



# Conquer your Stress: Go from Worrier to Warrior

Kathy Gruver, PhD

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## About me

- PhD in natural health
- Studied mind/body medicine at Harvard
- Written 7 books with a total of 12 awards
- Lectured over 200 times around the world including TEDx
- Hypnotherapy and coach
- Hip Hop dancer and trapeze artist

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**Yeah, seriously**



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## **Benefits of the Pause**

- Stops the fight or flight response
- Allows us time to decide whether we are going to respond or react
- Brings us back to the present and in the present moment there is no stress
- Brings us back to the body and shuts out other thoughts

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## What is Stress?

- "a condition or feeling experienced when a person **perceives** that demands exceed the personal and social resources the individual is able to mobilize."
- "a threat, real or imagined"
- It can be **A PERCEPTION**

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Painting by Octavio Ocampo

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- Digestion slows
- Cognitive function and decision making decrease
- Heart and lungs increase, Bowels/bladder empty
- Shot of adrenaline and a cascade of hormones
- Immune system increases temporarily
- Feeling of invincibility (or fear as we run)
- After the danger has passed everything goes back to normal, you sleep

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## What fails when we're stressed

- Memory
- Reason and logic
- Cognitive function
- Digestion
- Immune system
- Sexual response
- Rational risk taking
- Sleep
- Patience
- Self control and limit setting
- Tendency to accept responsibility if something goes wrong
- Ability to respond rather than react

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## On the Job

- More risk of accident and injury
- More absenteeism and tardiness
- Poor memory and ability to reason
- Less ability to take responsibility
- Increase in dangerous risk taking
- Poor communication, negative effect on relationships

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## Warning signs of stress

- Headaches
- Dizziness
- Racing Heart
- Restlessness
- Insomnia
- Smoking
- Over drinking
- Drug use
- Compulsive eating
- Bossiness
- Teeth grinding
- Crying
- Anxiety
- Boredom
- Anger
- Road rage
- Memory loss
- Loss of humor
- Forgetfulness
- Thoughts to run away
- Lack of joy in activities
- Addiction

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## What to do about stress?

- Meditate (do a mini)
- Take a walk
- Get a massage
- Play games
- Spend time w/friends
- Pet your pet
- Visualizations
- Affirmations
- Exercise
- Mindfulness
- Learn to "relax", whatever that means to you



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## Affirmations

- Make them short
- Make them positive
- Put them in the present
- Repeat them often

I am healthy and well.

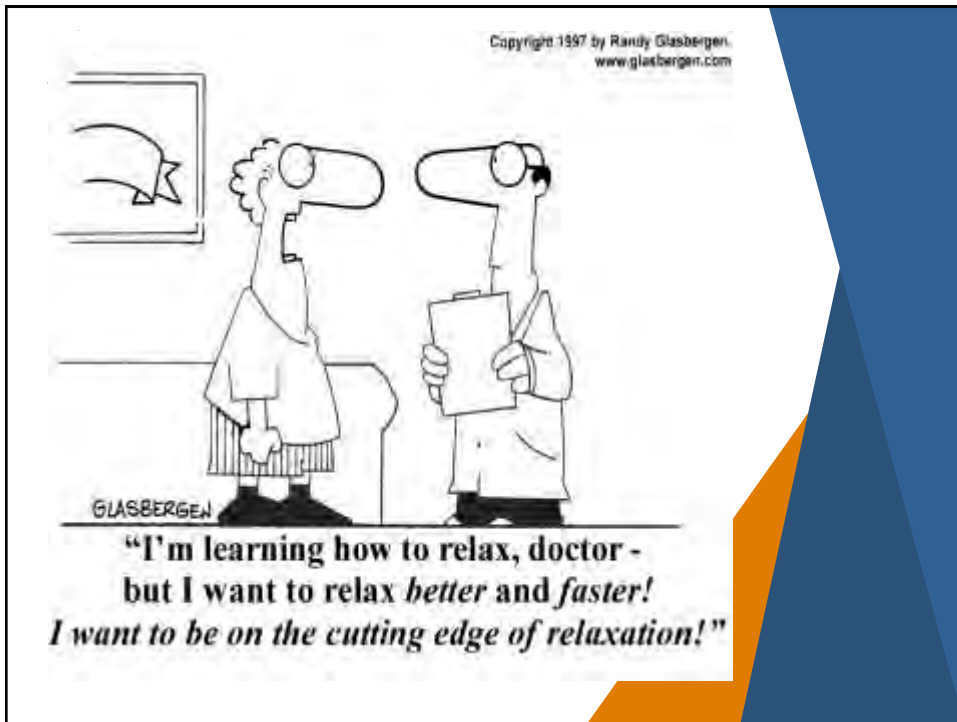
NOT: I'm not getting sick.

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- I am surrounded by supportive coworkers
- My day goes smoothly and quick
- I accept money from unexpected sources
- I have plenty of time
- I sleep deeply and soundly
- I communicate concisely and clearly
- I handle all issues with grace and ease
- I am effective and efficient

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## To Meditate

1. Focus on something repetitive like your breath, a word, a sound, a mantra
2. When thoughts move through, dismiss them without judgment and return to the breath

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## Daily Mindfulness

Go about each activity with awareness, curiosity and focus.

**If you don't have time for formal meditation** you can turn any activity into a meditation by staying present and mindful.



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## Presence enhances your job

- Notice
- Listen
- Recognize patterns
- Use your senses
- Solve problems
- Assists in communication and leadership
- Allows knowledge in that isn't conscious

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## Other ways to use visualization

- Progressive muscle relaxation
- Take a vacation
- Visualize how you would like to have handled that stressful situation. Do a do-over
- Visualize outcomes

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## Stress and Perception



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**Feel free to reach out.**

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