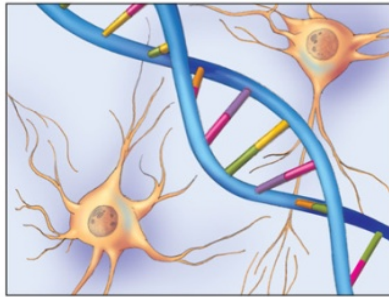


Chapter 14

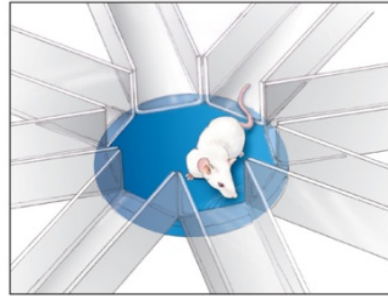
From Stress to Health and Well-Being

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The Multiple Perspectives Applied to Stress



Biological Perspective:
Are some individuals just “hard-wired” in a way that makes them better able to cope with stress?



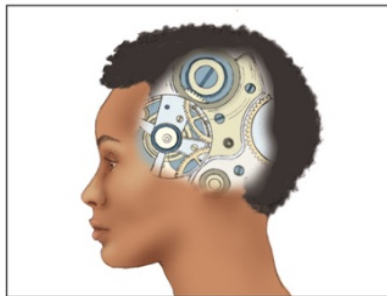
Behavioral Perspective:
Can certain stress responses — effective or ineffective — be learned?



Developmental Perspective:
Do older people deal with stress more or less effectively than younger people?



Cognitive Perspective:
Do some individuals perceive stress differently than others?



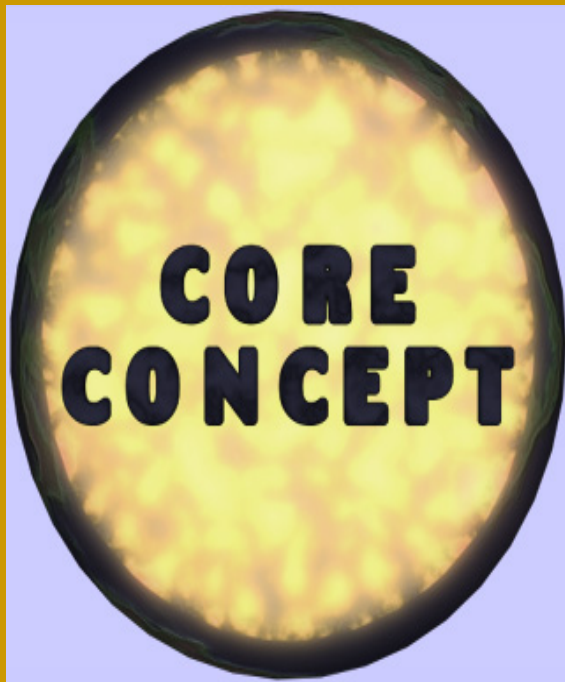
Sociocultural Perspective:
Are certain stress responses more prevalent in some cultures than in others?



Whole-Person Perspective:
Do certain personality traits predict healthier coping?



What Causes Distress?



Traumatic events, chronic lifestyle conditions, major life changes, and even minor hassles can all cause a stress response.

Traumatic Stressors

- A situation that threatens one's physical safety, arousing feelings of fear, horror, or helplessness
 - E.g., sudden life changes
- *Catastrophic Events*
 - Sudden violent calamities, either natural or manmade, that causes trauma
 - e.g., natural disasters, terrorist attacks

Psychological Response to Catastrophe

- Cohen and Ahearn (1980) identified five stages that occur in the wake of natural disasters.
 1. Psychic numbness
 2. Automatic action
 3. Communal effort
 4. Letdown
 5. Recovery

Working through Catastrophes

- *Narratives*
 - Formulate accounts of what happened
 - Stories help us find meaning in loss.
 - Facilitates healing
- *Trauma in the Media*
 - News coverage expands the experience.
 - Can create second-hand traumatization
 - e.g., perceived greater personal risk and threat
- *Vicarious Traumatization*
 - Severe stress caused by exposure to traumatic images or stories

Personal Loss: Grief

- Emotional response to loss
- Painful complex of feelings
 - sadness, anger, helplessness, guilt, despair
- Normal, healthy process of adapting to major life changes
- Integration: final phase of grieving
- Humiliation as loss; targeted rejection
- Disenfranchised grief

Which situation would likely make you feel worse?

- A – (males) Romantic partner dies **vs.**
- B – (males) Romantic partner rejects you for another
- C – (females) Romantic partner dies **vs.**
- D – (females) Romantic partner rejects you for another
- E – (all) Prefer not to answer

Who has been a victim of or knows someone who has been bullied?

- A – I have been bullied
- B – I know of someone who has been bullied
- C – Both A & B
- D – Prefer not to answer

Posttraumatic Stress

- *Posttraumatic Stress Disorder* (PTSD)
 - Delayed stress reaction
 - An individual involuntarily re-experiences emotional, cognitive, and behavioral aspects of past trauma.
 - e.g., natural disasters, life-threatening accidents, or physical abuse

Symptoms of PTSD

- Distracted
- Disorganized
- Memory difficulties
- Emotionally numb
- Less likely to feel pleasure
- Feel alienated by others
- Trouble sleeping
- Guilt about surviving
- Exaggerated “startle response”

Chronic Stressors

- Stressful conditions with a gradual onset and low intensity; long-lasting
- 1) Social stressors:
 - pressures in our social, cultural, and economic environment (e.g., unemployment, poverty, and racism)
- 2) Burnout:
 - a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, physical fatigue, and cognitive weariness; often work-related
 - avoided through job engagement

Worklife and Burnout

Worklife

Workload
Control
Reward
Community
Fairness
Values



Burnout

Exhaustion
Cynicism
Low Efficacy



Outcomes

Employee Health
Absenteeism
Quality of Work
Patient Satisfaction
Cost-Effectiveness

Chronic Stressors

3) Compassion fatigue:

- state of exhaustion experienced by medical and psychological professionals

4) Major life events:

- e.g., beginning of end of a relationship, new job, starting college

5) Daily hassles:

- situations that cause minor irritation or frustration

Change Can Be Hazardous to Your Health

- *Social Readjustment Ratings Scale (SRRS)*
- A psychological rating scale designed to measure stress levels by means of attaching numerical values to common life changes

Ch. 14

Section 14.2 & 14.3

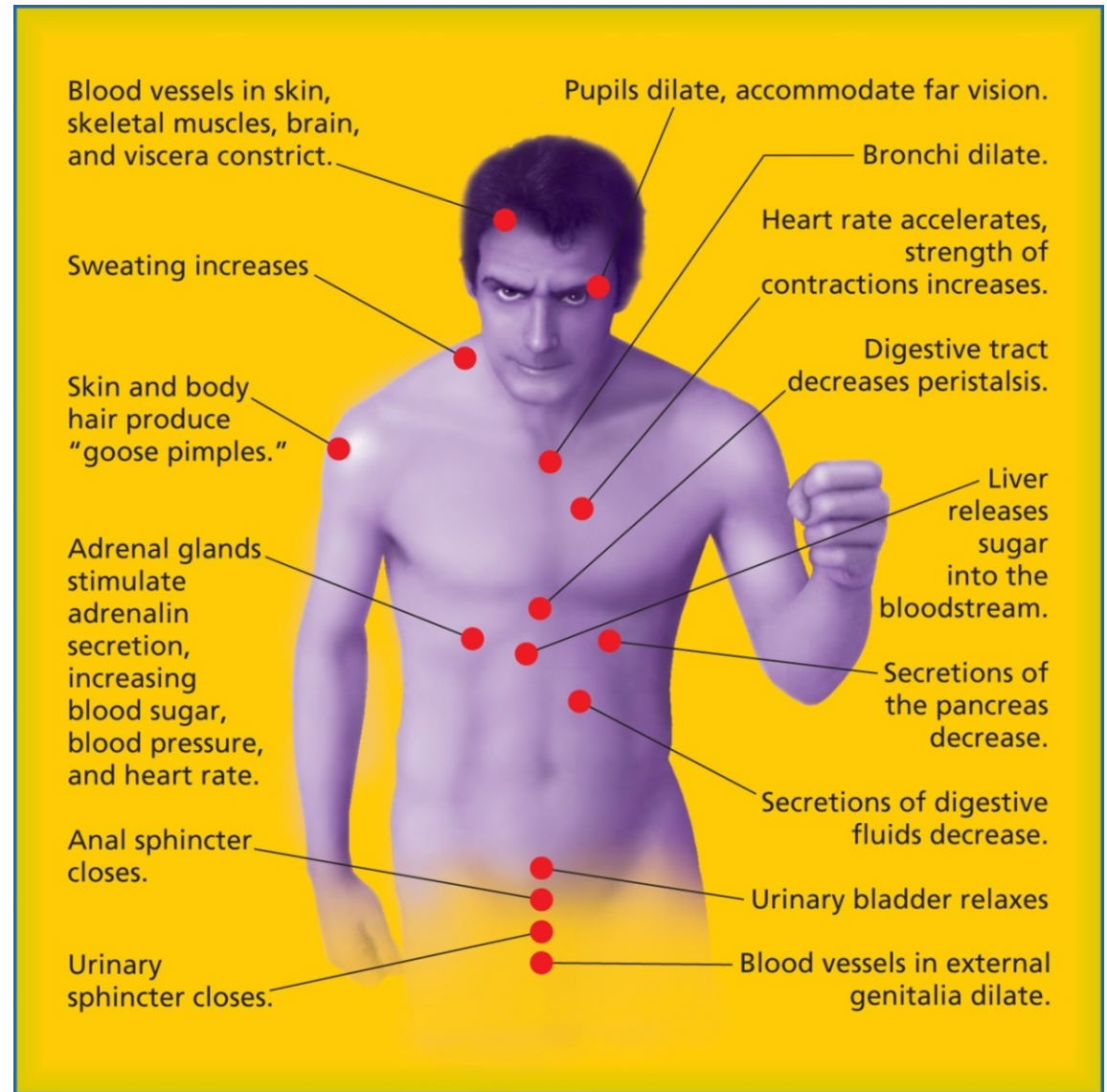
How Does Stress Affect Us Physically?



The physical stress response begins with arousal, which stimulates a series of physiological responses that in the short term are adaptive—but that can turn harmful if prolonged.

The Physiological Responses to Stress

- *Fight-or-Flight Response*
 - A sequence of internal processes that prepares the organism for struggle or escape
- *Acute Stress*
 - A temporary pattern of stressor-activated arousal with a distinct onset and limited duration



The Physical Stress Response

Stage 1: Alarm reaction

General arousal caused by:

- increase of adrenal hormones.
- reaction of sympathetic nervous system.

If stressor is not removed, organism moves to Stage 2.

Stage 2: Resistance

Arousal subsides because of:

- decrease in adrenal output.
- counter reaction of parasympathetic nervous system.

If stressor is not removed, the organism moves to Stage 3.

Stage 3: Exhaustion

General arousal of Stage 1 reappears.

Powerful parasympathetic response opposes arousal.

If stressor is not removed in time, death occurs.

Level of
normal resistance

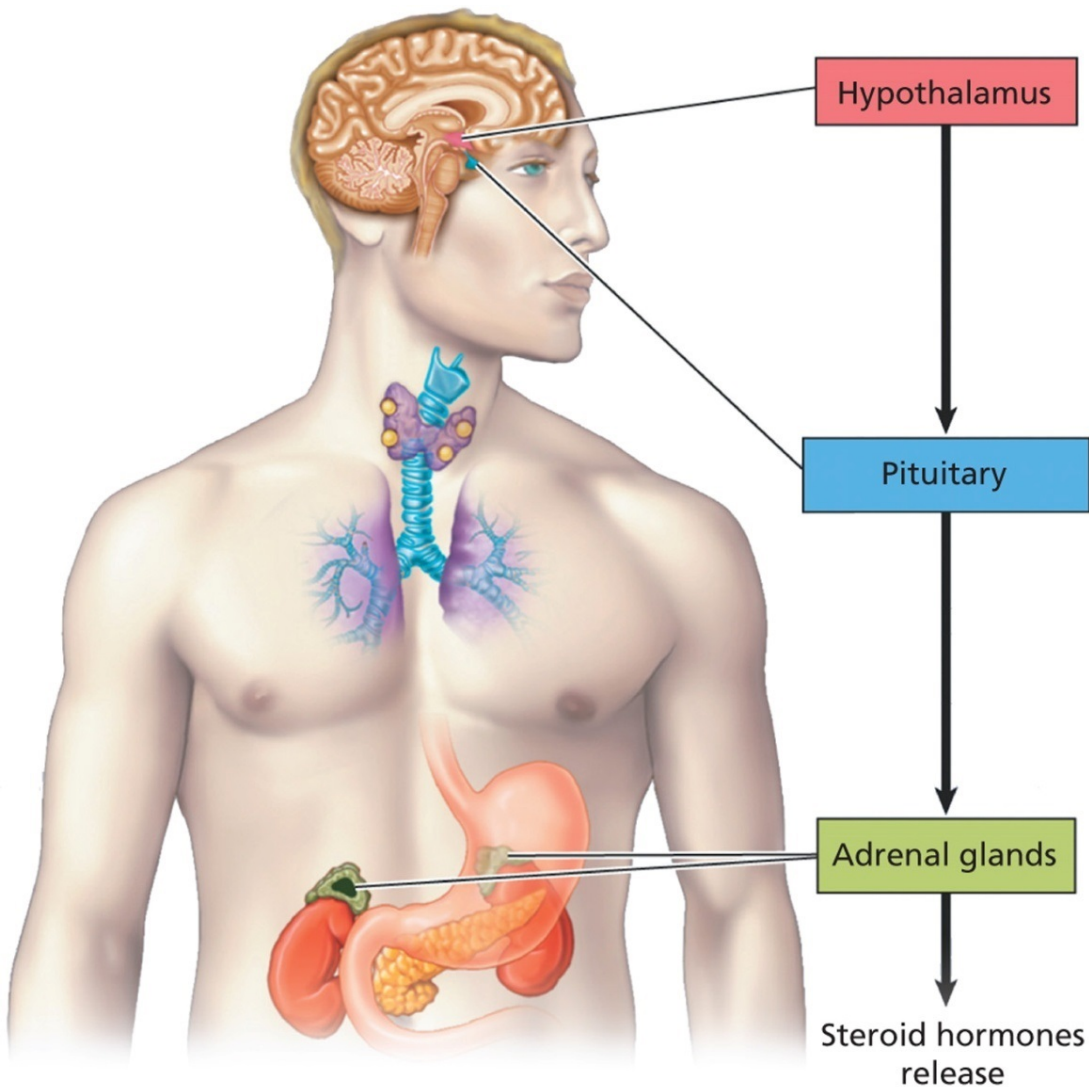
Alarm reaction

Resistance

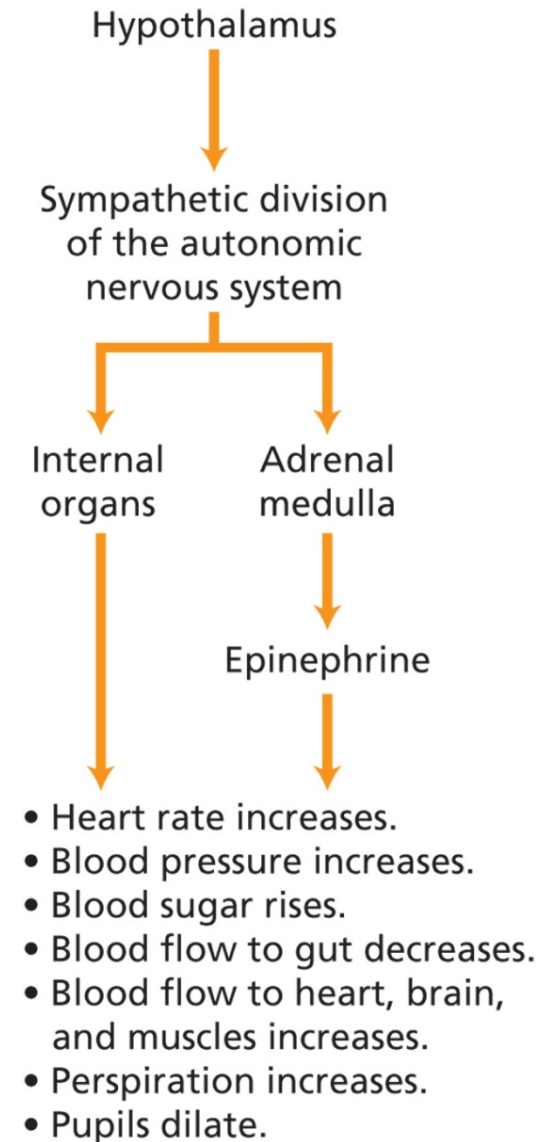
Exhaustion

Illness/death

Hormonal Response



Sympathetic Nervous System Response



The Physical Stress Response

Stage 1: Alarm reaction

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Level of
normal resistance

Alarm reaction

Resistance

Exhaustion

Illness/death

Tend-and-Befriend Model

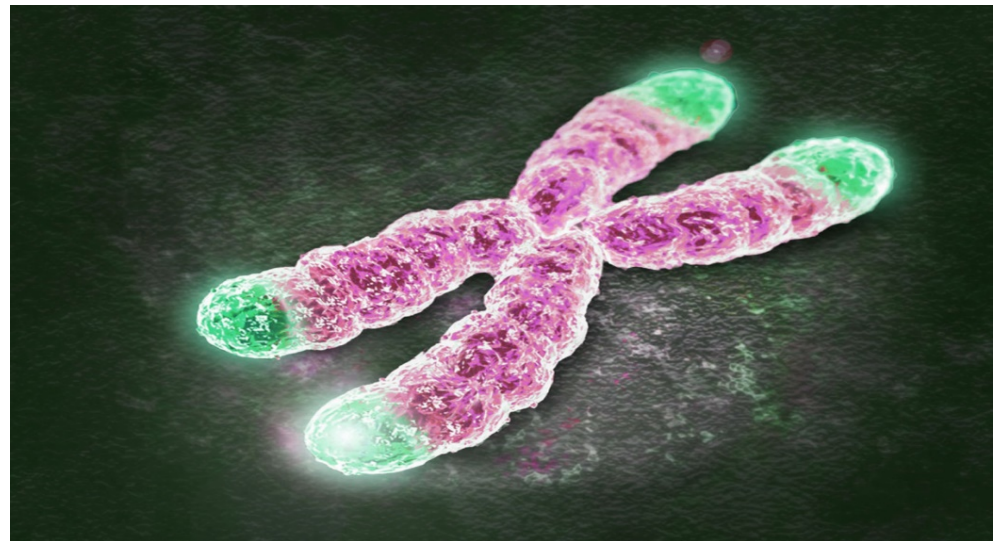
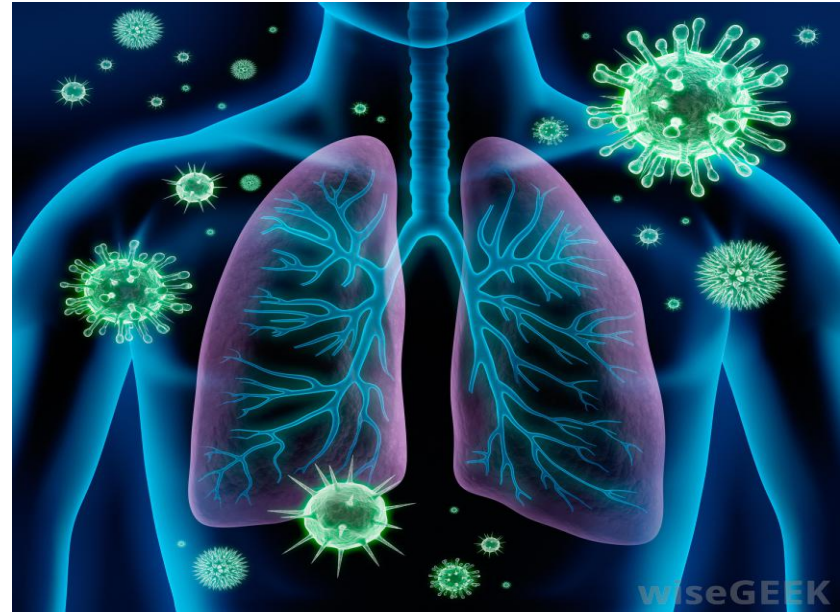
- Stress-response model proposing that females are biologically predisposed to respond to stress by nurturing and protecting offspring and seeking social support

Stress and the Immune System

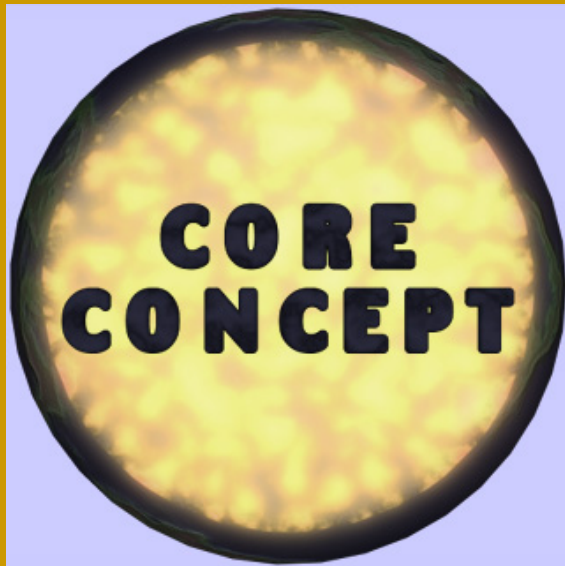
- *Immunosuppression*
 - Impairment in the function of the immune system
- *Psychoneuroimmunology*
 - Multidisciplinary field that pulls together psychologists, neurologists, and immunologists
 - Interest in mind-body connection

Bi-Directional Links: the Brain & Body

- ✗ Cognitive appraisals play a critical role in the stress-illness relationship.
- ✗ Cytokines
 - Hormone-like chemicals that fight infection and facilitate communication between the brain and the immune system
- ✗ Telomeres
 - DNA protein complexes that cap the ends of chromosomes and protect against damage to DNA

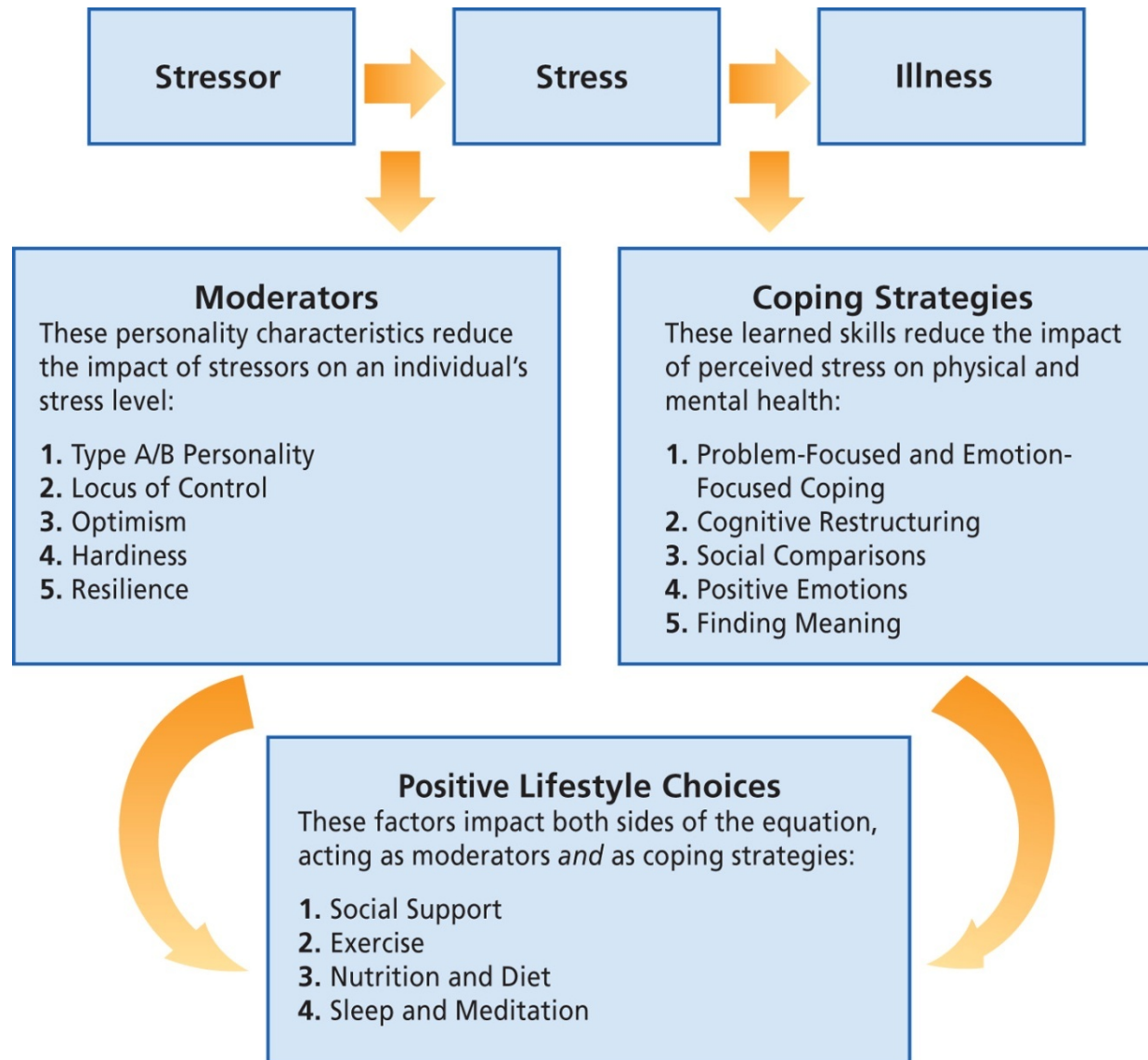


Who is Most Vulnerable to Stress?



Personality characteristics affect our individual responses to stressful situations and, consequently, the degree to which we are distressed when exposed to potential stressors.

Individual Factors' Influence on Our Stress Response



Personality and Stress

- *Type A*
 - behavior pattern characterized by intense, angry, competitive, or hostile responses to challenging situations
- *Type B*
 - behavior pattern characterized by a relaxed, approach to life

Locus of Control

✗ Individuals' expectations about our ability to influence the outcomes in our life.

- Internals believe that one has the ability to influence their life outcomes.
- Externals believe that they can do little to influence their life outcomes.

✗ Influence on Health:

- Comparison of internal vs. external
- Research with seniors experiencing varying levels of control

Psychological Responses to Stress

- *Learned Helplessness*
 - A pattern of failure to respond to threatening stimuli after an organism experiences a series of ineffective responses
- *Hardiness*
 - Attitude of resistance to stress based on a sense of three characteristics:
 - challenge, commitment, and control

Psychological Factors Related to Stress & Health

✗ *Optimism*

- Interprets stressors as external in origin, temporary and specific in their effects
- See a future of bright possibilities
- Fewer physical symptoms of illness
- Recover more quickly from certain disorders
- Live longer

Bonanno's Trajectories of Psychological Functioning

✕ *Resilience*

- Capacity to adapt, achieve well-being, and cope with stress, in spite of serious threats to development

Resilience: The ability of adults in otherwise normal circumstances who are exposed to an isolated and potentially highly disruptive event, such as the death of a close relative or a violent or life-threatening situation, to maintain relatively stable, healthy levels of psychological and physical functioning as well as the capacity for generative experiences and positive emotions.

Recovery: When normal functioning temporarily gives way to threshold or sub-threshold psychopathology (e.g., symptoms of depression or posttraumatic stress disorder [PTSD]), usually for a period of at least several months, and then gradually returns to pre-event levels.

Chronic Dysfunction: Prolonged suffering and inability to function, usually lasting several years or longer.

Delayed Grief or Trauma: When adjustment seems normal but then distress and symptoms increase months later. Researchers have not found evidence of delayed grief, but delayed trauma appears to be a genuine phenomenon.

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Section 14.4

How Can We Transform Negative Stress Into Positive Life Strategies?



Effective coping strategies reduce the negative impact of stress on our health, while positive lifestyle choices can enhance our mental and physical health and well-being.

Psychological Coping Strategies

- *Defending*
 - Efforts focused on reducing symptoms of stress and one's awareness of the them
- *Coping*
 - Taking action to reduce or eliminate the causes of stress, not merely the symptoms
 - problem-focused
 - emotion-focused coping

Psychological Coping Strategies

- *Emotion-Focused Coping*
 - Responding to stress by controlling one's emotional responses (not ruminating)
- *Problem-Focused Coping*
 - Responding to stress by identifying, reducing, and eliminating the stressor

Psychological Resources for Coping with Stress

✗ *Cognitive Restructuring*

- Reappraising stressors
- Its goal is to create a less stressful perspective.
- Recognizing thoughts about the stressor that is leading to the anxiety
- Cornerstone of cognitive-behavioral therapy

Psychological Resources for Coping with Stress

✗ *Social Comparison*

- Type of cognitive restructuring
- Compare oneself to others in similar situations
- Downward social comparison
 - Compare to those worse off
- Upward social comparison
 - Compare to those better off

✗ *Positive Emotions*

- Induce good health
- Sense of humor
- Increases longevity

✗ *Finding Meaning*

Psychological Resources For Coping With Stress

✗ *Psychological Debriefing*

- Brief, immediate strategy; focused on venting emotions and discussing reactions to the trauma
- Based on the belief that it is psychologically healthier to express negative feelings than to keep them inside

✗ *Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD)*

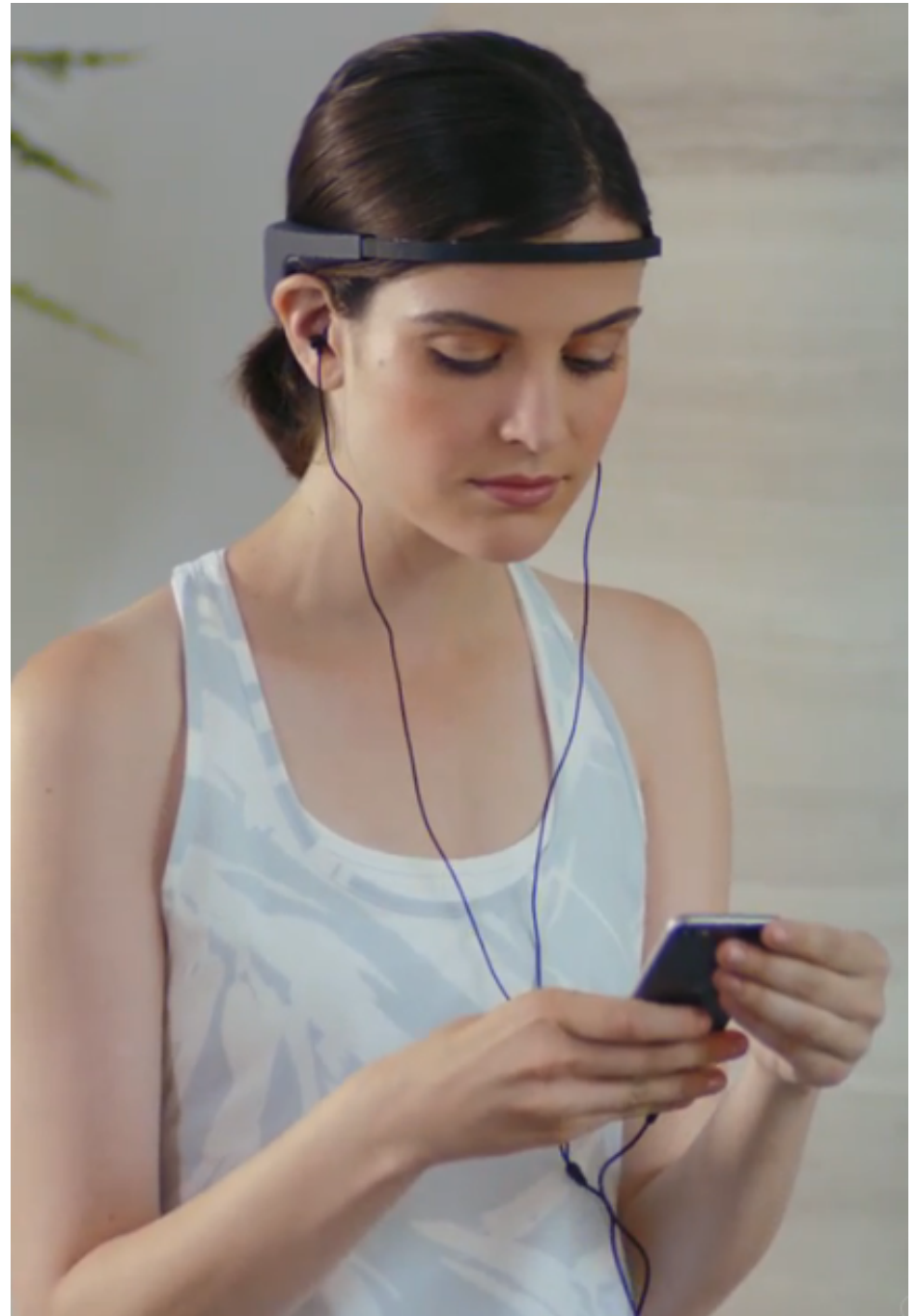
- Group sessions to trauma survivors
- Few studies have been performed; there are contradictory findings on the effectiveness of CISD.

Positive Lifestyle Choice

- *Social Support*
 - Emotional support, tangible assistance, physical affection, and informational support for understanding stressors and ways to cope
 - Resources others provide to help an individual cope with stress
 - Reduces physical and psychological arousal associated with the stress

Physical Coping Strategies

- ✗ Physical coping strategies include:
- Exercise (at least thirty minutes per day)
 - Nutrition and diet
 - Sleep and meditation



Ten Steps to Personal Wellness

1. Exercise regularly.
2. Eat nutritious, balanced meals (high in vegetables, fruits, and grains, low in fat and cholesterol).
3. Maintain a sensible weight.
4. Sleep 7 to 8 hours nightly; rest/relax daily.
5. Wear seat belts and bike helmets.
6. Do not smoke or use drugs.
7. Use alcohol in moderation, if at all.
8. Engage only in protected, safe sex.
9. Get regular medical/dental check-ups; adhere to medical regimens.
10. Develop an optimistic perspective and supportive friendships.

Happiness and Well-Being

- *Subjective Well-Being (SWB)*
 - An individual's evaluative response to his or her life, commonly called happiness; includes cognitive and emotional reactions
- The Faces Scale



20%



46%



27%



4%



2%



1%



0%

Health Psychology and Behavioral Medicine

✗ *Behavioral Medicine*

- ✗ Medical field specializing in the link between lifestyle and disease

✗ *Health Psychology*

- ✗ Psychological field that studies psychosocial factors that contribute to promoting health and well-being—and also those that influence illness—with the goal of educating the public about developing healthier lifestyles

Response to Campaign for Healthy Change

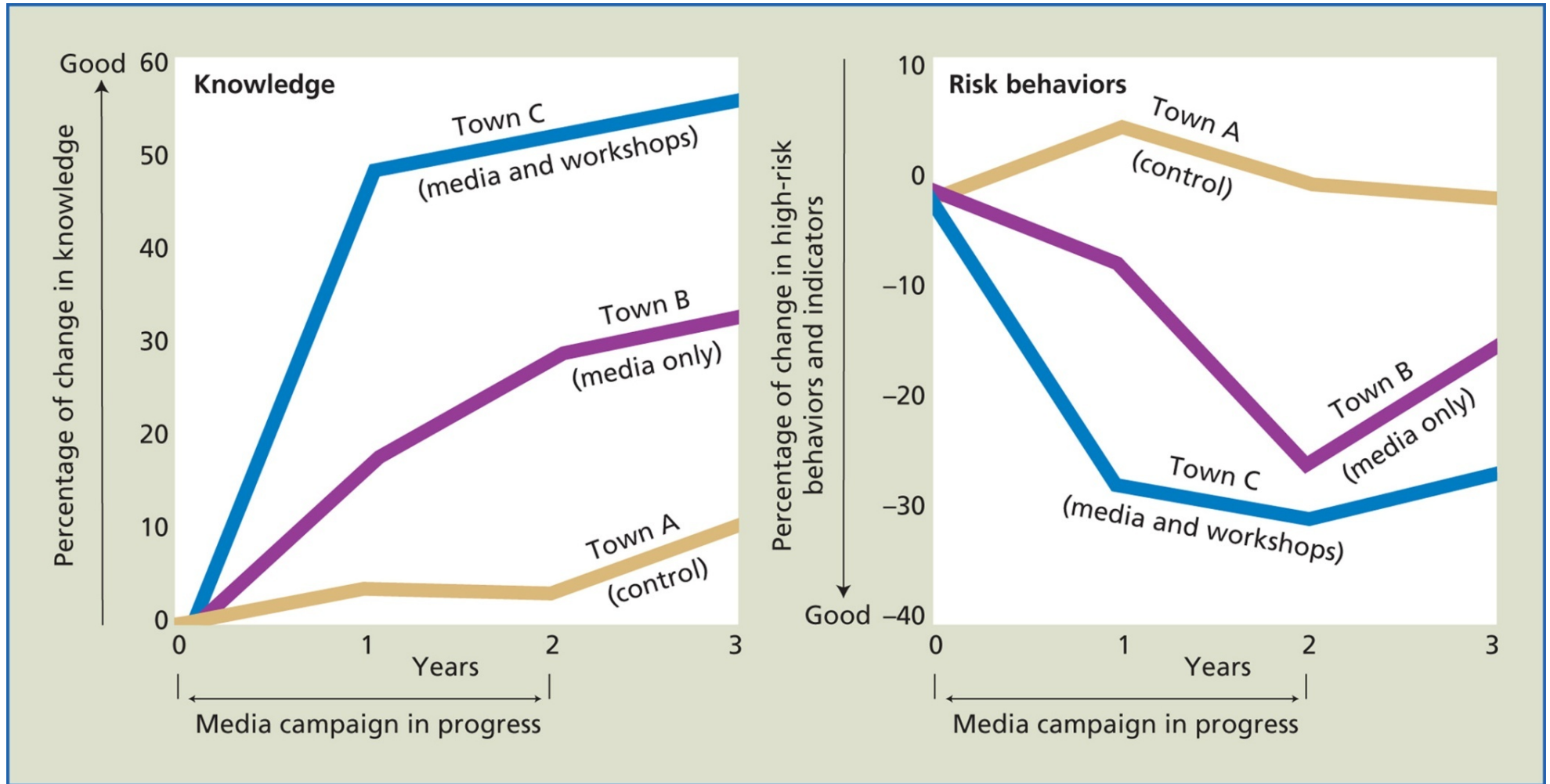


Figure 14.10 Response to Campaign for Healthy Change

Town A, whose residents received no mass media campaign for heart-healthy behavior, showed the least knowledge gain over two years. Town B residents, exposed to a media campaign, showed significant improvement. Knowledge gain was greatest for residents of Town C, whose residents participated in intense workshops and instruction sessions for several months prior to the media blitz. As knowledge increased, risk behaviors (bad health habits) and signs (indicators) decreased.