

**CINDY ARONSON TRAINING**  
**PRESENTS**

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**FROM STRESSED TO ZEST:**  
**RE-ENERGIZING YOURSELF & YOUR TEAM**

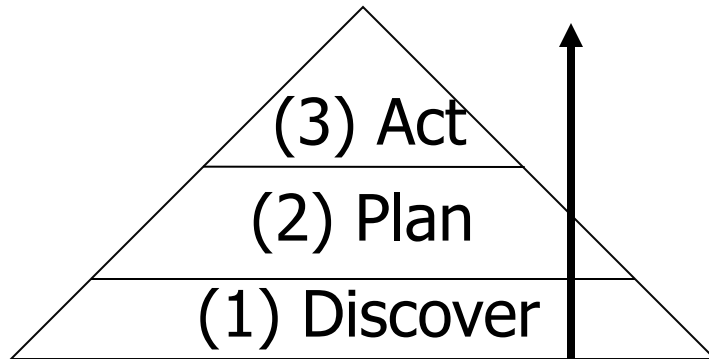
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**2021 Staff Conference (Virtual)**  
Monday, February 8, 2021  
Noon – 1:30 PM

# Managing Stress



**What causes you stress?**

**How does stress impact you?**

## **Make A Choice When Faced With Stressors**

1. Do nothing different.
2. Get rid of it.
3. Change your attitude (perspective)
4. Change your behavior (what you do)

## **The Schedule of Recent Experience (SRE)**

The SRE is a useful technique for understanding the long term stress you may be experiencing. It lists major life events and assigns a “stress rating” to each of these.

Our purpose for using the SRE in the Stressed to Zest workshop is to help you become aware of the level of stress you may currently have in your life and to encourage you to adopt habits for managing high levels of stress. Keep in mind this is solely an awareness exercise – if a health professional was conducting this exercise with you personally and talking through your experiences, your ratings may differ from the ratings you give yourself. Therefore, keep that understanding when adding up your final score.

### **Dr. Holmes instructions for using the tool:**

The SRE shows 42 important stresses that people experience in normal life. Review the list of 42 stressors, noting those that you have experienced in the last 12 months.

**(1)** Enter the number of times that the event has occurred in the **last year** in the ‘Number of Times’ column. **If an event has happened more than four times during the year, give it a maximum score of 4..**

**(2)** Multiply the number of times the event has happened by the stress rating listed for the event. This gives you your score for that event type. Total this to give your overall score.

Per Dr. Holmes research, scores of 200 or more on this scale may show that you are experiencing high levels of longer-term stress. You may be more susceptible to burnout or at risk of stress impacting your health. This is particularly the case if your work is routinely stressful. Scores of 300 or more mean that you should take particular care.

Making a commitment to adopt the habits and strategies we discuss in class can help you cope and balance all that you may be experiencing in your life right now. If you have any concerns over stress-related illness or are experiencing persistent unhappiness, we strongly encourage you to see a health professional.

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*(The SRE was developed by Dr. Thomas Holmes and his fellow researchers in a series of studies that compared patients’ health outcomes with the life events they had recently experienced. In Dr Holmes’ study, people with a score of less than 150 had a low likelihood (30%) of illness in the near future, while those with a score of over 300 had a very high likelihood of illness (80%).)*

## The Schedule of Recent Experience (SRE)

- 1) Lot more or a lot less trouble with the boss. \_\_\_\_\_ x 23 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) Major change in sleeping habits (sleeping a lot more or a lot less or a change in time of day when you sleep). \_\_\_\_\_ x 16 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) Major change in eating habits (eating a lot more or a lot less or very different meal hours or surroundings). \_\_\_\_\_ x 15 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) Revision of personal habits (dress, manners, associations, etc.). \_\_\_\_\_ x 24 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) Major change in your usual type or amount of recreation. \_\_\_\_\_ x 19 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 6) Major change in your social activities (e.g., clubs, dancing, movies, visiting, and so on). \_\_\_\_\_ x 18 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 7) Major change in church activities (attending a lot more or less than usual) \_\_\_\_\_ x 19 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 8) Major change in the number of family get-together's (a lot more or a lot fewer than usual) \_\_\_\_\_ x 15 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 9) Major change in your financial state (a lot worse off or a lot better off). \_\_\_\_\_ x 38 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 10) Trouble with in-laws \_\_\_\_\_ x 29 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 11) Major change in the number of arguments with spouse (a lot more or a lot fewer than usual regarding child rearing, personal habits, and so on). \_\_\_\_\_ x 35 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 12) Sexual difficulties \_\_\_\_\_ x 39 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 13) Major personal injury or illness. \_\_\_\_\_ x 53 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 14) Death of a close family member (other than spouse). \_\_\_\_\_ x 63 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 15) Death of spouse. \_\_\_\_\_ x 100 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 16) Death of a close friend. \_\_\_\_\_ x 37 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 17) Gaining a new family member (through birth, adoption, oldster moving in and so on) \_\_\_\_\_ x 39 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 18) Major change in the health or behavior of a family \_\_\_\_\_ x 44 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 19) Change in residence. \_\_\_\_\_ x 20 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 20) Detention in jail or other institution. \_\_\_\_\_ x 63 = \_\_\_\_\_

## The Schedule of Recent Experience (SRE) continued

- 21) Minor violations of the law (traffic tickets, jaywalking, disturbing the peace, and so on). \_\_\_\_\_ x 11 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 22) Major business re-adjustment (merger, reorganization, bankruptcy and so on). \_\_\_\_\_ x 39 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 23) Marriage. \_\_\_\_\_ x 50 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 24) Divorce. \_\_\_\_\_ x 73 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 25) Marital separation from spouse. \_\_\_\_\_ x 65 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 26) Outstanding personal achievement. \_\_\_\_\_ x 28 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 27) Son or daughter leaving home (marriage, attending college, and so on). \_\_\_\_\_ x 29 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 28) Retirement from work \_\_\_\_\_ x 45 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 29) Major change in working hours or conditions \_\_\_\_\_ x 20 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 30) Major change in responsibilities at work (promotion, demotion or lateral transfer). \_\_\_\_\_ x 29 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 31) Being fired from work. \_\_\_\_\_ x 47 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 32) Major change in living conditions (building a new home or remodeling, deterioration of home or neighborhood) \_\_\_\_\_ x 25 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 33) Spouse beginning or ceasing to work outside the home. \_\_\_\_\_ x 26 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 34) Taking out a mortgage or loan for a major purchase (purchasing a home or business, and so on) \_\_\_\_\_ x 31 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 35) Taking out a loan for a lesser purchase (a car, TV, freezer). \_\_\_\_\_ x 17 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 36) Foreclosure on a mortgage or loan. \_\_\_\_\_ x 30 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 37) Vacation. \_\_\_\_\_ x 13 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 38) Changing to a new school. \_\_\_\_\_ x 20 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 39) Changing to a different line of work. \_\_\_\_\_ x 36 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 40) Beginning or ceasing formal schooling \_\_\_\_\_ x 26 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 41) Marital reconciliation with mate. \_\_\_\_\_ x 45 = \_\_\_\_\_
- 42) Pregnancy. \_\_\_\_\_ x 40 = \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Score**

### Summary:

Different individuals have different abilities to cope with stress. Generally, if you score more than 200, be aware that longer-term stress is something you need to pay careful attention to. If you score more than 300, be vigilantly aware and work to minimize the amount of stress in your life.

# 12 Habits of Stress-less Living

1. Prioritize, organize and make a great list.
2. Tap into the power of friendship.
3. Work at being an optimist.
4. Believe.
5. Schedule fun.
6. Breathe deeply.
7. Relax by visualizing happy endings.
8. Keep your schedule simple.
9. Know where to find perspective.
10. Don't procrastinate the big rocks.
11. Delegate
12. 'Your choice – what works for you?'

# 9

## Ways to Energize Yourself and Your Team

<p><b>1. Assess Eating Habits</b></p> <p>How are you fueling yourself and your team? What do you eat and drink? Junk food/drinks may offer quick jolts of energy but long term often drain your energy. Model and encourage healthy eating habits and fuelings.</p>	<p><b>2. Balance Your Energy With Recovery</b></p> <p>As we are all aware, some projects, times of the week or year, customers, etc. take high amounts of energy. Encourage self and others to pay special attention to how you recover from these high energy moments. 'Recovery' can be added breaks, time off, fun activities to recharge, sleeping in, parties to celebrate, etc.</p>	<p><b>3. Create Rituals</b></p> <p>Research shows the more decisions we make, the more energy we use. Put some decisions on auto-pilot with rituals or routines. Consider eating the same breakfast, engaging a food prep day for the week's meals, follow a regular agenda for meetings, structure a daily agenda, engage regular traditions that employees (or your family) look forward to at various times of the week, month, year, etc.</p>
<p><b>4. Be Positive</b></p> <p>Deal with real problems, challenges, and conflict but do so in a positive way. Problems can make us bitter or better. Choose better and model it for your team. What can/did we learn? How can this strengthen us in the long term? How is this an opportunity to build stronger relationships with people? Be a leader who sees the good in every situation.</p>	<p><b>5. Stop Multitasking</b></p> <p>Research shows that we are more effective and energized when we clarify and put order to our priorities and focus our time on first priorities. The more we work on, the less we often get done. Negotiate priorities with others and agree to focus on completing them. Successfully accomplishing them breeds more success &amp; accomplishment is energizing.</p>	<p><b>6. Discover What Matters to You</b></p> <p>This ties to #5 – spend time clarifying what matters to you most; what you value; what your greatest priorities are. Be clear on what they are for work and life and put them in order of importance to you. As leaders, remember you serve and help others so include their thoughts and priorities when developing your priorities.</p>
<p><b>7. Focus on What Matters to You</b></p> <p>DISCOVER • PLAN • <u>ACT</u> Focus your resources of talent, time and money on what matters to you most. When your behavior supports your values you are most productive and energized. Doing so sets a great example for those you lead and encourages them to do the same.</p>	<p><b>8. Beat Energy Drains</b></p> <p>Discover and clarify the people, processes, and projects that act as energy vampires, sucking the energy from you. Once you've clearly defined the energy drains, make a choice with each:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do Nothing</li> <li>2. Get Rid of It</li> <li>3. Change My Attitude</li> <li>4. Change My Behavior</li> </ol>	<p><b>9. Use Your Stress</b></p> <p>Perhaps one good thing about stressors that zap our energy is that we get sick of feeling this way and it forces a decision. Many of the greatest success stories in any field came from great failures or very stressful 'crucible moments.' Stressing muscles in weightlifting leads to greater strength – the same is often true when we use our stress to strengthen the best in us.</p>

## 52 Proven Stress Reducers

1. Get up fifteen minutes earlier in the morning. The inevitable morning mishaps will be less stressful.
2. Prepare for the morning the evening before. Set the breakfast table, make lunches, put out the clothes you plan to wear, etc.
3. Don't rely on your memory. Write down appointment times, when to pick up the laundry, when library books are due, etc. ("The palest ink is better than the most retentive memory." - Old Chinese Proverb)
4. Do nothing which, after being done, leads you to tell a lie.
5. Make duplicates of all keys. Bury a house key in a secret spot in the garden and carry a duplicate car key in your wallet, apart from your key ring.
6. Practice preventive maintenance. Your car, appliances, home, and relationships will be less likely to break down/fall apart "at the worst possible moment."
7. Be prepared to wait. A paperback can make a wait in a post office line almost pleasant.
8. Procrastination is stressful. Whatever you want to do tomorrow, do today; whatever you want to do today, do it now.
9. Plan ahead. Don't let the gas tank get below one-quarter full; keep a well-stocked "emergency shelf" of home staples; don't wait until you're down to your last bus token or postage stamp to buy more; etc.
10. Don't put up with something that doesn't work right. If your alarm clock, wallet, shoe laces, windshield wipers — whatever — are a constant aggravation, get them fixed or get new ones.
11. Allow 15 minutes of extra time to get to appointments. Plan to arrive at an airport one hour before domestic departures.
12. Eliminate (or restrict) the amount of caffeine in your diet.
13. Always set up contingency plans, "just in case." ("If for some reason either of us is delayed, here's what we'll do..." kind of thing. Or, "If we get split up in the shopping center, here's where we'll meet.")
14. Relax your standards. The world will not end if the grass doesn't get mowed this weekend.
15. Pollyanna-Power! For every one thing that goes wrong, there are probably 10 or 50 or 100 blessings. Count them!
16. Ask questions. Taking a few moments to repeat back directions, what someone expects of you, etc., can save hours. (The old "the hurrieder I go, the behinder I get, " idea.)
17. Say "No!" Saying "no" to extra projects, social activities, and invitations you know you don't have the time or energy for takes practice, self-respect, and a belief that everyone, everyday, needs quiet time to relax and be alone.
18. Unplug your phone. Want to take a long bath, meditate, sleep, or read without interruption? Drum up the courage to temporarily disconnect. (The possibility of there being a terrible emergency in the next hour or so is almost nil.)
19. Turn "needs" into preferences. Our basic physical needs translate into food, water, and keeping warm. Everything else is a preference. Don't get attached to preferences.



20. Simplify, simplify, simplify...
21. Make friends with non-worriers. Nothing can get you into the habit of worrying faster than associating with chronic worrywarts.
22. Get up and stretch periodically if your job requires that you sit for extended periods.
23. Wear earplugs. If you need to find quiet at home, pop in some earplugs.
24. Get enough sleep. If necessary, use an alarm clock to remind you to go to bed.
25. Create order out of chaos. Organize your home and workspace so that you always know exactly where things are. Put things away where they belong and you won't have to go through the stress of losing things.
26. When feeling stressed, most people tend to breathe in short, shallow breaths. When you breathe like this, stale air is not expelled, oxidation of the tissues is incomplete, and muscle tension frequently results. Check your breathing throughout the day, and before, during, and after high-pressure situations. If you find your stomach muscles are knotted and your breathing is shallow, relax all your muscles and take several deep, slow breaths. Note how, when you're relaxed, both your abdomen and chest expand when you breathe.
27. Writing your thoughts and feelings down (in a journal, or on paper to be thrown away) can help you clarify things and can give you a renewed perspective.
28. 'Smell the roses, blow out the candles.' Try the following yoga technique whenever you feel the need to relax. Inhale deeply through your nose to the count of eight. Then, with lips puckered, exhale very slowly through your mouth to the count of 16, or for as long as you can. Concentrate on the long sighing sound and feel the tension dissolve. Repeat 10 times.
29. Inoculate yourself against a feared event. Example: before speaking in public, take time to go over every part of the experience in your mind. Imagine what you'll wear, what the audience will look like, how you will present your talk, what the questions will be and how you will answer them, etc. Visualize the experience the way you would have it be. You'll likely find that when the time comes to make the actual presentation, it will be "old hat" and much of your anxiety will have fled.
30. When the stress of having to get a job done gets in the way of getting the job done, diversion — a voluntary change in activity and/or environment — may be just what you need.
31. Talk it out. Discussing your problems with a trusted friend can help clear your mind of confusion so you can concentrate on problem solving.
32. One of the most obvious ways to avoid unnecessary stress is to select an environment (work, home, leisure) which is in line with your personal needs and desires. If you hate desk jobs, don't accept a job which requires that you sit at a desk all day. If you hate to talk politics, don't associate with people who love to talk politics, etc.
33. Learn to live one day at a time.
34. Every day, do something you really enjoy.
35. Add an ounce of love to everything you do.
36. Take a hot bath or shower (or a cool one in summertime) to relieve tension.
37. Do something for somebody else.

38. Focus on understanding rather than on being understood; on loving rather than on being loved.
39. Do something that will improve your appearance. Looking better can help you feel better.
40. Schedule a realistic day. Avoid the tendency to schedule back-to-back appointments; allow time between appointments for a breathing spell.
41. Become more flexible. Some things are worth not doing perfectly and some issues are well to compromise upon.
42. Eliminate destructive self-talk: "I'm too old to...," "I'm too fat to...," etc.
43. Use your weekend time for a change of pace. If your work week is slow and patterned, make sure there is action and time for spontaneity built into your weekends. If your work week is fast-paced and full of people and deadlines, seek peace and solitude during your days off. Feel as if you aren't accomplishing anything at work? Tackle a job on the weekend which you can finish to your satisfaction.
44. "Worry about the pennies and the dollars will take care of themselves." That's another way of saying: take care of the todays as best you can and the yesterdays and the tomorrows will take care of themselves.
45. Do one thing at a time. When you are with someone, be with that person and with no one or nothing else. When you are busy with a project, concentrate on doing that project and forget about everything else you have to do.
46. Allow yourself time – everyday – for privacy, quiet, and introspection.
47. If an especially unpleasant task faces you, do it early in the day and get it over with; then the rest of your day will be free of anxiety.
48. Learn to delegate responsibility to capable others.
49. Don't forget to take a lunch break. Try to get away from your desk or work area in body and mind, even if it's just for 15 or 20 minutes.
50. Forget about counting to 10. Count to 1,000 before doing something or saying anything that could make matters worse.
51. Have a forgiving view of events and people. Accept the fact that we live in an imperfect world.
52. Have an optimistic view of the world. Believe that most people are doing the best they can.

Source: The National Headache Foundation – Chicago, IL

## Notes:

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### About Your Instructor:

**Cindy Aronson** loves her job and is on a mission to inspire others to love theirs too. As the owner and principal of Cindy Aronson Training, she develops and leads programs that fuel workplace engagement, pride, leadership impact and personal and professional success.

For over 25 years, she has had the honor and privilege to be a partner in talent development with a variety of outstanding colleges and universities, businesses and organizations and thousands of talented professionals. Her 'Developing Leadership Excellence' program has been attended by hundreds of business leaders and chosen by educational institutions and numerous companies/organizations to strengthen the talent on their teams.

Cindy holds a degree in communication from the State University of New York College at Fredonia. She is a member of the National Speakers Association and a founder and executive board member of the Lucille Ball inspired, National Comedy Center - the nation's officially designated cultural institution for comedy. She lives in Bemus Point, New York.

**Connect with her at:** [cindyaronson1@gmail.com](mailto:cindyaronson1@gmail.com) | 716.969.6016 | [Linkedin.com/cindyaronson](https://www.linkedin.com/company/cindyaronson)