

Training your Brain to Help your Body Cope with GI Disorders

Eva Szigethy MD PhD

Associate Professor of Psychiatry, Medicine & Pediatrics,
University of Pittsburgh

Director, Medical Coping Clinic, Children's Hospital of
Pittsburgh

Director, Visceral Inflammation and Pain (VIP) Center,
Division of Gastroenterology, Hepatology, and Nutrition,
University of Pittsburgh Medical Center

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University of Pittsburgh

Conflict of Interest

- Conflict of Interest: None
- Disclosure: All medication suggestions in this presentation are off-label uses unless noted otherwise.

Objectives

1. Understand how stress and IBD overlap
2. Stress management and improving sleep

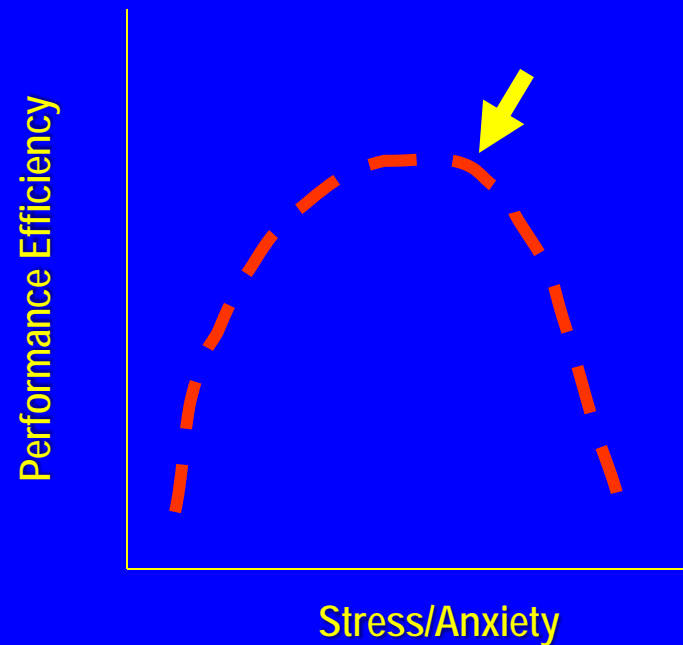
STRESS RESPONSE

- The response to stress is designed to help ensure survival of the organism
- Acute stress activates the fight/flight response resulting in cascade of healthy reactions in our brain and body



Stress Can Exact A Toll On Body & Mind

- Can be useful in enhancing performance & efficiency
- Can be harmful & negative especially when it becomes chronic & excessive



Effects of Chronic Stress

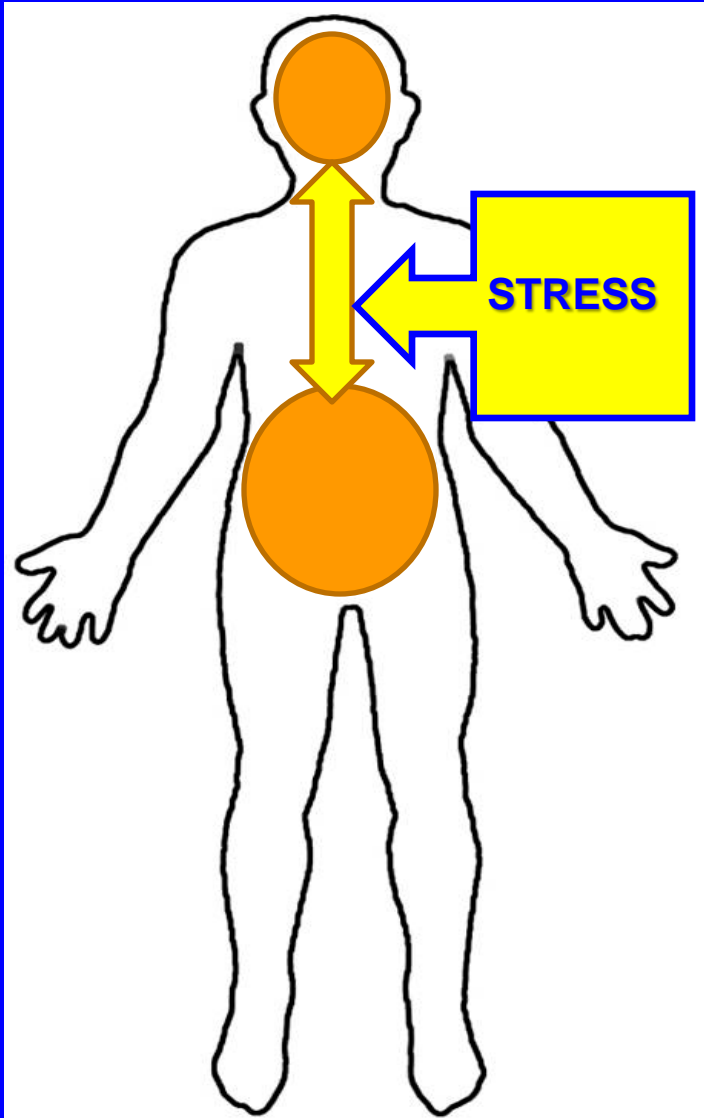
BRAIN

- Difficulty thinking clearly and focusing
- Depression, irritability or the “blues”
- **Fatigue**
- **Increased sensitivity to aches and pains**

BODY

- Increased muscle tension
- Increased blood glucose levels and insulin levels
- Immune system suppressed
- Decreased ability to fight infection

Brain-Gut-Stress Connection



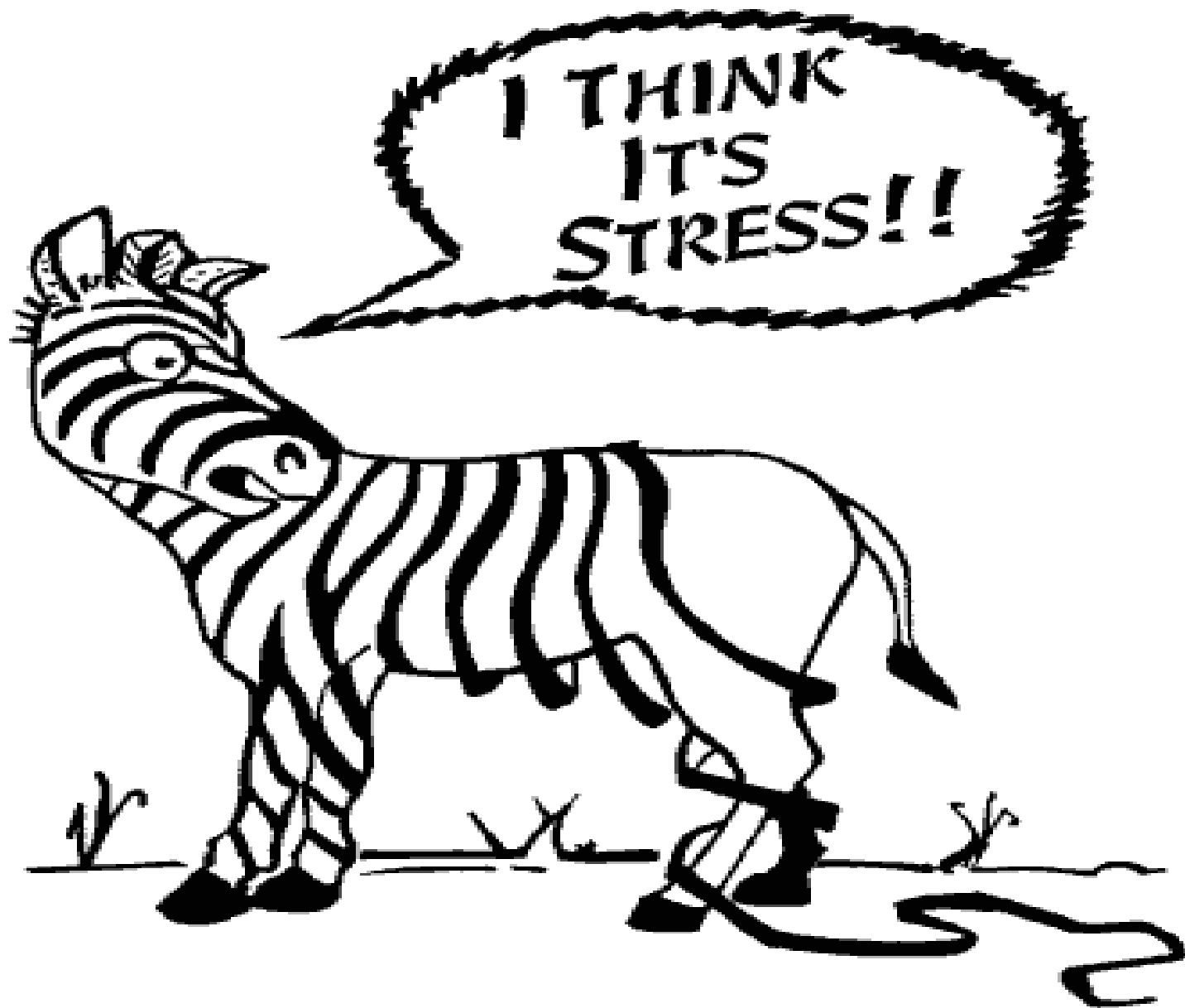
Stress results when something that happens to you exceeds the capacity of your mind to deal with the event effectively.

The mental and physical effects of stress are due to the elevation of stress hormones and related biochemical cascades that occurs when the brain is activated.

Stress and Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD)

Stress can influence

- IBD relapse
- Impact response to treatment (e.g., infliximab)
- Increase risk of depression
- Increase sensitivity to pain



I THINK
IT'S
STRESS!!

Types of Stressors

- **Biological-** disease, infection, surgery
- **Environmental-** life stressors, trauma
- **Psychological-** anxiety, depression

Life Stress and IBD

1. Patients predisposed to developing IBD have higher rates of depression and life stress compared to healthy controls
2. Stress is associated with a more severe IBD course and more frequent relapse.
3. Life stress specifically has been associated with gut inflammation and altered GI motility
4. Those with positive coping strategies and low stress scores have the lowest relapse rates when followed for one year.

MORRIS

HOW TO
DELEGATE
STRESS



Stress Management

“Seeing the Light”



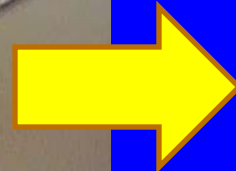
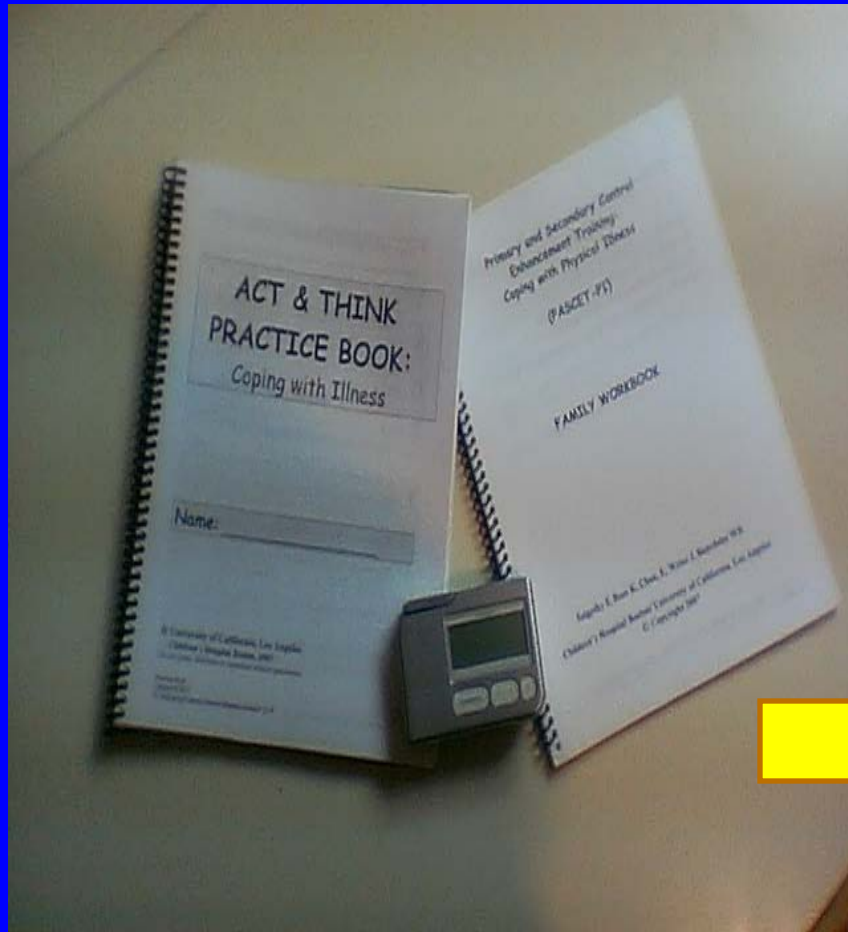
- Take out one or two things reduces stress
- Schedule breaks
- Just a few minutes can make it better
- Simple steps
- Tough to sell

Personal Stress Management

- Taking daily time outs - yoga, exercise, hobby, meditation
- Social Support
- Laughing Place
- Daily Mantra - - Optimism

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

A Way to Manage Stress



DE-STRESSING

Cognitive Behavior Therapy for Stress

- CBT alters behavior and thinking to change mood.
- CBT helps individuals to interrupt automatic emotional processing which maintains negative thinking.
- CBT teaches problem-solving based on teaching what you can and cannot control and adjusting behavior and thoughts accordingly.

One type of CBT: ACTS for US

- **A** Activities
- **C** Calm (Relaxation)
- **T** Think positive
- **S** Sleep hygiene

Activity- Exercise

- Reduces stress and depression
- Low intensity better than exhaustive program
- Exercise better than sedentary life style



YOGA

- **Emotional**
- **Physical**
- **Spiritual**



ACT: Teaching Problem-Solving

- **S**tay calm and say what the problem is
- **T**hink of solutions
- **E**xamine each solution- what is good or bad about it
- **P**ick one and try it.
- **S**ee if it works. If no, try another solution.

“My voices told me just to relax today!”

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RELAXATION

4 4 8 Breathing

IMAGERY



Mindfulness in Everyday Life



- Stop, pause – come to stillness
- Take a breath
- Observe, open to present experience: *sensation, emotion, thought, situation*
- Proceed: how can I best take care of myself, this moment?

The Art of Positive Thinking....Reversing BLUE thoughts....

- **B**laming yourself
- **L**ooking for the negative
- **U**nhappy guessing
- **E**xaggeration

Sleep History

- History
 - Bedtime Routine
 - Excessive Daytime Sleepiness
 - Arousals
 - Regularity
 - Snoring



CBT-Insomnia

1. Consistency
2. Don't go to bed unless tired
3. If not falling asleep after 20 minutes, go do something else.
4. Don't watch the clock.

Relaxation/Hypnotherapy

- Often used to target pain, a common complaint in this population.
- Visualizing calm, happy place
- 4,4,8 Breathing

Illness narrative is the patient's
perception of their illness and illness
experience.

Illness Narrative

What do you call your problem?

What do you think caused your problem?

Why do you think it started when it did?

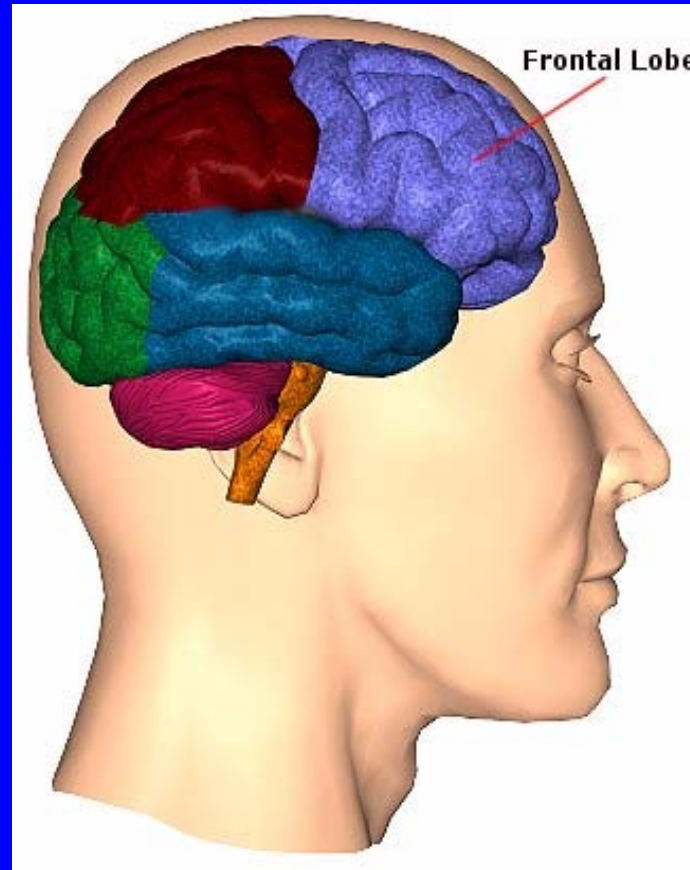
What does your sickness do to you? How does it work?

How severe is it? How long do you think you will have it?

What do you fear most about your illness?

What control do you have over your illness?

Telling your story, active coping and positive thinking alter the effects of stress on the brain



If you don't want to be ill...

...Speak your feelings.

Emotions and feelings that are hidden can influence how our body works negatively and lead to more disease flare-ups. Sharing illness stories is a powerful remedy

VISCERAL INFLAMMATION & PAIN (VIP) CENTER

- Integrates behavioral health into medical care
- Reduces stigma of behavioral health when seen as part of a comprehensive medical treatment plan
- Facilitates screening for stress and psychological issues during medical visits
- Personalized medicine for pain management, sleep and fatigue
- Decreases medical utilization and medical costs
- **412-802-6696**



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