# 6 Myths About Stress

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## Six Myths about Stress

Have you ever heard something that wasn't true? Of course, we all have! There are urban legends, folklore, "old wives tales," and unverified claims with exaggerated and/or untrue details. Sometimes a myth is half-true, so we assume it has merit and validity.

Nobody likes to be taken for a ride. When we discover what's really true, it's almost a liberating experience. Our eyes are opened. Sometimes, the truth causes us to make adjustments in the way we think and act. The truth helps us to re-align our thinking. When we discover what's true, we often save time, money and energy. With this in mind, let's take a look at six myths about stress, as well as the reality that debunks them.


"Stress and anxiety have no impact your productivity, or what you accomplish during the day."

In other words, everyday is "business as usual." Just ignore your aches and pains, and maybe it will go away! Or maybe go to sleep a little earlier, and the problem will take care of itself.

Of course, this is not true. Stress has a tremendous impact your productivity levels—and you need to do something about it. Your body experiences a physical or biochemical response to stress. For many people, stress causes them to feel overwhelmed, exhausted, and helpless.

You can't perform at your best when you're stressed out. It's been said that stress causes "low capacity brainpower."

Let's give an example. Suppose you're called into your boss' office to discuss a project that has gotten off track. Ooh, you're nervous! You're worried about being reprimanded, and possibly fired. Your heart is beating 90 miles an hour. Your skin becomes flushed, and this feeling takes over your body— this feeling of being "on edge."

What is happening to you? For one thing, there is a change in your body chemicals. This means you're likely to experience a change in behavior. You're actually in a state of distress. You feel emotionally drained, frustrated, and overwhelmed. That makes it really hard to come up with new ideas, take a fresh approach or try something new.

Now consider a different scenario. You're having a good day. You just finished a big project that you've been working on for months. There is a tremendous sense of relief and accomplishment. The project couldn't have turned out better. Your boss is pleased too— and seems to respect you more now.

In a situation like this, what is happening to you physically? For one thing, you feel good. That's because there "happy chemicals" dominant in your body. There are "feel good" endorphins, such as serotonin and dopamine. When you feel good, doesn't life seem beautiful and sweet? You feel adventurous and optimistic about the future. You're ready to take risks, and try something new. The sky is the limit now! You feel relaxed, easy going and confident. This kind of state is ideal of learning, problem-solving and coming with creative solutions as well as ways to take action.

Do you see the difference between the two scenarios? Stress has a tremendous impact your productivity and what you accomplish during the day. If you're relaxed, calm and easy going, you'll be much more focused and get things done. That is when your work becomes fun and rewarding.


"Strong men show no emotions... and weak women show too many emotions! Actually, it's only high strung people who respond to stress emotionally!"

Showing your emotions is not a sign of weakness! Everyone experiences emotions, even people who appear to be stoic, straight-laced or even-keeled! We can't help but respond to life in any other way. The human brain is hardwired to respond to life in an emotional way. And that's not necessarily a bad thing, either.

When you look at the scientific literature on emotions, researchers have established six universal emotions. These are joy, fear, surprise, disgust, anger and sadness. And everyone experiences these six universal emotions!

How do we know this? Well, there are scientific ways to measure emotions. These measurements include electrodermal (skin) responses, heart rate, blood pressure, EEG activity, and brain imaging techniques.

## Emotions boost memory

Did you know that emotions boost your memory? It's true. You're more likely to remember events that have strong emotional meaning attached to it.

Years ago, I took Kevin Trudeau's Mega Memory course. In that course, Trudeau teaches you "memory triggers." That is, if you want to remember something—like turning left or right when you're getting directions—you visualize it dramatically in your mind.

For instance, if you wanted to turn left, it is helpful to use your imagination to picture flames, firecrackers or maybe an explosion on the left. Research shows that emotionally-fired up imagery helps us to remember. You're more likely to remember things that are dramatic and emotionally-charged versus plain-old, everyday image, such as a road sign that points to the left.

When you experience something emotionally, your brain tunes into that event. It's as if your brain tells you, "This is important! You better pay attention now!" As a result, you focus your attention on it. Your brain tunes out everything else—because these things aren't important anymore. Your brain narrows its focus on the emotional trigger or emotionally-laden event.

Emotions drive our attention and focus. The way we feel and respond emotionally forces us to pay attention. Our emotions create meaning, and they also have their own memory pathways.

Your brain actually gives top priority to strong emotions. It's a survival response that ensures that emotionally-laden events get attended to immediately.

## Strong emotions "stimulate" the brain

Another thing about strong emotions is that they stimulate the brain. Your brain releases these body chemicals—and it's usually an automatic response. It's like breathing; you do it without you ever thinking about it.

For instance, if you're suddenly caught off guard, then you have adrenalin surging through your veins. If something that makes you happy or euphoric, then you have feel-good endorphins (serotonin, dopamine, norepinephrine). If you experience fear, there is cortisol, insulin and adrenaline surging through your body. Whatever the emotion, your mind and body are stimulated biochemically.

Our emotions give us a live report at all times on the body's response. We may not realize it, but emotional feedback is our top priority. When we experience intense emotions, our brain releases neurotransmitters, and biologically marks the event as significant. These neurotransmitters remind us, "Something important just happened here." Emotions help us to realize our body's physical reaction to the world.

## Mind-body connection

Did you know that we tend to store emotional responses in our bodies? If someone betrayed you, and this really hurt your feelings…. then you might experience lower back pain—because of the build-up of those chemicals associated with the emotions—which causes the muscles to tense up—thus creating back pain.

When study emotions from a scientific perspective, it's easy to see a mind-body connection. People don't always realize that they're converting their stress and anxiety into physical symptoms.

Emotions are actually a form of "arousal" — whatever gets your attention or stimulates you— that's an emotional response. And emotions are important in all mental functions. Emotions also contribute to our ability to pay attention, develop creative insights, remember things, and solve problems.


"Whatever you're working on, it's important to be "on task" and focused. Downtime is a waste of time!"

Of course, it's good to be "on task" and focused. But it's also wise to take a break every 30 minutes or so. Did you know that taking a break actually gives you energy? It's true!

Dr, Leonard Coldwell, the founder of U-Cure cds, often talks about the importance of taking breaks. Dr. Coldwell talks about rubbing your hand against a table, and how you could keep rubbing your hand forever… if you occasionally took breaks. You see, taking a break provides energy. When you take a break, your mind and body are able to rest and recuperate. In many ways, taking a break is like recharging your batteries. It's like putting jumper cables on a car battery, and reviving it so that the vehicle is drive-able again.

Why is downtime so important? Because intense concentration requires a lot of energy. Whenever we rest, it's like re-charging our batteries. If you're constantly on the go, your batteries may need a jump start. Whenever we take a little break, it's like putting jumper cables on a dead car battery. Taking a break gives us energy!

If you are in a high stress situation, your brain craves need deep physiological rest. Have you ever been so tired that you just want to watch TV and relax? Maybe you don't have enough energy to read, carry on a conversation, or go out

dancing. All you want to do is take it easy. Perhaps you even crave some physical release of the tension, anxiety and stress in your body. You crave the kind of deep relaxation in which you totally let go of the stress and tension— so that your body to recover restore and rejuvenate. Sometimes exercise or sleeping gives us this type of physical release. Other times, we need something more. We may to exercise or sleep, but when we get up in the morning, we have to go back to that stressful job… or interact with a co-worker or person who we don't like. We cannot escape the stress, so we continue to store it in our bodies.

Have you ever wondered what happens to the brain when it rests? For one thing, your brain starts to rearrange its circuits, clean out the mental debris, and process emotional events.

We absorb so much information non-consciously that downtime is absolutely necessary to process it all. If you stop paying attention, you're doing something that is equally important—reflecting.

Downtime gives us time to reflect, and give things personal meaning. Some researchers call this "going inside" – or taking time for personal reflection. Everyone has to "go inside" if the learning is to be imprinted on the brain.

That's why we should always allow for 'downtime". Your downtime might be taking a walk, listening to music, exercising, and stretching, writing, journaling, drawing, or even listening to your U-Cure cds. But downtime is never a waste of time—because it gives your energy, it allows for internal processing and reflection.

Have you ever seen fresh-baked bread coming out of the oven? If you go to the grocery store early in the morning, you'll see bread that's just been baked. Now it's waiting to cool on a rack. The cooling process is called proofing.

In the same way, your brain's neural connections need time to solidify and settle after learning. If you're doing a lot of reading, studying or listening to a speaker—your brain needs a take a break every 20 to 30 minutes. Remember this: the more intense the learning, the more reflection time is necessary.

Downtime is never a waste of time! It's actually good for the brain. We need to allow time to re-think ideas in light of new information. We need to take time out to reflect. Just like the stomach needs time to digest food after eating, our brain needs time to "go inside" and process what you're experiencing. Taking a break is good for you!


"It's not fun being bored, but really your brain could care less. Your brain responds in a consistent way, whether something is boring or interesting."

Ok, this must be the philosophy of our old school teachers!

Did you know that science has confirmed what you've suspected all along? Boring is bad! We all need a little excitement in our lives. That's what's best for your brain.

Consider what happens to your brain when something is boring. Your brain switches gears, and stops paying attention. There simply isn't enough juice to focus and stay on track.

That's why the brain LOVES a challenge! When you're thirsty, you crave water. If you're hungry, you want something to eat. In the same way, your brain craves stimulation. Just like a bland, flavorless meal doesn't satisfy you—the brain craves stimulation. That's why emotions are so important. Emotions fuel the brain and spark your interest. Just think about it. Why do you like your friends? In one way or another, they caught your attention. You feel an emotional connection or bond with them. This wouldn't happen if you thought they were boring. If your friends were boring, you'd find other people to spend your time with.

Have you ever noticed what happens to you when you're bored? You feel tired and sluggish. Your brain wants to take a little nap. That's why boring, mundane tasks are devastating for the brain! You don't have enough "juice" to pay attention.

Sometimes, we say that boring things are a "turn off." This is literally true!

Researchers have examined the brain when it's bored ("turned off") versus "turned on." Did you know that a boring activity actually thins the cortex of the brain, whereas a challenging activity thickens the cortex?

This shows that there is a physiological component to being bored! That's why mentally stimulating activities are good for your brain.

When an activity is fun, exciting and stimulating, the brain pays more attention. Physiologically, you release "feel-good chemicals" in the body. This gives you the energy to focus, concentrate and perform at your best. You've got the juice that you need to survive and thrive!

Consider what happens when you're bored. You shift into "low capacity" gear. No energy or creative juices are going to the brain. Instead, your brain becomes dormant, like it's sleeping. It's the same way that your computer fades to a black screen when there is no activity—everything comes to a screeching halt.

Isn't it obvious— your brain responds differently when something is exciting versus boring.

There's a researcher named Dr. Marian Diamond who has written a book called "The Magic Trees of the Mind." The book mentions about Dr. Diamond's experiments with rats—and how they responded in an "enriched" environment versus an "impoverished" environment.

In her experiment, Dr. Diamond had two groups on rats run through mazes. One group of rats lived in an impoverished environment. They lived in a plain maze, with only one way in and out. The rats had to figure out how to get in and out of there. There were some dead ends (or blocked off partitions) and the rats had to turn around and go back.

The other group of rats was in an enriched environment. Their maze included toys, little wheels for the rats to run on, balls, levers, sound effects, and food rewards.

The impoverished environment was plain and ordinary—just maze of walls—and no toys or rewards whatsoever. But the enriched environment was a fun place to be, with lots of sights and sounds to motivate the rats to get in and out of the maze.

Dr. Diamond found that rats in the enriched environment found their way through the maze much faster. She also looked at the rat's brains—and found that the rats in the enriched environment had thicker and denser dendrites (or neural circuits) in the brain. Yes, the rats in the enriched environment actually had healthier, more fit brains that the impoverished rats.

Dr. Diamond published her findings her book, "The Magic Trees of the Mind." Of course, the magic trees refers to the dendrites—the branching activity of the neural circuits.

What does Dr. Diamond's research mean to humans? For one thing, it suggests that mental stimulation makes a HUGE difference in the way we think, act and move.

You see, the "enriched" environment was mentally stimulating— and this helped the rats to be faster and smarter. The boring, "impoverished" environment caused poor performance, slow "task completion" and slow brain growth.

That's why boredom is more harmful to the brain than enrichment does good! Boredom leads to withdrawal, senility and depression—whereas activity and challenge promotes health and well-being.


"Your brain can only do one thing at once. Doing different things at the same time is stressful."

The truth is that your brain is a multi-processor. Your brain can and does many things at the same time. All at once, your brain processes a world of colors, movements, emotions, shapes, smells, sounds, tastes, and feelings.

In fact, your brain records a thousand new bits of information every second. And your brain has room for even more information!

Your brain remembers EVERYTHING that has ever happened to you. When you meet someone new, your brain processes the visual impression of that person's face in one hundredth of a second. You record this 3-D visual impression into your memory. You will also record other details about this person, such as your feelings, ideas and associations. Later, you have the ability to recognize this face out of thousands of others recorded in your memory.

While your brain is doing all this, it is also taking in data from the other senses: sound, touch, smell and taste. The whole time, your brain is monitoring, analyzing and adjusting physiological factors, such as heart rate, breathing, body temperature, etc.

This goes on every second of our lives! Your 3 1/2 pound brain may be the MOST COMPLEX SYSTEM in the universe.

Your brain has a multi-task operating system. Biologically, physically, intellectually and emotionally, we're doing many things at once. Your brain is constantly registering perceptions (thousands of visual cues per hour) Your brain also monitors your vital signs (heart, hormone levels, breathing, digestion, etc) Your brain also continually updates reality (matching new learning with representations from the past) In addition, your brain is attaching emotion to each event and thought, forming patterns of meaning to construct the larger picture, and inferring conclusions form the info acquired.

In many ways, our brain is like a marching band. Our brain gets all kinds of auditory, visual and kinesthetic input—and it blends all this information together to make a beautiful song.

And your brain actually sings and dances! Your brainwaves are like electrical impulses, and it follows a rhythm that helps you to understand life and make sense of it.

It's wonderful that our brain is a multi-tasker. Does mean that you can drive and talk on your cell phone at the same time? Hmmm, we see this everyday, don't we?

There are a lot of activities that you can "chunk" together, but some higher level tasks require your undivided attention. Maybe talking on your cell phone and driving should be separate activities.

Recently, I received a funny email from a U-Cure customer. She is a busy person, and listened to her U-Cure cds while mowing the lawn. "I don't know if the cds working or not," she said. "It's hard to hear with all that noise coming from the lawn mower!"

Anyway, U-Cure is one of things that shouldn't be multi-tasked. To get the best possible results, please don't listen to the U-Cure cds while driving or operating heavy machinery.

The best way to listen to U-Cure is to close your eyes, and lay back in a chair or stretch out on your bed. That's the best way to induce a state of deep relaxation.


"Your brain hates exercise! There are better ways to relieve stress."

Actually, your brain loves exercise! It's true. Your brain enjoys both mental exercise and physical exercise.

Did you know that problem-solving is to the brain what aerobic exercise is to the body?

When you're attempting to solve a problem, there is an explosion of brain activity. You've got neural synapses forming, neurotransmitters activating and there is increased blood flow to the brain. Problem-solving is like mentally lifting weights. Your brain kicks into high gear, so that you can think faster and smarter.

Problem-solving also gives you longevity—so that you're younger, smarter and more creative in life.

Problem-solving also mentally exercises your brain. You can also get a mental workout with crossword puzzles, reading a book, listening to a speaker, talking to a friend. You exercise your brain by listening, watching, remembering, reflecting… plus your focus and concentration. All of these things stimulate the brain, and actually exercise it.

Another great way to exercise your brain is by listening to U-Cure cds. It exercises your brain with a rhythmic stimulus. What you hear is a sound in your left ear…and then a different sound in your right ear. Your brain puts both sounds together, to create a single, unified sound. It's called binaural beats…. and this exercises your brain.

Of course, all of this is mental exercise. What about physical exercise? Some people hate to exercise. The thought of going to the gym and working out doesn't appeal to them.

There is always a transitional time. The first time you attempt to exercise, you may not be very good at it. You may fall all over yourself, look goofy, and make lots of mistakes. But with practice and repetition, you'll get the hang of it.

Give yourself a little time, and you'll enjoy exercise. Be gentle with yourself, but keep at it. Don't give up! Remember that repetition (doing the same thing over and over) results in mastery.

Consider exercise to be a challenge—which you may recall is good for your brain. With time, you'll notice some muscle definition, toning and tightening. You may even lose weight, or at least a couple of inches from your waistline… all of this will reinforce your experience of exercise… and you'll start to enjoy working out.

If you don't like exercise, try to experiment with different things—until you find something that you like. Check out your local gyms, and get a free week pass. Try a group fitness class. Or befriend someone in your neighborhood, and start lifting weights in your garage. Another idea is to get an exercise video or dvd. You can find those at your local library, or even at the grocery store.

The point is to try different forms of exercise, until you find something you like, you can stick with it, and stay motivated.

Exercise is also a great stress reliever. Exercise enables you to physically release the tension and anxiety in your body. When you exercise, there are actually an electro-chemical changes going on in your body. There is increased blood flow to your skin, brain, muscles and other organs.

When you get a good cardio workout, you're getting five times more blood flow that you normally have. Also, the amount of oxygen going to the working muscles is increased by 15 times.

Your heart also gets a workout while exercising. The heart's blood flow increases by about four or five times from that of its resting state. Breathing also becomes faster and deeper. Your lungs and the rest of your respiratory system needs more oxygen for circulation. This causes the rate and depth of your breathing to increase.

Isn't this amazing? Your mind and body gets a work out when it exercises!

We all want to look our best, and maybe fit into a bikini or Speedo swimsuit… but the main reason to exercise is what it does for your brain and body. Exercise gets you fit, and helps your mind and body to function better.

As Goethe said, "Everything is hard before it is easy." Good habits are hard to develop, but easy to live with. Once you have developed a good habit, it becomes automatic and easy. It will serve you well, and enable you to rise higher in life.

If you are too busy to exercise, then your life is out of balance. If you're got too much to do. You're on a treadmill that you cannot get off. Your fuel is getting low, and you're close to running on empty. This is a dangerous position to be in. You may be approaching a breaking point.

That's why it is so important to take time out for yourself. Time invested in yourself is time well-spent. This week, take the time to get your life into balance. Take time out to relax, de- stress and exercise. Avoid boring and impoverished activities! Find healthy ways to reduce stress, so that your brain is stimulated, exercised and energized.  When you do so, you'll be on your way to a happy and healthier lifestyle, every time.

## Information about “20 Minutes to Less Stress”

**The U-Cure Empowerment Package** is a 3-cd set (Total Relaxation, Breathing Techniques and Self-Healing) that will help you to let go of tension and anxiety and relax deeply. Listening for just 20 minutes will help you to be focused, even-keeled and clear minded. It was developed by psychologist and naturopathic doctor Leonard Coldwell, who used the cds in his private practice to help his patients, which included cancer victims.

**Why 20 minutes?** Research suggests that it takes at least 20 minutes to neutralize the "fight or flight" response. As you listen to our cds, your mind and body will relax deeply, and you'll find yourself feeling calm and energized. Another plus is that 20 minutes won't take up too much of your time.

**What makes us unique?** Our "stress reduction cds" combine a spoken narrative with brain synchronization audio technology. You will discover clinically-proven stress reduction methods such as progressive relaxation, breathing techniques and relaxation imagery**.**

**What's in it for me?** Our cds equip you with a "stress reduction strategy" that you can practice anytime, anyplace... whenever stress strikes. As you listen to our cds, you'll become more aware of stress, and the way you respond to it. As you practice our techniques, you'll have a better grip on your emotions. Rather than feeling overwhelmed, discouraged, worn out or frazzled — you'll be more resilient and bounce back. Of course, being resilient also enables you to stay focused, so that you can get things done faster and more efficiently during the day.

**Is this mumbo-jumbo?** No, the negative effects of stress have been well-documented in scientific journals. Dr. Walter Canon (a Physiologist & Harvard professor) coined the term "fight or flight response." Cardiologist Herbert Benson pioneered mind-body research focusing on stress and the relaxation response. Plus, several contemporary medical doctors – such as Dr Bernie Siegel, Dr Andrew Weil, and Dr Carl O. Simonton—just to name a few have written about the relaxation response, and its power to heal and restore the mind and body.

**How will "stress reduction cds" make me feel good?** As you listen to the U-Cure cds, you will relax deeply. Your body starts to release the tension and anxiety that you have built up and stored. You’re so relaxed, that your body actually goes into a regenerative state. As you breathe deeply, more oxygen and blood goes to your heart, lungs, skin, and other major organs. There is a tremendous sense of release. Also, a wonderful burst of energy comes as you feel calm, relaxed, and upbeat.

As you listen to U-Cure, the deep relaxation stimulates the release of "feel good"

endorphins. When you feel good, you're happy. Your stress starts to melt away physically and emotionally. All of a sudden, you can think clearly. Now you can take a look at life with a fresh, new approach.

**Ten signs of excessive stress**

Here are ten telltale signs that the pressures of life are getting a grip on you:

1. **Forgetfulness**. Stress short-circuits your memory, at least temporarily. There is so much on your mind, that it is hard to think straight.

2. **Irrational thinking**. Under stress, it is hard to think clearly and get organized. Small challenges become huge obstacles.

3. **Feelings of frustration, anger, anxiety, and fear**. Stress can cause our feelings to spiral out of control.

4. **Impulsive behavior.** You respond in a way that's completely out of character for you. You act on a whim, without thinking about the consequences.

5. **Tendency to make mistakes**. You forget something, leave it behind, or overlook details that you would have normally considered.

6. **Headaches, backache, joint or muscle pain.** This is what happens when your body converts your emotional response to stress into physical symptoms.

7. **Difficulty in falling asleep**. Stress makes it difficult to wind down and drift off to sleep.

8. **Shallow breathing and tightness in the chest.** This is a sure sign of stress and tension.

9. **Weakened immune system**. Under stress, we are more susceptible to colds, flu, headaches, sore throat, and congestion.

10. **Arguments with family and friends.** When stressed, you become easily agitated over trivial matters. You may fly off the handle, and totally lose your temper.

**What is your body telling you?** Your body responds to the way you think, feel and act. When you are frightened, angry or anxious, your body is using your emotions to tell you that something isn't right. If you're going through a stressful time (such as losing your job, divorce, or the death of your spouse) you may find that your heart is racing. You're jittery, anxious and tense. What's happening is that you're converting your anxiety to physical symptoms. Left untreated, you may find yourself with high blood pressure, a hernia, a stomach ulcer, or even a

heart attack.

**Get rid of stress, tension and anxiety** with our U-Cure Empowerment Package. It is a set of three cds, developed by psychologist and naturopathic doctor, Dr. Leonard Coldwell. Each set includes “Total Relaxation,” Breathing Techniques” and “Self Healing” and is now at half-price for $49.99.

Our U-Cure cds will enable you to relax deeply, and let go of stress, tension and anxiety. Listening to our U-Cure cds for just 20 minutes will leave you feeling calm, relaxed, energized and upbeat. Now, you're ready to take charge... because you're focused, even-keeled and thinking clearly. Now you can see things from a fresh perspective, and are better equipped to solve problems and implement creative solutions.

If you're ready for a change, consider this wonderful program that has made such a remarkable difference in my own life, and thousands of others:

http://www.20minutestolessstress.com/