide. I clearly remember one of the people in the interview being asked would you want to go to American and he immediately questions them back. “No, Isn’t that the place where people jump of buildings?” Another example I can think of is I saw somewhere on Instagram that the social life of Mexico has shown to result in longer and happier lives. While I don’t have formal sources I can say that if people are saying this it must be true. I also support this idea based off my own observations and those of others I’ve spoken with. But we also have to look at more developed nations such as China and Japan. The leading nations in technological advancements no doubt but they also have very high suicide rates, very high tobacco and alcohol usage.

The inference I’ve drawn is that we need to stop being so hot or cold. This team or that team. I think life needs to be balanced. Both good and bad must exist to give each other meaning. A religion I really like is the ying and yang. To be 100% honest I know nothing about the religion. All the information I know is from, the karate kid, kung fu panda and simply from observing the symbol itself. But what I’ve learned is we as students of life need to forever seek the perfect balance. We must learn to come to terms with the bad days learn to accept and love them. Experience the full spectrum of ups and downs that life has to offer. We must not fall too in love with the good times and we must not hate the bad times so much simply observe them for what they are and not question either of them and learn what you need to learn form both.

# Artifact #3

Alright, one thing I like to elaborate in my writing is the situation I found myself in while writing and the thought process behind the idea. I also love talking about myself, one thing I really enjoy is killing two birds with one stone. With this in mind I thought to myself what I can research and write about that would serve as a good piece of content for my final website, while getting me closer to meeting other goals I have set for myself. I work at a tax firm with my godmother, and we’ve been very busy recently. But during my time at work there have been two things that have kept me sane amid all the numbers. That was the news and stocks. Usually how it goes is I sit at my computer turn the television on and get to work.

I have become more interested in stocks because lately that’s all they’ve been talking about in the news and because I happened to have been reporting a client’s trades on his taxes. Again, another thing about me is I don’t believe anything that I haven’t seen for myself. All throughout highs school I heard about trading and what not but I never believed in them because to me there was no way you could make money online without doing any work. My mind changed when I got to see the profits this lady was able to generate last year. So, with the context provided I want the purpose of this essay to be further understanding the stock market and politics.

## What are Tariffs?

I’m sure everyone has heard about the tariff situation that is currently taking place. With this paragraph I am going to try to explain what they are. A tariff is a fee imposed by a government on products at the time of import. There are many reasons why a country imposes tariffs. One reason for tariffs is as a method to generate extra revenue. Since it is sort of a bottle neck area this is one last checkpoint where a government can place a final fee on products before it reaches the end consumer. Another reason for tariffs is to help domestic manufacturers remain competitive in the market. In some cases, foreign countries have the ability to make products much cheaper than domestic manufactures. This price difference encourages consumers to choose the cheaper alternative and poses a threat to domestic producers since they can’t keep up with the prices foreign entities can provide.

## International Relations

In this case we will be examining the relation between the United states and China because it is a very popular topic right now due to the circumstances, we currently find ourselves in. China and the U.S trade with each other to meet the demands of their population. China and the U.S are an important relation because they are the biggest and most powerful countries right now and they are each other’s umber one trade partners. However as iterated before China can produce things at a much cheaper price so people gravitate toward buying their product. This has created a trade deficit. A trade deficit is when a country buys more than they can sell. On the surface this doesn’t seem like such a big deal, which is initially what I thought. Who cares that they make things cheaper good for them right? The dangerous thing about this is the nature of humans. We are a very nasty territorial creature. If a country is making so many sales our money is circulating in their economy, making them stronger and making our money worth less. But even scarier is what they can do with their increasing production power. To observe this we can take a look back to world war 2. At the time the U.S was the top producer in the world we had so many factories churning products out. When the war started all of these factories were repurposed to help the war effort. I believe this is the president’s biggest concern with China. They have so many efficient factories that can easily be converted into weapon and supply factories that would aid them in defeating any foe they face. What made this concern even more real is the fact that China produced 11 warship in 2024 with plans in 2025 to expand their fleet by 400 warships.

What Donald Trump is trying to do with these absurd tariffs is bring back some of that global power that we have handed over to China. The sharp price increase on imported good should make consumers gravitate toward cheaper domestically sourced products and bring some of the production back to the United States. This is basically the situation that has the whole U.S stock market’s panties in a bunch which is what we are going to get into in this next section.

## Stonks

What the actual flip is the stock market? I ask myself this question almost everyday it just doesn’t fit into my head how you can earn money without doing any work. That goes against everything I have always been taught. But in this paragraph we will be trying to understand what it Is, how it started and why it is not doing so good currently.

The stock market is like a giant online marketplace where investors can go to buy shares in a company. This means they own a small percentage of the company and are entitled to compensation in a couple different ways, but first we should clarify why a company would decide to sell small chunks of their company. A company does this in order to make more money seemingly out of thin air. This is the part that I never really understood but that exactly what it is. As an shareholder you don’t exactly get a percentage of the earnings, well in the case of dividend stocks you do get sent money from time to time but not as much as a regular stock. In that scenario you get the earning when you sell you stock to someone else or back to the company. But in this case you are also sharing the risk that the company could go under and you could be left with no money.

## Recession

According to the internet and media we are currently in the midst of an economic recession. This also confuses me a lot because I look around and everything seems to be pretty much okay. But that’s basically what a recession is it s when things are not going great. We’ve seen some pretty bad ones like in the 1920’s when nobody could access their money. But in this case lets examine what the recession we are currently facing looks like and why it is this way. One big reason I believe we are having recession like symptoms right now is because everyone is just so great. Think about it everyone is going to college, everyone is getting here fitness right. So it’s becoming harder to stand out and be a spectacular candidate for a job.

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