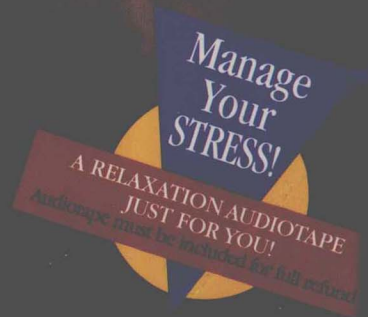


# COPING WITH STRESS

## IN A CHANGING WORLD



Richard Blonna

# COPING WITH STRESS IN A CHANGING WORLD

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*with 136 illustrations*

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# PREFACE

Stress is everywhere today. It seems that we cannot get away from this overwhelming player in our lives. As our world becomes more complicated, stress creeps in and affects our lives at all levels.

*Coping With Stress in a Changing World* approaches the topic of stress by presenting it uniquely in a wellness context. Stress is not an isolated phenomenon but rather a dynamic transaction influenced by one's overall level of well-being across the six dimensions of health. This book explains to students the interconnectedness of health and stress. It describes how all of the dimensions of health are involved in both the appraisal of potential stressors and the ability to cope with them. It explains how wellness (optimal health) can enhance our ability to manage stress.

The text is written in three parts and designed so that one part flows smoothly into the next. Part 1 is designed to introduce stress and explain how it is connected to health and wellness. Each of the dimensions of health are discussed with a focus on their connection to stress.

Part 2 presents an integrated approach to coping with stress. It describes four levels of coping with stress—rethink, reduce, relax, and release (the four *Rs*)—and explains how to reorganize one's life in a more health-enhancing, stress-reducing way.

The final part presents a developmental look at stress and coping. Most stress management textbooks present a piecemeal approach to applying coping to typical stressors (school, work, relationships). *Coping With Stress in a Changing World* presents a systematic, developmental analysis of stress and coping. Stressors and coping strategies appropriate to each stage of life are examined in detail.

## Audience

The text is written to appeal to both traditional college-age students as well as nontraditional students. It is the author's experience that a classroom mixture of numerous ages, backgrounds, and life experiences complement the teaching of stress management. The text is designed to provide examples, illustrations, and activities that are targeted toward and appeal to all groups of students.

Further, it is hoped that by presenting a developmental perspective on stress and coping, students will gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of the tasks and stressors faced by people at various points in their

development. Traditional and nontraditional students will see how stressors and coping skills change in relation to life experience and development.

## Features

### ***Design***

The text is designed to grab the student's attention. A single column text format was chosen to allow ample margins for presenting pedagogical aids. All key words and concepts are bold-faced to stand out easily. All key words are defined in the margins. The text also uses boxes to provide short examples or illustrations of supplementary material.

All artwork is designed to provide a crisp, clear visual picture to enhance the text. Many of the drawings employ cartoon-type figures that add humor wherever possible. This is consistent with our desire to lighten up the text.

Photographs have been chosen that portray a wide variety of people from varied races, ethnic groups, and genders. Many of the photographs portray active, healthy people enjoying life as they manage their stress.

### ***Marginal Definitions***

As previously mentioned, all important words are defined in the margins. These marginal definitions allow the students to quickly find the meaning of key words without having to flip pages.

### ***Keys to Understanding***

Important concepts, entitled *Keys to Understanding*, appear in the margin and provide simple explanations for important stress concepts.

### ***Stress in Our World Boxes***

This boxed feature provides a personal perspective concerning stress. The characters featured in *Stress in Our World* are used to give a human face to the discussion of stress. They also provide a cross-cultural perspective on stress.

## Pedagogical Aids

The text incorporates a variety of pedagogical aids that assist instructors in conveying information as well as helping students explore the role of stress in their lives.

*Chapter Objectives.* Each chapter has a set of measurable objectives for students. This enables instructors and students to know what the goals are of each chapter.

*Student Study Questions.* Each chapter has a set of study questions that help students review and analyze the material covered in the chapter.

*Chapter Summaries.* Each chapter ends with a comprehensive summary that highlights key aspects of the chapter.

*Assess Yourself.* The Assess Yourself entries are self-surveys designed to provide personal information for students concerning their stress. The activities can serve as a springboard for group discussion or they can be used privately, as an aid for students to gain a broader understanding of stress in their personal lives. Because they are perforated for easy removal, they can be completed either in-class or as homework in preparation for classroom processing. They provide students an opportunity to share information about their personal stressors and coping strategies.

*Documentation.* All material referred to in the text is contained in the reference list. All references are current, with at least 75% from the past 5 years.

## Ancillaries

A comprehensive ancillary package is available to qualified adopters of *Coping With Stress in a Changing World*. A unique feature of this package is that it was developed by the author, which ensures integration of the material.

*Instructor's Manual and Test Bank.* The instructor's manual features chapter overviews, learning objectives, suggested teaching outlines with recommended notes and activities for teaching each chapter, personal assessments, issues in the news, suggestions for guest lecturers, media resources, and 25 full-page transparency masters of helpful illustrations, charts, and tables. The test bank contains approximately 500 questions, including multiple choice, true/false, matching, and essay test questions.

*Esatest III.* This test bank software provides a combination of user-friendly aids that enable the instructor to select, edit, delete or add questions, as well as construct and print tests and answer keys. Available to qualified adopters of the text in IBM DOS and Macintosh formats.

*Stress Management Audiotape.* Packaged free with the textbook, this valuable cassette tape presents four relaxation techniques (diaphragmatic breathing, breath meditation, systemic muscle relaxation, and autogenic training) for the students to practice and incorporate into their everyday routine.

*Mosby's Health Exchange.* This newsletter provides instructors with the latest information concerning "hot topics" to supplement their Mosby stress, health, fitness, sexuality, drugs, and wellness texts. The newsletter is published twice a year and covers numerous health and wellness topics. In addition to being a useful resource for instructors, it features a pullout center section with information tailored to students.

## Acknowledgements

The reviewers made excellent suggestions that were integrated whenever possible. Their contributions are present in every chapter. I would like to express my appreciation for their work.

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## Special Acknowledgements

*Coping With Stress in a Changing World* is the culmination of 4 years worth of labor that started out as a dream. Since high school I have dreamed that someday I would be a college professor, serve as a consultant, and write books. Writing this book was the third, and final part of the dream. I guess it goes to show you that with enough hard work and discipline, a little luck, and belief in your dreams, fairy tales can come true.

I would like to acknowledge Dr. Jay Segal of Temple University, my professor of stress management in graduate school. Dr. Segal was the first person to stimulate my interest in stress management. Dr. Segal's help and encouragement helped me get my feet wet teaching my first classes in stress management as an adjunct faculty member finishing his dissertation.

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Dr. Ellis, the principles and philosophy of Rational Emotive Therapy also serve as a major underlying foundation for this book as well as guidelines for my personal life. Your work has been a major influence on my thinking for the past 20 years.

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**Richard Blonna**



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