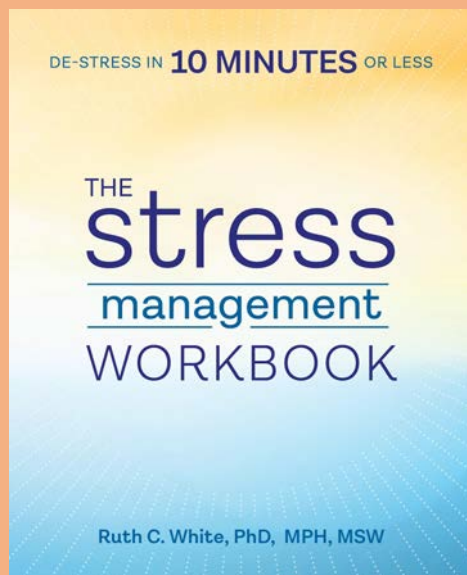
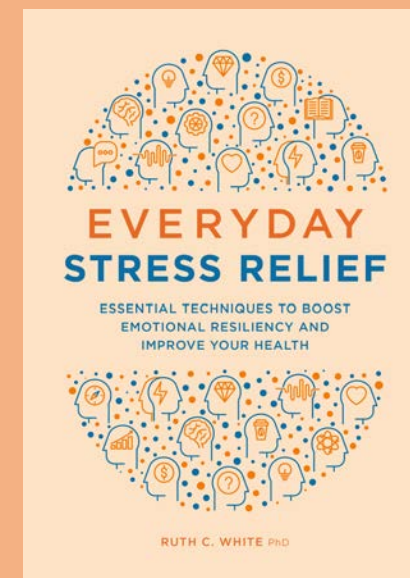


# Managing Stress in the Age of COVID

*finding calm in the chaos*



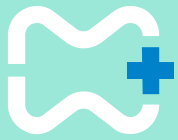
Ruth C White, PhD MPH MSW



A serene landscape photograph of a lake with several ducks swimming. In the background, there are trees and a city skyline under a cloudy sky. The text is overlaid in a white serif font.

Between stimulus and  
response there is a space.

In that space  
is our power  
to choose our response.  
In our response lies our  
growth and our freedom.



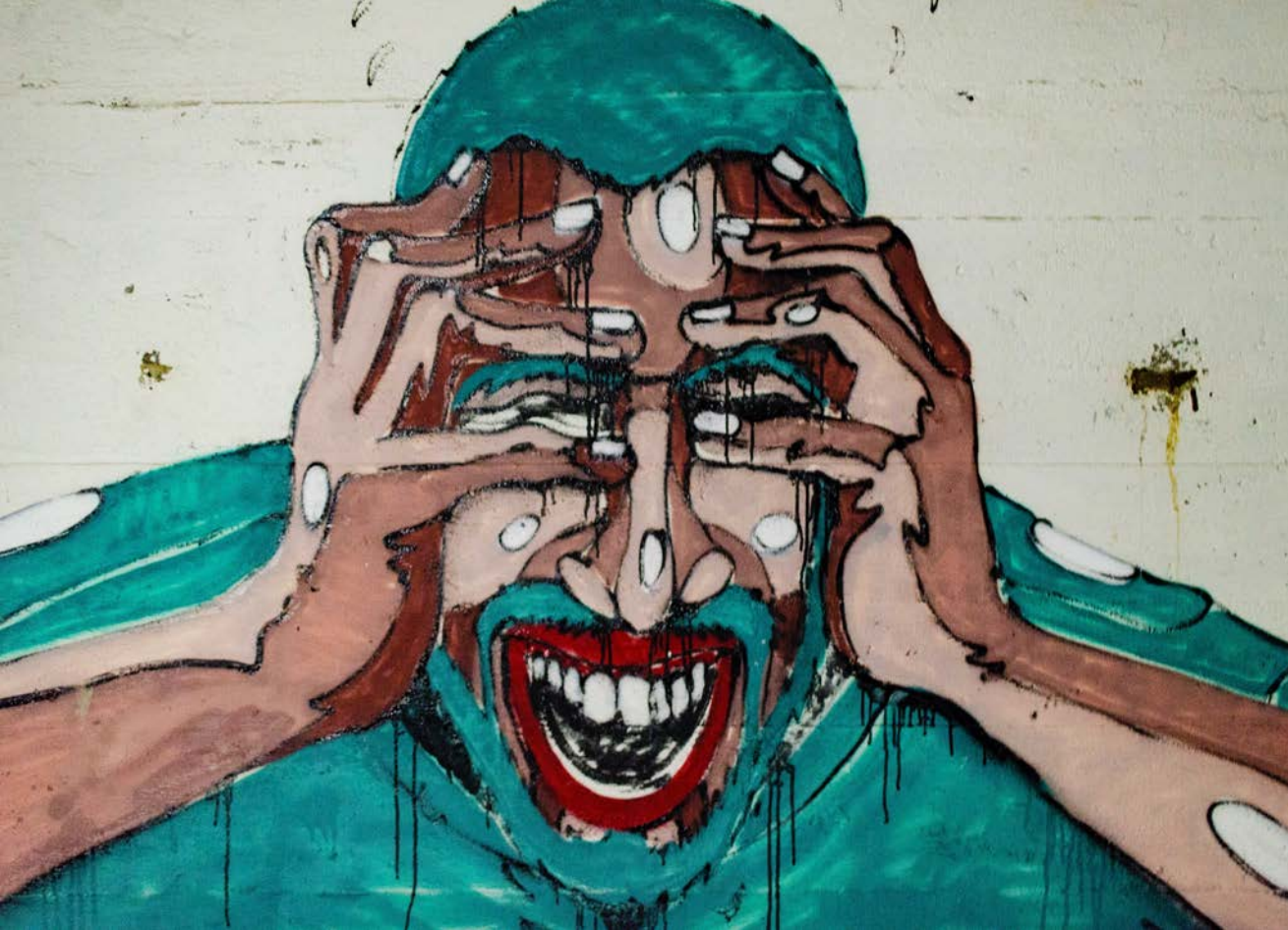
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# Topical Outline

- Introduction
- Stress of COVID19
- Biopsychosocial impacts of stress
- Personal stress management strategies
- Building resilience





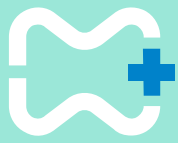


WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE  
AN AMERICAN?

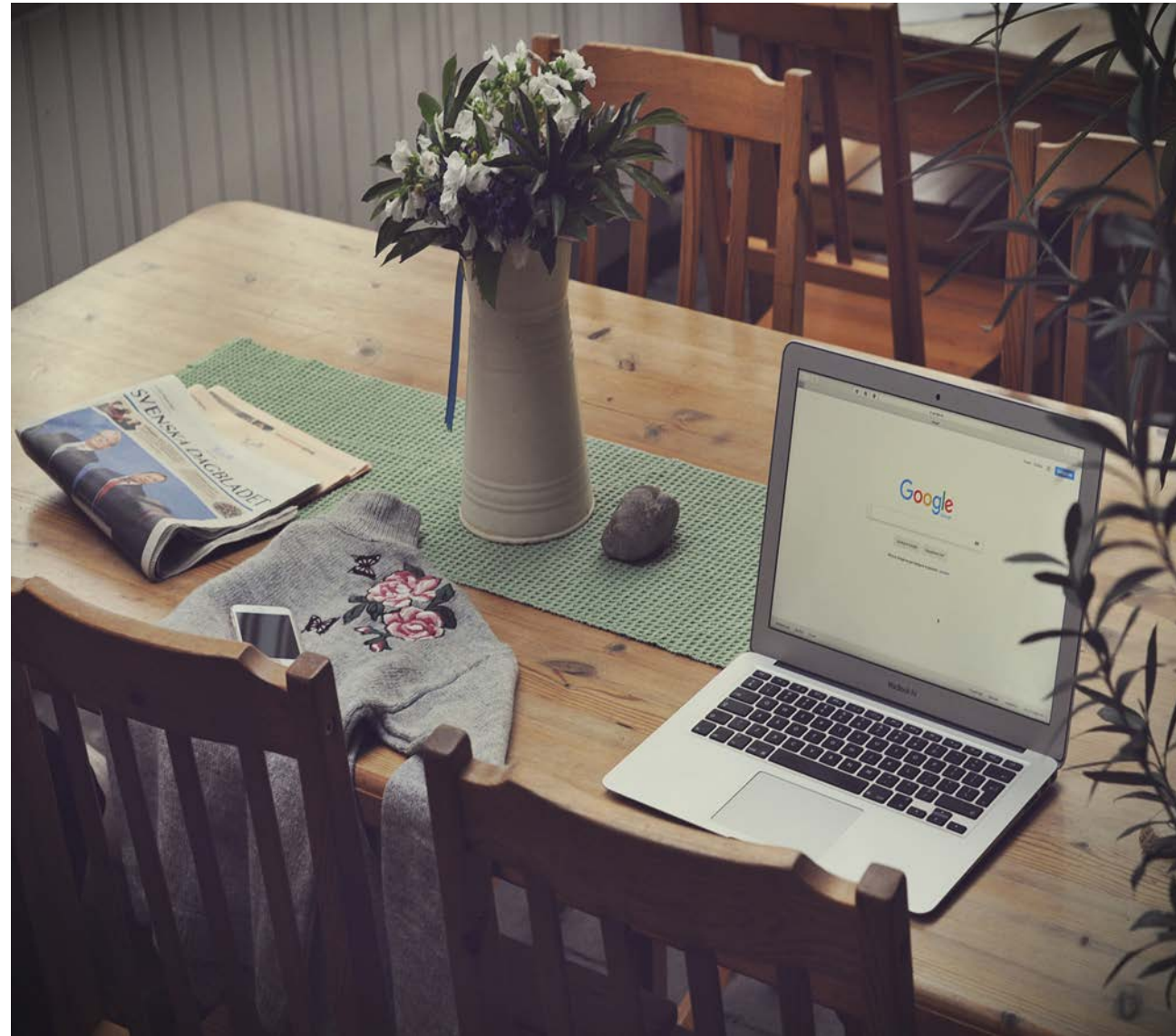


WELL I'LL TELL YOU WHAT IT MEANS...  
IT MEANS **HARD WORK!**  
AND PLENTY OF IT!





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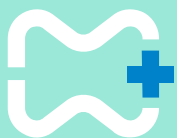










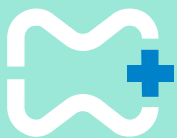


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# Stress During an Outbreak

- Fear/worry about your health & that of loved ones
- Changes in sleeping & eating
- Difficulty sleeping or concentrating
- Worsening of chronic health issues
- Worsening of mental health conditions
- Increased use of alcohol/drugs



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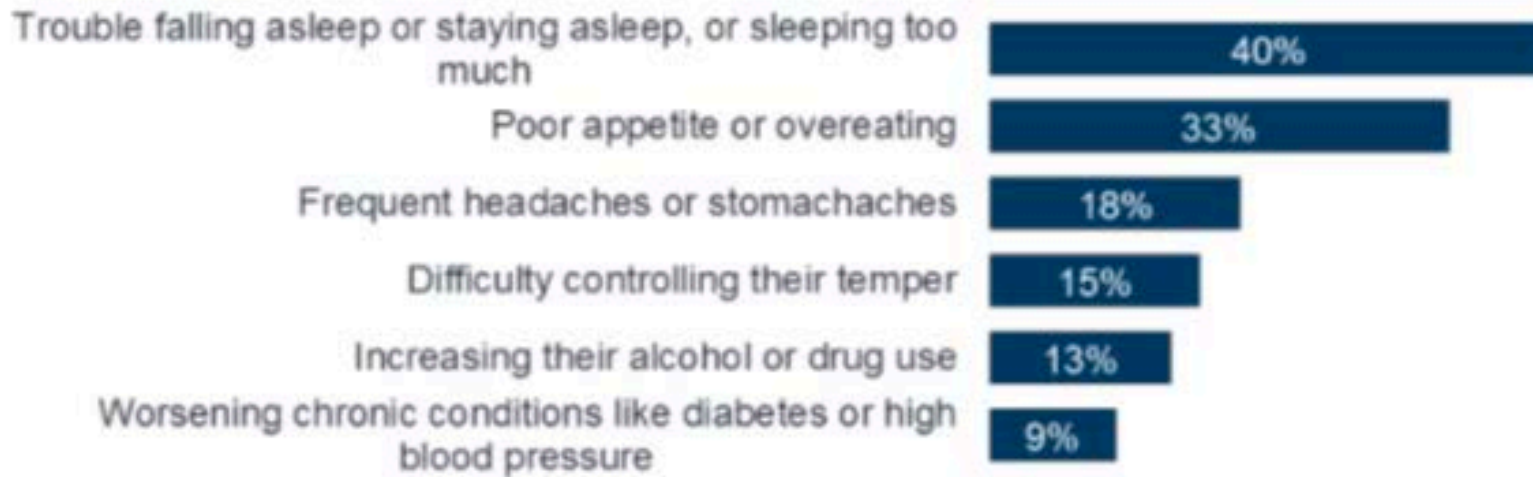
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## Majority Say Worry Or Stress Related To Coronavirus Has Had Adverse Effects On Health Or Wellbeing

Percent who say that worry or stress related to the coronavirus outbreak has caused them to experience each of the following in the past two months:



---

Have experienced any of the above 56%

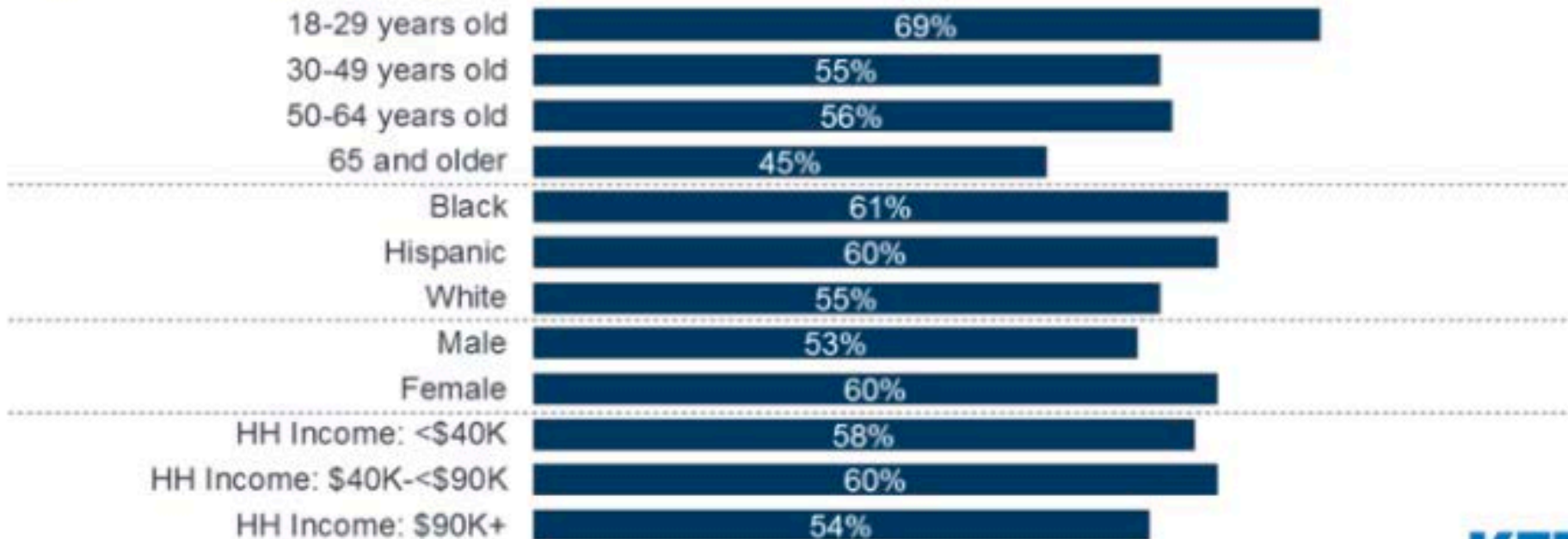
SOURCE: KFF Health Tracking Poll (conducted April 15-20, 2020). See topline for full question wording.



Figure 12

## Majorities Across Most Groups Report Worry Or Stress Related To Coronavirus Outbreak Has Impacted Mental Health

Percent of each of the following groups who say that worry or stress related to the coronavirus outbreak has caused them to experience adverse effects on their mental health or wellbeing in the past two months:



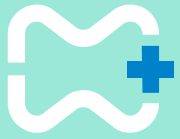
SOURCE: KFF Health Tracking Poll (conducted April 15-20, 2020). See topline for full question wording.





*how are you feeling?*





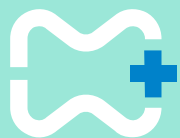
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THE END!

*common sense but not common practice*





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now



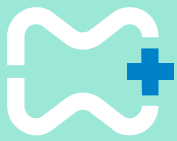
then





and  
breathe





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# stress

*an evolutionary response*

*a state of mental or emotional strain or tension  
resulting from adverse or very demanding circumstances*

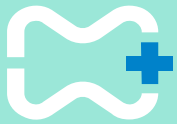






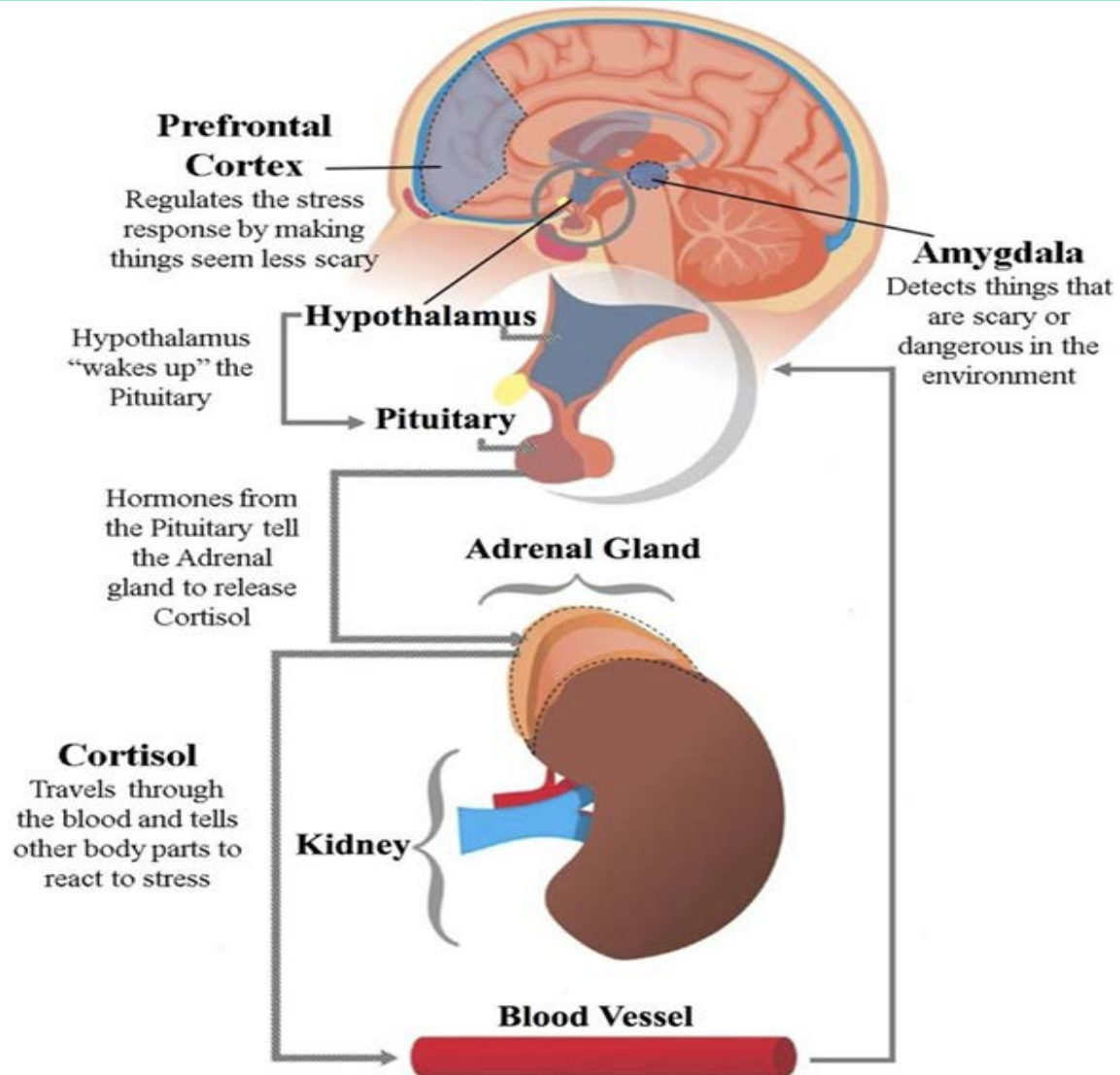
FARFEE



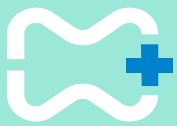


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- Acute stress
  - Adrenaline/epinephrine: inc. BP, pulse, respiration, blood sugar & blood flow to muscles, more oxygen to the brain
  - As initial surge of adrenalin subsides then HPA axis -> Cortisol: increase blood sugar and fats
  - Return to homeostasis and a state of calm (within ~90mins)
- Chronic stress
  - No release = toxicity
  - Inc appetite; storage of unused nutrients as fat
  - No return to homeostasis



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## headaches

Stress can trigger and intensify tension headaches.

## increased depression

Chronic stress can wear you down emotionally and lead to depression.

## heartburn

Stress increases the production of stomach acid, which could lead to heartburn or make it worse.

## insomnia

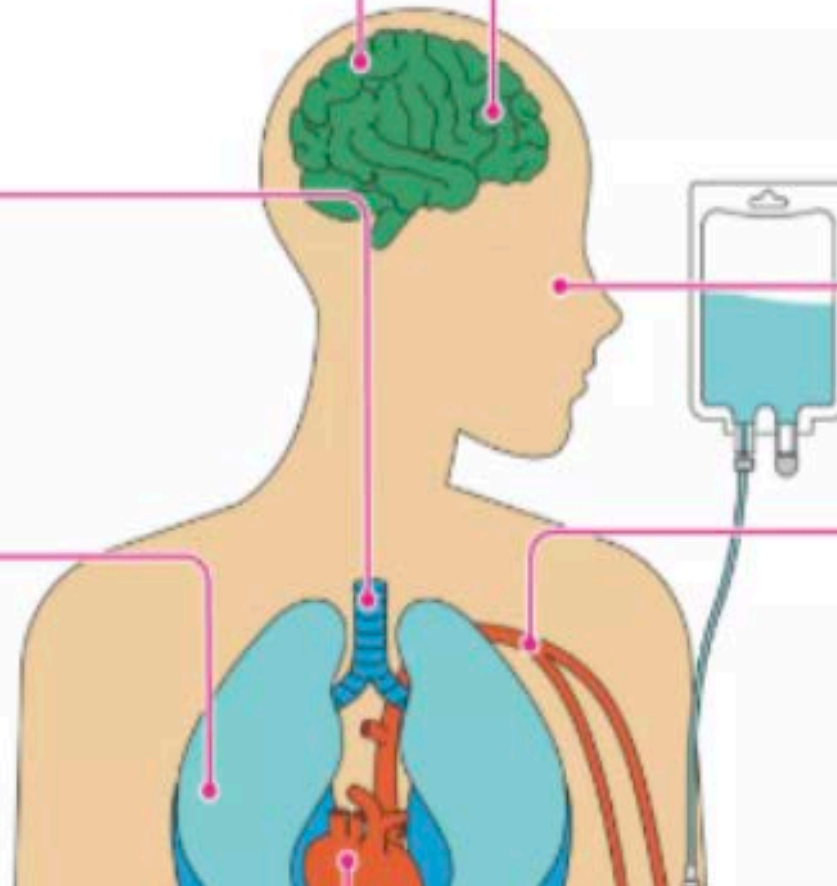
Stress makes it harder to fall asleep and stay asleep, which can lead to insomnia.

## rapid breathing

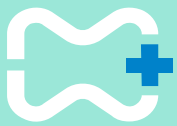
When you're stressed, the muscles that help you breathe tense up, which can leave you short of breath.

## weakened immune system

Long-term stress weakens your immune system's defenses, leaving you more vulnerable to infections.







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## risk of heart attack

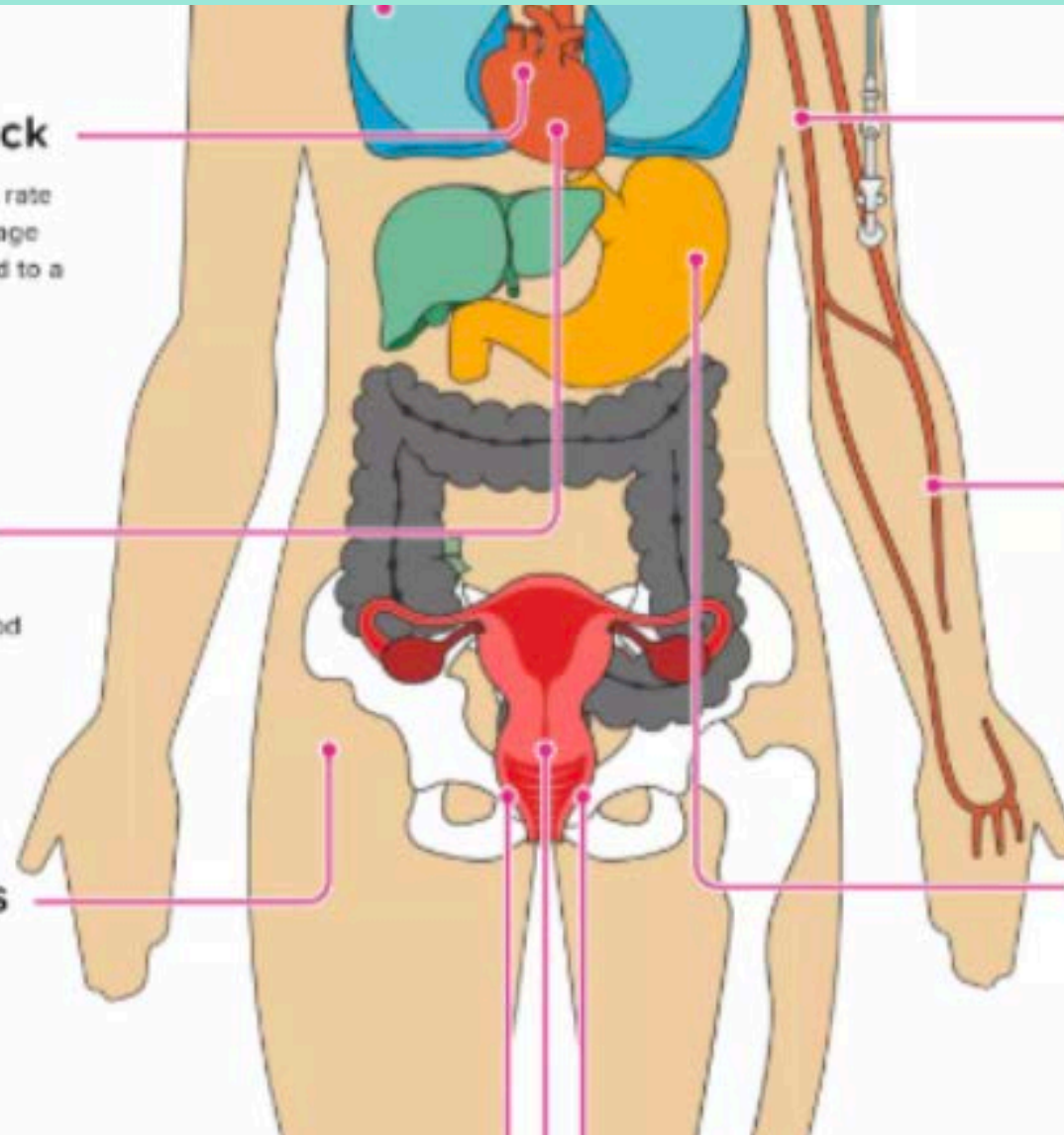
Over time, an increased heart rate and high blood pressure damage your arteries, which could lead to a heart attack.

## pounding heart

Stress hormones make your heart pump faster so that blood can quickly reach your vital organs and limbs.

## fertility problems

Stress interferes with the reproductive system in both men and women, and may make it harder to conceive.



## high blood sugar

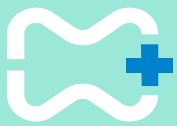
Stress causes your liver to release extra sugar (glucose) into your bloodstream, which over time puts you at risk for type 2 diabetes.

## high blood pressure

Stress hormones tighten blood vessels, which can raise your blood pressure.

## stomachache

Stress affects your body's digestive system, which can lead to stomachaches, nausea, and other tummy troubles.



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## erectile dysfunction

Your brain plays an important part in the process of getting an erection. Stress can interfere with this process.

## missed periods

Fluctuating hormones can throw your menstrual cycle off, or in severe cases stop it altogether.

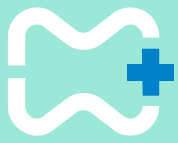
## low sex drive

Stress — and the fatigue that often comes with it — can take a toll on your libido.

## tense muscles

Stress makes muscles tense up, and chronic stress can lead to tension-related headaches and backaches.





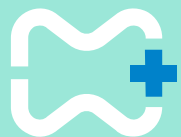
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# Emotional/psychological/behavioral responses to stress

**Behavioral:** smoking, drinking, eating, sleeping, withdrawal, watch a lot of TV, compulsive behaviors, poor self-care (hygiene/appearance)

**Emotional/psychological:** depression, anxiety, irritability, anger

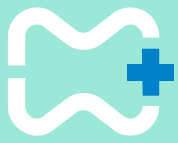


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where/how do you feel stress?





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## personal strategies

*be mindful*

*connect*

*gratitude*

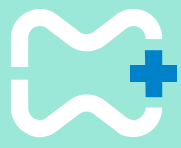
*journal*

*take a  
break*

*schedule*

*disconnect*

*move*



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breaktime

be mindful





# journal

what are you grateful for?

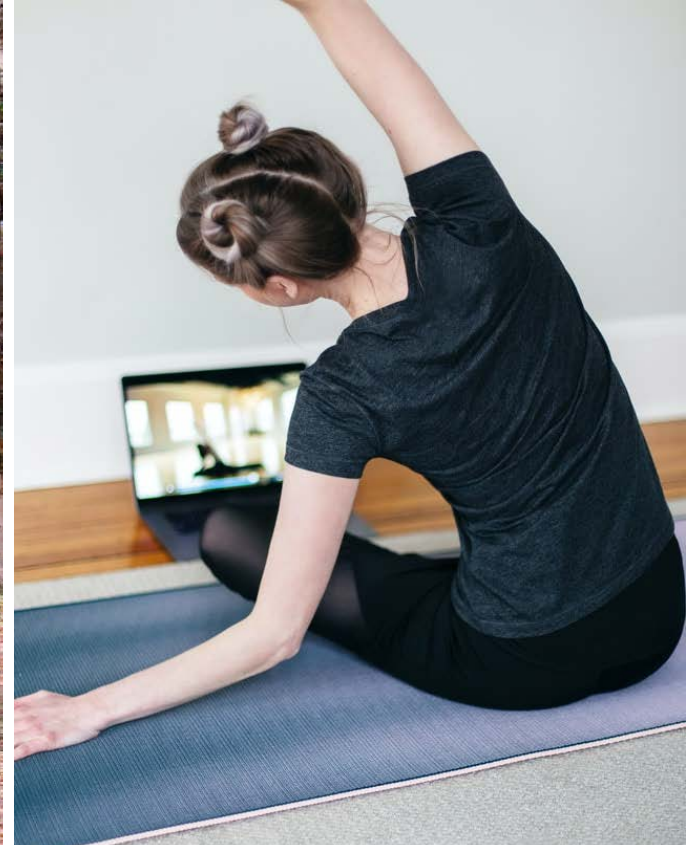
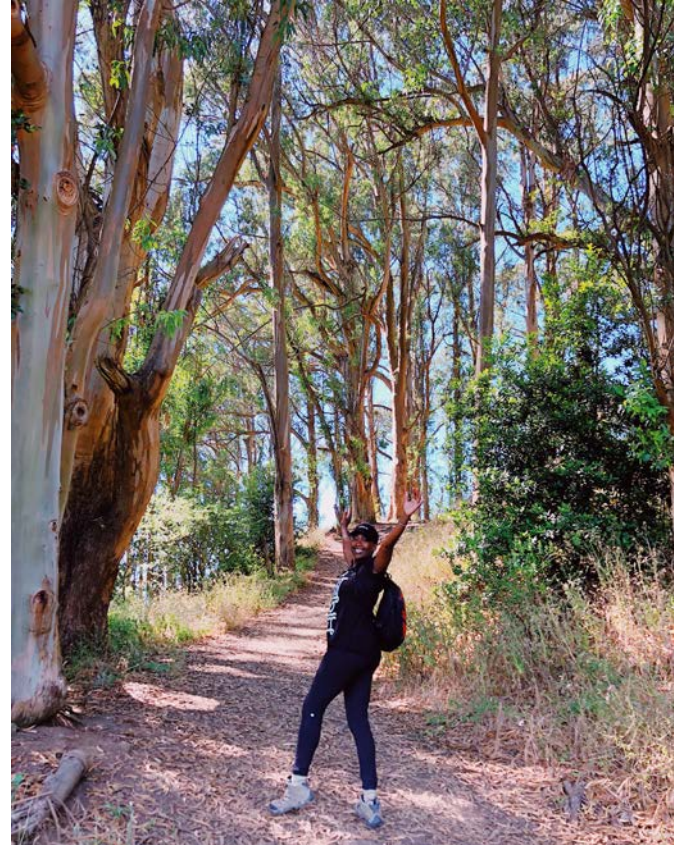


connect

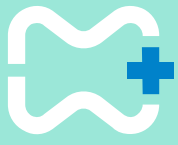
phone a  
friend







move



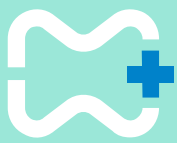
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- meals
- breaks
- exercise
- sleep
- media
- connecting
- mindfulness
- pets
- coordinate with kids/partner/roommate



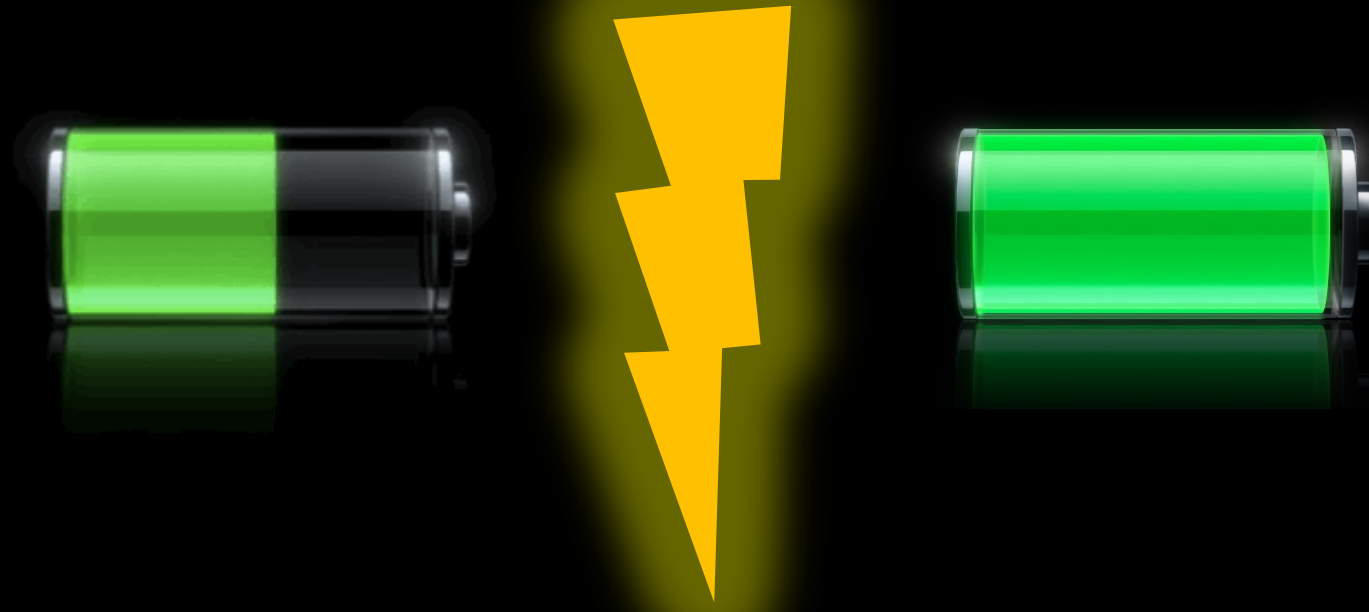


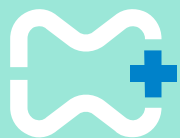
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## emotional resilience

*actively and creatively*

adapts to stressful situations and crises



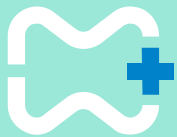


## building resilience

managing self ...



...leading others



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## the power of zzzzzz **s**



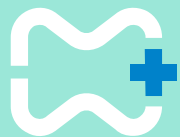
*'the ultimate energy drink'*

→ brain function

→ moods

→ health





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no zzzzzz **\$**



**40%**

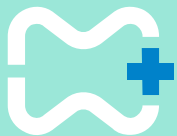
sleeplessness interferes with work

**\$50 billion**  
lost productivity

**60%**

Americans having sleep issues  
several nights a week

**\$16 billion**  
healthcare bill



## **S**leep hacks

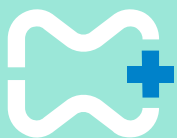
*dark, cool, calm & comfortable*



*same thing, same time*

*6 is the fix, but 7 is heaven*





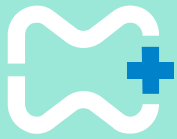
## **n**utrition hacks



- *begin with breakfast*
- *brighter is better*
- *raw & real*
- *pretty the plate*
- *green the grub*
- *finish with fruit*







## activity: movement and the brain

sharper memory

improved concentration

self-efficacy

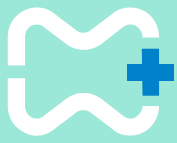
lower stress

elevated mood

enhanced creativity

mental stamina

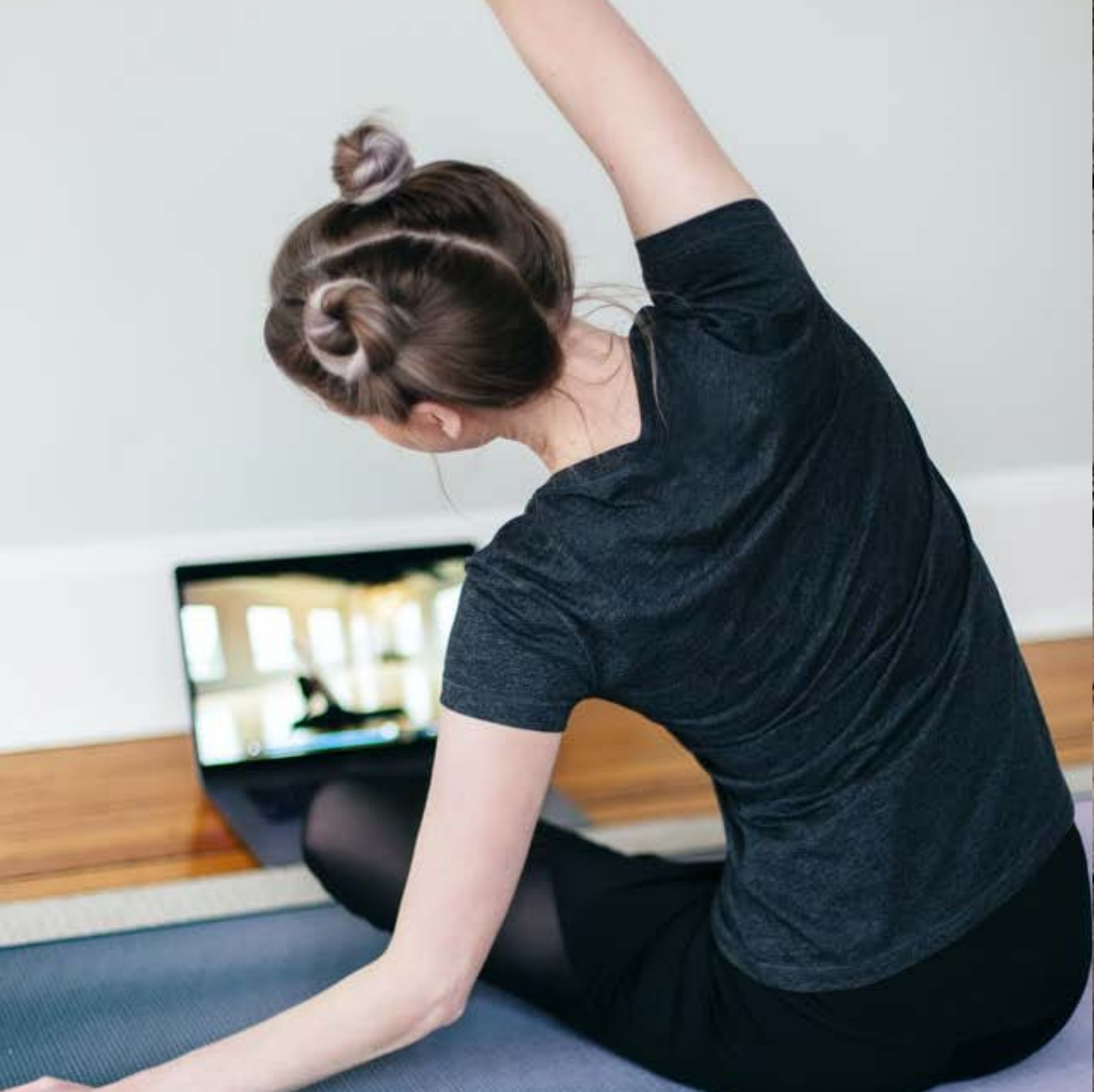
faster learning



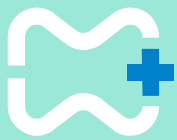
## **a**ctivity: fit body, fit mind, fit workplace

“on days when employees exercised - *during regular work hours* - they reported better time management, higher productivity and better interpersonal relationships, and they felt more satisfied at the end of the day”









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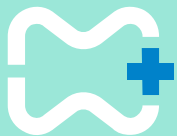


## **a**ctivity hacks



- *do something*
- *make it routine*
- *walk*
- *keep it moving*
- *take it outside*
- *walk & talk*





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## **p**eople hacks



- *friends & family*
- *thanks & praise*
- *grace & gratitude*
- *love & kindness*
- *share & care*

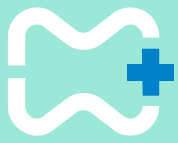




## communication & support at work

- effective communication → **higher** engagement
- **high** social support at work → **high** productivity
- seeking and giving social support → **high** emotional resilience
- 'the contagion of emotion': **stressed** boss → **stressed** workers





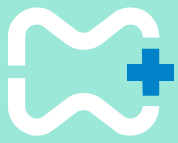
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*what will you do?*



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[wellmindplus.com](http://wellmindplus.com)  
[ruthcwhite@gmail.com](mailto:ruthcwhite@gmail.com)  
[206.371.7099](tel:206.371.7099)

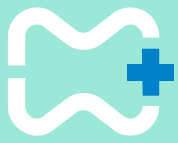
 @ruthcwhitephd

 @ruthcwhite

 @ruthcwhite







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# *resources*

*take a break*

*8 ways to 8 hours*

*fit for life*

*5 hacks for healthy eating*