

TENTH EDITION

# Managing Stress

*Skills for Self-Care,  
Personal Resiliency, and  
Work-Life Balance in a  
Rapidly Changing World*

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*To all my friends and family,  
and to the great many people I have encountered  
over the years and decades, who have  
served as dynamic inspirations in my own life, thanks  
for making this a better world in which to live.*





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# Foreword

Courtesy of Larry Dossey, MD



*“After ecstasy, the laundry!”* This ancient saying can be applied to our current understanding of health and illness. During the past 50 years, we have discovered that, beyond doubt, the mind has an enormous impact on the body. Our emotions, thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors can affect us

for good or ill. Now that we have glimpsed these lofty insights, it's time to get down to practicalities and apply them. It's time, in other words, to do the laundry. But the task isn't simple. How, exactly, can we bring mind and body into harmony? How can we alleviate the stressful effects of modern life? How can they be turned to our advantage? Can we learn to benefit from these changes? Can we become wiser and healthier in the process? Advice is not difficult to find, as self-proclaimed experts are everywhere. They tout the latest formulas for stress-free living and personal transformation from tabloids, talk shows, and a plethora of self-help books, giving the entire area of stress management a bad name.

It is refreshing, amid all this blather, to discover Dr. Brian Luke Seaward's *Managing Stress*. In clear, uncluttered language, he takes us on a gentle walk through the territory of mind-body interaction. From cover to cover you will find that he is a very wise guide and possesses a quality almost always missing in stress management manuals: humor. Dr. Seaward knows the field well—he has taught it and lived it—and he provides scientific documentation at every step. But perhaps most importantly, Dr. Seaward daringly goes beyond the usual approach to the subject to speak of the soul and of human spirituality. He realizes that stress management and maximal health are impossible

to attain unless the questions of life's meaning are addressed.

Since *Managing Stress* first came out in 1994, the pace of life has certainly quickened. With this change, Americans have begun to embrace a host of complementary healing modalities, which underscores the importance of seeking a sense of inner peace from the winds of change.

As a physician who has long advocated the integration of mind and body for optimal health, I find it a pleasure and honor, therefore, to recommend this work. It is a fine contribution to the field of stress management and will serve as an invaluable guide to anyone seeking harmony in his or her life.

*Managing Stress* is a treasure for individuals seeking practical methods of achieving a more stress-free, happier, productive life. It is also an implicit invitation to an expanded view of our individual mind and body, and our place in the planetary Order of Things. On this realization our individual health and the health of everything else ultimately depend.

The bottom line: Seaward's views have increasing relevance in today's world. Our lives have changed considerably since the first edition of *Managing Stress* was published. It is increasingly clear that our individual health is not possible unless it is considered in the entire planetary context. What happens locally in our lives is never divorced from what occurs anywhere else on Earth, as the current coronavirus pandemic has painfully shown. That is why we must expand our concepts of stress beyond the interaction of mind and body of single individuals, and beyond our immediate social milieu, to include the entire global nexus.

We are therefore learning that “mind-body” is not limited to personal experience, because we cannot

secede from the natural world into which we are born and embedded. We are global creatures whose individual mind and body transcend their customary limits and boundaries in ways that connect with every living thing. We ignore this at our own risk. While this may sound impossibly complex or even dismal, it need not be, because it is an opening through which we can grasp the essential, ultimate nature of human consciousness as infinite, unitary, boundless, and one. This is the ultimate implication of this excellent book.

I congratulate Brian Luke Seaward for this new edition. It is an outstanding contribution. May there be many more.

—Larry Dossey, MD  
Executive Editor,

*Explore: The Journal of Science and Healing*  
Former Executive Editor,  
*Alternative Therapies in Health and Medicine*  
Author of *Reinventing Medicine*,  
*One Mind*, and *Healing Words*



# Preface

## ADAPTATION: STAYING ABOVE THE FRAY

The world became a very different place at the start of 2020 when the coronavirus took hold of the world and, like an 8-foot-thick wall of concrete, stopped the world in its tracks. COVID-19 has affected every aspect of life as we know it. The repercussions from this pandemic will be felt for years, if not decades. It is very unlikely that we as a nation will ever go back to how things were before. If there is one thing this pandemic has revealed, it is how dysfunctional so many aspects of society are. Going back is not the answer, yet going forward into this uncharted territory offers no easy or quick solutions. Coupled with this pandemic is a vein of civil unrest that has not been seen in this country for over 40 years. The new layers of stress revealed have not gone unnoticed. Issues like unemployment, bankruptcies, inflation, domestic abuse, self-medication, and political unrest created a perfect storm of stress.

It's no secret that young adults today are growing up in a world that is very different from not only that of their parents, but also that of their older siblings. Since the first edition of *Managing Stress* came out two decades ago, experts agree the world has become a much more frenetic place to live. In the approximately 25 years that this book has been in print there have been cultural revolutions in daily life, including significant changes to the music industry (iTunes), the news industry, the job market, the banking industry, the communication industry, the hotel industry (Airbnb), and the cab industry (Uber), not to mention daily changes in social media and the emergence of new ways to share information. Add to this layer of complexity various health issues, including the coronavirus, autism, social unrest, obesity, diabetes, teen suicide, and opioid addiction, as well as population increases and shifting demographics, such as increased Latino, Asian, and Muslim populations and the growing number of senior citizens. There is a great quote from Roy Blixer stating that “the only person who likes change is a wet baby.” By and large, people don't like change, particularly change that they cannot control. Magazine headlines that once

suggested various ways to decrease stress now tell us that stress is here to stay (so get used to it). Stress is the new normal. Despite the rapidly changing dynamics on planet Earth, what hasn't changed are the means to find your center, your sense of inner peace.

Experts from a host of disciplines have been commenting on the state of information processing today in the Wi-Fi digital age. The prognosis is not necessarily good. People are spending the vast majority of their time, perhaps all of it, in what has become known as “short-form information processing” and “short-form messaging.” In simple terms, this means cherry-picking information for specific facts, without taking time to process the larger context of the facts or taking time for critical thinking, synthesis, creative thinking, and memorization. Metaphorically speaking, people today are missing the entire forest because they are staring at one or two trees.

The proliferation of iPads, smartphones, and other electronic devices, coupled with instant access to information and decreased attention spans, has begun to change (some say decrease) the intellectual capacity of the twenty-first-century citizen. What is being lost is what is now called “slow, linear thinking skills,” along with intuitive-based knowledge. *Knowledge* (a domain of mental well-being) is the ability to gather, process, recall, and communicate information. *Wisdom* is the alchemy of knowledge and experience (real, not virtual) accrued over time. Time, however, is a rare commodity today, and more and more experience is viewed through a computer screen. People are opting for information rather than knowledge. As a result, wisdom becomes ever rarer.

Stated simply: There is a big difference between information gathering (e.g., facts and figures) and the application of deep-seated wisdom. All-too-common examples include people who venture into national parks for a day's hike unprepared, without proper equipment or supplies. Such people often have cell phones and GPS tracking devices, which they then use to call for help when stranded on a mountaintop or when they have fallen down cliffs. Facts and figures



cannot replace common sense (accrued wisdom), nor is a reliance on technology an excuse for ignorance. Stressful times, such as those in which we are living, necessitate wisdom.

*Managing Stress* is a synthesis of wisdom: accrued knowledge, ageless wisdom, and personal experiences over time. More than just a collection of facts and figures, *Managing Stress* connects the dots for nearly all aspects of stress through the ageless wisdom of the mandala template of mind, body, spirit, and emotions. *Managing Stress* is also a process of transformation, in which one moves from a motivation of fear toward a motivation of love and compassion. Mountains are a symbol of strength in times of change, which is why this symbol was chosen as the cover art for this tenth edition.

A quick glance at any headline makes it obvious that dramatic change is in the air and will be for some time to come. Pandemics, global warming, energy demands, social unrest, economic challenges, terrorism, personal bankruptcy, water shortages, advances in technology, and new diseases are a few of the many changes sweeping Earth as we speak. As planetary citizens, we are not immune to change. Moreover, with change comes stress, and humans are not immune to stress either. But with each change we encounter we have a choice to view it as a threat or an opportunity for growth. This new edition offers a unique synthesis of timeless wisdom from various world cultures, combined with new insights, research studies, and practical approaches to empower you to become resilient to stress during these times of dramatic change.

Many of the multicultural concepts in this edition are considered to be ageless wisdom, also known as *common sense*. But as the expression goes, “Common sense is not too common when people are stressed.” As newly initiated members of the Wi-Fi generation, people not only expect instant information retrieval, but also perfect soundbites of wisdom to accommodate their every need (rarely does a sound bite solve a life problem). As such, experts have coined the term “disposable knowledge” to describe the Internet mentality of failing to dig beyond the surface (or the first 10 listings of a Google search) to really gain a handle on information content. This book digs beneath the surface to reveal an alchemy of ageless wisdom, current

research, and practical tips for you to have the best skills and resources for your personal life journey. As several students have said to me, “*Managing Stress* not only connects the dots; it builds a bridge to a better life.”

When *Managing Stress* was first published in 1994, it broke new ground. Never before had the focus of a college textbook presented such a holistic perspective of health and well-being under the influence of stress. Twenty years ago, you would have been hard pressed to find the word *spirituality* in a college textbook, yet today it would seem awkward not to address this aspect of health. Indeed, many of the topics and aspects that were considered at the vanguard a decade ago are now so familiar that they have become household words: t'ai chi, hatha yoga, echinacea, Pilates, meridians, and chakras, to name a few. Today, as the global village knocks on your doorstep, insights from Asia, Africa, and Latin America offer a multicultural approach to seeking and maintaining balance in our lives. Perhaps it's no secret that as the pace of life continues to increase, so does the hunger for credible information to create and maintain a sense of balance in these times of change. As the first edition of *Managing Stress* found its place on bookshelves across the country, it became known as the “bible” of stress management. I am happy to say that I continually hear it described that way. I am also happy to hear so many comments on the writing style, layout, and production of the textbook: aesthetically pleasing to the eyes, easy to read and understand. A lot of work goes into the selection of photographs, cartoons, and artwork to make this book visually appealing and engaging. As with all previous editions, a conscious decision was made not to include stress-inducing photographs. The television news and the Internet are saturated with these types of images, and my intention is to maintain a positive energy between the covers of this book.

## WHAT IS NEW AND IMPROVED IN THIS TENTH EDITION?

The topic of stress and stress management (now often called *resiliency*) is quite dynamic, and as such there is always new information to add to the ever-growing body of knowledge. Here are some things added to place this tenth edition on the cutting edge of this colossal topic, as well as several new workbook exercises.



## Chapter 1: The Nature of Stress

A new section has been included on the topic of “rest and digest” (the opposite physiological conditions of fight or flight). With so much in the news about intense acute stress, including the coronavirus, California wildfires, and countless other situations, a new section has been added on trauma (“Trauma: Stress on Steroids”).

## Chapter 3: The Physiology of Stress

A new section has been added on the vagus nerve, which is responsible for rest and digest.

## Chapter 4: Stress and Disease

A whole new perspective on stress and disease has been added through the wisdom of Dr. Joe Dispenza, a big name in the field of mind-body-spirit medicine, with his work on neuroplasticity, as well as the energy centers known as the chakras. Additionally, with a new interview with PNI luminary Kenneth Pelletier, this chapter has a new, updated take on Pelletier’s view of the stress and disease models.

## Chapter 6: The Stress Emotions: Anger, Fear, and Joy

A long overdue section on microaggressions has been added to give balance to a population of people often targeted by inappropriate behaviors.

## Chapter 7: Stress-Prone and Stress-Resistant Personality Traits

A new section titled “The High-Tech Personality” has been added to describe a stress-prone personality related to constant use of screen devices, leading to an addiction.

## Chapter 9: Cognitive Restructuring: Reframing

There have been many requests from people who use the book to add the section titled “Stay Above the Fray: Raising Your Vibration.” The focus of this book is a shift from fear-based thoughts and behaviors to compassion-based thoughts and behaviors. This section supports this shift.

## Chapter 10: Healthy Boundaries: Behavior Modification

With the advent of the coronavirus pandemic and its aftermath, with ripples far and wide, a special section has been added regarding behavior changes for adaptation.

## Chapter 11: Journal Writing

Poetry therapy is an extension of journal writing where one tries to make order out of chaos. This edition addresses this in more detail.

## Chapter 12: Expressive Art Therapy

A new section has been added to highlight the popularity of adult coloring books.

## Chapter 13: Humor Therapy (Comic Relief)

A long overdue section addressing the topic of inappropriate humor has been added.

## Chapter 14: Creative Problem Solving

A new section, “Creativity: Bend, Break, and Blend?” has been added to this chapter, giving a new perspective on cracking the code of the creative process. Additionally, a small section has been added regarding the importance of boredom as a factor in the creative process.

## Chapter 17: Additional Coping Techniques

The section on social support groups has been beefed up with a new introduction as well as some new insights regarding the importance of this essential coping skill. A new coping skill, and hence a new section, has been added, titled “Body Tapping: An Emotional Freedom Technique.”

## Chapter 18: Diaphragmatic Breathing

As more and more people rely on smartphone apps to help them function throughout the day, a section was added on the topic of apps for relaxing breathing.

## Chapter 23: Massage Therapy

New sections on Thai massage and Chinese massage have been added, as well as a short section on the new, calming technique of Havening.

## Chapter 27: Physical Exercise, Nutrition, and Stress

With an interest in shortcuts to health and fitness, a new section was added to this chapter to address the topic of high intensity interval training (HIIT), as well as some additional research supporting the claims that physical exercise helps ward off the effects of depression.

## STRESS MANAGEMENT IN A RAPIDLY CHANGING, CHAOTIC WORLD

As with each new edition, this revision contains highlights of the latest state-of-the-art research on all aspects of stress management. This book strikes a fine balance between highlighting the landmark research on health psychology, psychoneuroimmunology, and holistic healing and the newest research studies, theories, and applications of effective stress management in our rapidly changing and chaotic world. We have learned firsthand that stress can not only suppress the immune system, but also make people more vulnerable to infectious diseases like the coronavirus.

Although it may seem like health care is in a state of flux, from a different perspective it appears to be on the cusp of a new revolution where mind, body, and spirit are seen as equal parts of the whole. Once again, *Managing Stress* stands at the vanguard as the premier resource for holistic (mind-body-spirit) stress management.

Since the creation of the Office of Alternative Medicine at the National Institutes of Health in 1993 (now called the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health), more money and research has been focused on a host of healing modalities that fall under the domain of complementary or “integrative” medicine. Every technique for stress management is considered at some level to fall into the category of complementary or alternative medicine. Although, at best, the conclusions can only be drawn from outcomes due to the dynamics of the mind-body-spirit paradigm, the interest in this field only continues to grow. This book bears the collective fruit of this growing body of knowledge.

I urge readers to consider *Managing Stress* as an invitation to further explore all of the many topics highlighted in this book in greater depth through other books, articles, and experts in each respective field. No one book can contain all of the information on any topic, let alone this one, but it is my hope that this book sets you on a path toward a well-balanced life.



# Acknowledgments

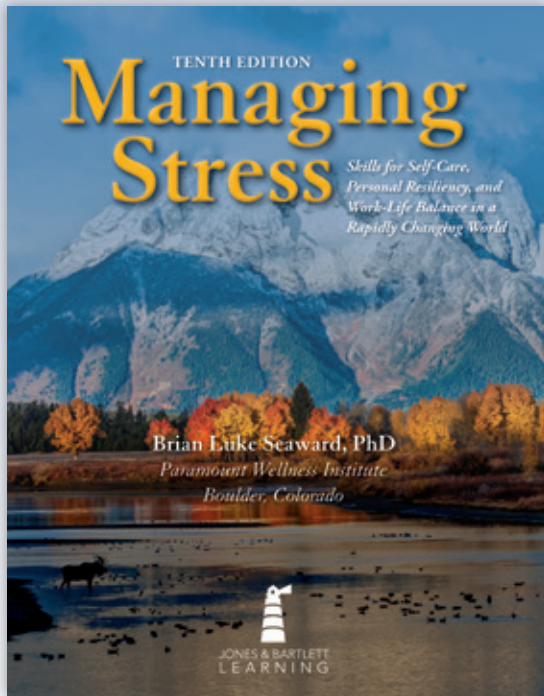
When Maureen Stapleton won her Oscar for Best Supporting Actress in 1982 for her role in the movie *Reds*, she walked up to the podium and said, “I’d like to thank everyone I ever met.” At times writing this book, and working on all its many editions, I have felt much the same way. In fact, I would like to include many people I have never met, but whose work and wisdom have inspired me in a great many ways and found their way into this book. While I would like to share my gratitude with everyone—and you know who you are, including Joe Pechinski, Dave Clarke, Candace Pert, James Owen Mathews, and my invaluable mentors Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, MD, and Larry Dossey, MD—there are simply too many friends, colleagues, scholars, and luminaries to list here. A very special thanks to Mark Ellison and Sally Cadman for their insightful feedback on Chapter 28, *Ecotherapy: The Healing Power of Nature*. Heartfelt gratitude to

Randy Glasbergen and Brad Velej for the use of their wonderful cartoons. Huge thanks also to all my students, friends, heroes, and colleagues too numerous to mention, who were so kind to allow me to use their art therapy pieces or pose for countless photos used in this book. I am forever grateful. I particularly wish to thank my many colleagues who have been so supportive with this work over the years and who have written to tell me that this book has changed the lives of countless people (students and teachers alike) who have used it and taken its holistic message to heart and soul. Special thanks go to Cathy Esperti (Cathy, you are *the* best), Ashley Malone, Meghan McDonagh, Rebecca Damon, and Troy Liston at Jones & Bartlett Learning, who are simply awesome. Thanks for making this tenth edition the best ever. The phrase “it takes a village” certainly applies here, so thanks to everyone who has been and continues to be part of my “village.”





# How to Use This Book



Based on the concept of holistic wellness, where the whole is always greater than the sum of the parts, *Managing Stress*'s content and format uniquely offer insights on the integration, balance, and harmony of mind, body, spirit, and emotions throughout each section and in various chapters (e.g., the concept of entrainment can be found in Chapter 4, "Stress and Disease," and Chapter 22, "Music Therapy"). Like the wellness paradigm it is based on, *Managing Stress* is formatted in a mandala of four parts:

**Part 1: The Nature of Stress** (physiology, stress, and disease)

**Part 2: The Mind and Soul** (mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects as they relate to stress)

**Part 3: Coping Strategies** (promoting insights and resolution of stressors)

**Part 4: Relaxation Techniques** (promoting physical homeostasis)

This book integrates all four components of the wellness paradigm. First, because it is so visible, we will look at stress from the physical point of view, including

both the dynamics involved in fight-or-flight and the most current theories attempting to explain the relationship between stress and disease. We then focus on mental and emotional factors, outlining pertinent theoretical concepts of psychology: the stress emotions, anger and fear, as well as specific personality types that are thought to be either prone or resistant to stressful perceptions. (More cognitive aspects are covered in Part 3.) The much-neglected component of spiritual well-being will round out the first half of the book, showcasing selected theories of this important human dimension and its significant relationship to stress. The remainder of the book will focus on a variety of coping strategies and relaxation techniques, and come full circle to the physical realm of wellness again, with positive adaptations to stress promoted through the use of physical exercise. As you will surely find, true to the wellness paradigm, where all components are balanced and tightly integrated, there will be much overlap among the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual factors in these chapters, as these factors are virtually inseparable. And just as the word *stress* was adopted from the discipline of physics, you will see that some other concepts and theories from this field are equally important to your ability to relax (such as entrainment).

True to the nature of holistic stress management, there is no separation or division between mind and body, emotions and spirit, or any of these four aspects. As such, you will see cross-referencing between chapters to help you connect the dots so that your understanding of the mind-body-spirit connection is solid. You may find it best to start with Chapter 1, "The Nature of Stress," and continue straight through to the end of Chapter 8, "Stress and Human Spirituality," to gain the best perspective of this colossal topic. From there you can cherry-pick information on which coping techniques and relaxation techniques work best for you. Keep in mind that the best approach is to try them all to find which is most effective for you.

Each chapter of the text has several pedagogical devices designed to aid in the mastery of the material, including feature boxes, surveys, key terms, exercises, and checklists.

**Case studies** titled Stress with a Human Face illustrate how real people deal with a variety of stressful situations.



**Key terms** are clearly defined in the text where the term first appears to help with comprehension and expand your professional vocabulary.

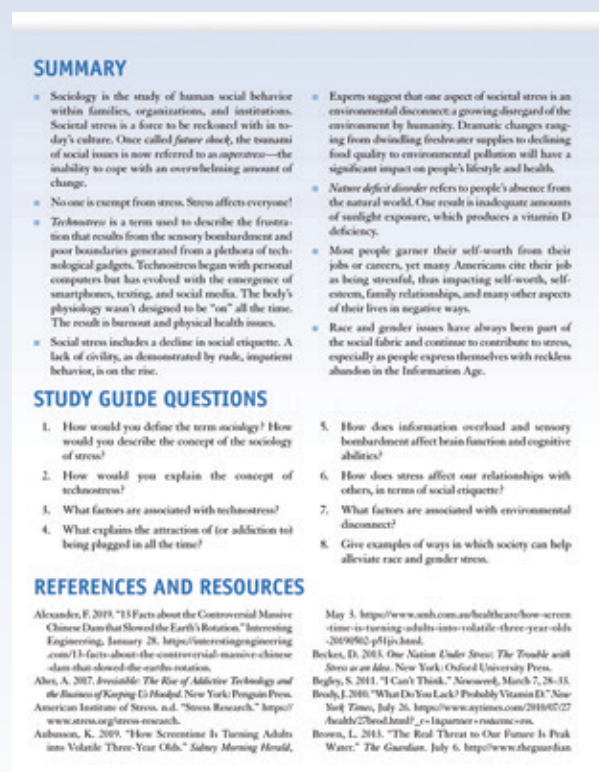
**Holistic medicine:** A healing approach that honors the integration, balance, and harmony of mind, body, spirit, and emotions to promote inner peace.

**Walter Cannon:** Twentieth-century Harvard physiologist who coined the phrase "fight or flight."

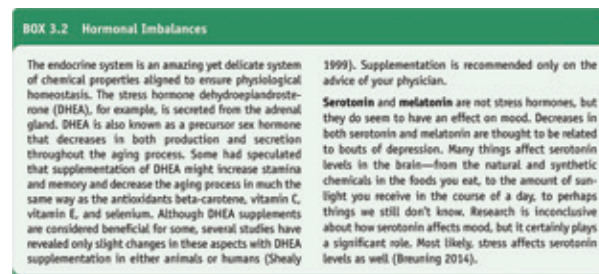
**Fight-or-flight response:** A term coined by Walter Cannon; the instinctive physiological responses preparing the body, when confronted with a threat, to either fight or flee; an evolutionary survival dynamic.

**Stress reaction:** The body's initial (central nervous system) reaction to a perceived threat.

**End of chapter summary** appears at the end of each chapter and contains a comprehensive summary of the main points in the chapter along with study guide questions and references for further study.



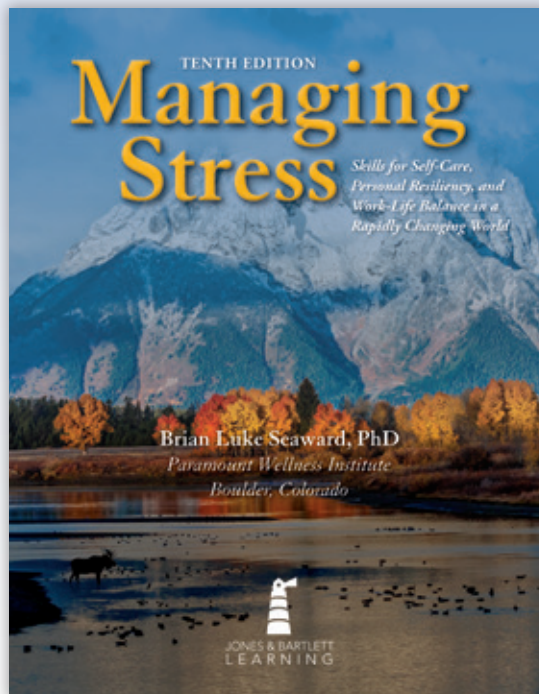
**Box features** throughout the chapters provide unique current and historic perspectives on key topics, questionnaires, and things to consider.





# Student and Instructor Resources

## NAVIGATE ADVANTAGE ACCESS



Each new book comes complete with a dynamic online resource packed with instructor and student resources! Navigate Advantage Access provides an interactive eBook, workbook activities, audio engagement with the author, meditation audio and video, as well as assessments, knowledge checks, learning analytics reporting tools, and more.

## RELAXATION MEDIA AND AUDIO INTRODUCTIONS

In his own words, the author, Brian Luke Seaward, introduces each of the four sections in the book. He provides a summary of each chapter in the section and explains why the information is so important to the understanding and management of stress. This is a great resource for students and instructors!

The author also includes four relaxation audio files as well as a relaxation video—perfect to listen to while studying, meditating, or simply relaxing.

## THE ART OF PEACE AND RELAXATION WORKBOOK, TENTH EDITION

The new edition of the workbook is now available only through our Navigate product. Worksheets are included as printable and/or writable PDFs.

## LESSON PLANS

This edition includes 26 lesson plans and class exercises created specifically for students and participants in the author's holistic stress management certification workshop. The lesson plans have been adapted for instructors who use *Managing Stress* as a college textbook.

## INTERACTIVE LECTURES

The following 16 unique audio and closed-captioned visual interactive lectures contained in Navigate provide a powerful, comprehensive exposure to the holistic (mind, body, spirit, and emotions) approach to stress management, including both cognitive (coping) skills, a host of relaxation techniques, and personal life skills for optimal health and well-being (also known as mind-body-spirit homeostasis). In each weekly lesson, these online lectures combine both theoretical and experiential learning through a series of exercises to give the user the life skills to promote peace, relaxation, and optimal health.

### Lesson 1: Welcome to the Stress of Life

Stress knows no demographic boundaries. It affects everyone and is often called the “equal opportunity destroyer.” We begin by looking at the nature of stress, various types of stress, and stressors, followed by some definitions of stress and some classic background from experts who first studied the concept of stress. This lesson then progresses to expand your

comprehension beyond the Western “mechanistic” approach to a complete wellness dynamic, including the mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual aspects, known collectively as the holistic perspective. Combined with this content is an introduction to a very basic relaxation technique called diaphragmatic breathing.

## **Lesson 2: SOS: Message in a Bottle**

Is the world in deep trouble? Perhaps! Stress may be a perception, but many external factors are coming together in an unprecedented way that influence these perceptions. This lesson looks at several social factors that can so greatly fan the flames of personal stress. We conclude with a time-tested coping skill: journal writing as a means to release stress-based emotions and gain clarity in one’s thoughts.

## **Lesson 3: The Stress or Relaxation Barometer**

To really know what effects stress has on the body, you must first understand the basics of stress physiology. This lesson takes a closer look at the physiology of stress (both short term and long term). It also explains a classic relaxation technique, progressive muscular relaxation, that can help you understand stress physiology.

## **Lesson 4: Headaches, Lupus, and Hemorrhoids, Oh My!**

The association between stress and disease is colossal. From tension headaches to cancer, our thoughts and the associated emotions can directly affect our health. Is the physical body the first or last place that the symptoms of disease and illness manifest? This lesson explores two perspectives of the stress and disease dynamic through several models of the stress and disease phenomenon: a holistic and a mechanistic approach. By understanding the mind-body connection, you become empowered to maintain or return to homeostasis.

## **Lesson 5: Reprogramming the Software of the Mind**

By and large, stress begins as a perception—an interpretation of some event that we perceive as a threat. As such, it is essential to understand the framework

of the mind (thoughts, perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, opinions, and emotions) to manage stress effectively. By becoming familiar with various theories of psychology, one can better achieve this goal to turn the perceived threat into a nonthreat and move on with one’s life. This lesson begins with some basic fundamentals of psychology, through the eyes of stressful perceptions, and then highlights a formidable tool, cognitive restructuring (also known as reframing) to use in everyday life.

## **Lesson 6: Feeling the Stress, Feeling the Love**

In simple terms, there are two stress emotions: anger (fight) and fear (flight). But nothing is simple about stress. There are actually hundreds of stress emotions, including joy and happiness (eustress). This lesson takes a closer look at the two primary stress emotions (anger and fear) as well as ways to deal creatively with each so that you control your emotions rather than having them control you. We also look at the emotions associated with good stress (eustress) followed by specific aspects of personality that can either promote stress or help buffer against it.


## **Lesson 7: Minding the Body, Mending the Mind**

Art therapy is a formidable coping technique that serves as an emotional release (catharsis) for unresolved emotions. Through the use of various media, feelings and thoughts can be expressed in ways that verbal language simply cannot articulate, thus opening the door to resolution and inner peace. Muscle tension is the number one symptom of stress. Physical relaxation is also a powerful stress reducer. Hence, massage is accepted as a much-desired relaxation technique. This lesson also explores bodywork (massage therapy) as a relaxation medium.

## **Lesson 8: Health of the Human Spirit**

Spiritual well-being is very much a part of health and wellness, but it is so often ignored in dealing effectively with stress. Left unaddressed, stress can choke the human spirit. For this reason (and many others), human spirituality is very much a part of stress and stress management. In fact, spirituality is considered by many to be the cornerstone of holistic stress





management regarding relationships, values, and a meaningful purpose in life, aspects that are related to every stressor. This lesson invites you to take a closer look at this often-ignored wellness component by exploring many different perspectives from various luminaries around the world.

### **Lesson 9: Change This!**

We all have ideas on how we can improve our lives by tweaking some habits that throw gasoline on the fire of stress. Luckily, there is help. This lesson takes a look at several types of behavior that can push one over the edge and, equally important, ways to examine and change behavior for the better by becoming more assertive, more confident, and embracing change for the better.

### **Lesson 10: Be the Calm in the Eye of the Storm**

Today, everyone is bombarded with sensory overload, from Facebook updates and YouTube links to thousands of text messages. How does anyone stay grounded in these cyber winds of change? The answer is meditation: a simple way to calm the mind of perpetual sensory bombardment and information overload, not to mention common emotional issues. Meditation is not a religion! It is a simple technique for mental training, and every athlete does it. Speaking of athletes, many athletes do a form of meditation called T'ai chi Ch'uan, often called a "moving meditation," which is also a great means of relaxation.

### **Lesson 11: Imagination Is More Powerful Than Knowledge**

It has been said that we have the means to solve our own problems (stressors). We just need to use our heads. If stress can be disempowering, creativity is considered very empowering. Creativity allows you to have options. Einstein said that imagination was more powerful than knowledge. It was the empowerment aspect of creativity he referred to. We begin to explore the creative process and then see how it can help us solve problems (both big and small). The mind not only has the power to create options, but also has the power to promote relaxation and healing through the use of mental imagery and visualization, which are very effective relaxation skills.

### **Lesson 12: Good Vibrations**

The sound of laughter and the sound of music may not seem to have much in common, but they are both regarded as ways to ease stress and lighten the heart. From an energy perspective, they are both known as "good vibrations." Humor, that which can promote laughter, is one of the finest coping techniques known to humanity. Music has been recognized for millennia as a soothing relaxation technique.

### **Lesson 13: Coping and Relaxation Techniques, Part I**

It has been said often that time and money (more likely the lack thereof) are the causes of tremendous stress. Perhaps we have all felt this way at one time or another. By understanding the psychology of money and time, one can better navigate the shoals of stress. Good communication skills are also very important for this navigation because many stressors involve interactions with others. This lesson focuses on refining several effective coping skills essential for personal homeostasis. One of the most common techniques to promote relaxation is called progressive muscular relaxation (PMR). An exploration of this technique rounds out this lesson.

### **Lesson 14: Coping and Relaxation Techniques, Part II**

There are hundreds of ways to cope with stress, from hobbies to dream therapy, all of which help give insights to our problems and help us to work toward resolution. This lesson examines some additional coping techniques that are important to include in your toolkit of stress management. Combined with this is a closer look at hatha yoga as an essential relaxation skill. Hatha yoga has gone mainstream in the United States. More specifically, it has gone corporate (which is really the antithesis of hatha yoga). We explore the basics of yoga as it was originally taught several thousand years ago.

### **Lesson 15: The Power of Suggestion**

The mind has an incredible power to heal (make whole). This has been recognized the world over in many types of relaxation efforts, including autogenic training, clinical biofeedback, and ecotherapy. This

lesson takes a closer look at these methods that can help the mind work with the body to achieve a greater sense of relaxation and homeostasis.

### **Lesson 16: A Healthy Body: Back to Basics**

Stress begins in the mind but quickly ends up in the body. Perhaps the most effective relaxation technique is an activity that engages the stress response, which is exactly what physical exercise does. Exercise is stress to the body, but a controlled stress. We cannot talk about exercise without addressing nutritional habits. Moreover, we really cannot talk about stress without addressing nutrition as well. For this reason we discuss

several important factors to consider when incorporating exercise and nutrition in your overall stress management program.

### **ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTOR RESOURCES**

- Test Bank
- Slides in PowerPoint format
- Instructor's Manual
- Discussion Questions
- Lecture Outlines
- Lesson Plans
- Grading and Analytics Tools



# Praise for *Managing Stress*

## INSTRUCTORS

“Having taught Stress Management since 2012, I make sure to use Seaward’s textbook each and every semester. I cannot wait to introduce students to all the stress management techniques presented in these pages. Whether it’s a coping strategy or relaxation technique, students will walk out with lifelong skills. Students have called my Stress Management course life changing, and it’s primarily due to this textbook!”

—Julio Rodriguez, Ph.D., University of Florida

“Dr. Brian Luke Seaward’s stress management texts have inspired students and instructors/professors alike for decades! Material in *Managing Stress* encourages people to investigate their thoughts, actions, and feelings to change from negative to more positive practices in their lives. This text is presented holistically and thoroughly, and the perspective is refreshing and healing for all.”

—Dr. Gwendolyn Roberts Francavillo,  
Malek School of Health Professions,  
Marymount University, Alexandria, VA

“An easy to use and practical guide to real life stressors and how to manage them before they manage you. Brian Luke Seaward provides strategies and techniques to navigate the choppy waters of life and sail through to the calm on the other side. By the way, this afternoon [I] got approval from the General Education Committee to present a three credit Positive Health and Stress Management honors level course for next semester. Naturally, I am using your books for these courses!!!”

—Christel Autuori, RHD, RYT, MA, Certified  
Integrative Health Coach, Certified Holistic Stress  
Management Instructor, Director,  
Institute for Holistic Health Studies,  
Western Connecticut State University

“At a time when I was beginning my own holistic health journey, Dr. Seaward’s books and workshops were incredibly helpful for increasing my understanding of health, stress, and spirituality, and the

body-mind-spirit connection. Since my first workshop with him nearly 20 years ago, I’ve traveled on his Spirit of Ireland trip, attended his annual retreat, and obtained his level II holistic stress management instructor certification. His books have been part of my journey, both personally and professionally. As I teach holistic health and healing concepts to my students, Dr. Seaward’s *Managing Stress* textbook is a pinnacle resource. As I tell my students, ‘he literally wrote the book on stress management.’ I appreciate that Dr. Seaward’s books and workshops balance the seminal foundations of holistic health with the latest research and health issues. Whether you plan to use this text for inspiring students or for your own personal growth, I recommend it with gratitude and wholeheartedness.”

—Amy L. Versnik Nowak, Ph.D.,  
University of Minnesota Duluth

“I highly recommend *Managing Stress: Principles and Strategies for Health and Well-Being* to any college professor who teaches stress management. It is a comprehensive and holistic approach to stress management in that the reader receives a clear and in-depth understanding of the wide variety of causes and effects, while learning about a multitude of adoptable options for managing their stress. Not only is it informative, but it is an inspiring and empowering personal resource for students to learn how to cope in this ever-changing world, in a more healthy and balanced manner. I have used Dr. Seaward’s text throughout my three decades of teaching this course and each edition has incorporated new updated information that reflects current research and the latest coping techniques. It is unequivocally the best college text on this topic content-wise, and in addition it offers the instructor many technologically based resources. Once again, BRAVO on this new edition!”

—Susan Kennen, Professor of Health Education,  
Duchess Community College, Poughkeepsie, NY

“*Managing Stress* is the best comprehensive, evidence-based stress management book that I have ever used to teach students and nurses about the physiology and



pathophysiology of stress, and stress management coping and relaxation skills. Each chapter is extremely well annotated with multiple references and resources. This 28-chapter book is well organized into four parts, including the Nature of Stress, the Mind and Soul, Coping Strategies, and Relaxation Techniques, which make it easy for students and educators to find content, references, and resources. I give this textbook a 5-star rating as it is the most thorough and comprehensive resource on stress management that is easy to use, evidence based, and well written. This book helps learners find thoughtful coping and relaxation skills in a very stressful world. This is a monumentally great gift to the world about stress management.”

—Karen C. Sanders, MSN, RN, AHN-BC,  
HWNC-BC, RN Patient Advocacy NC, PLLC

## STUDENTS

“This textbook is my ‘go to’ book almost daily. As a holistic mental health clinician and trainer, I rely on this book as if it was the DSM version of stress management. It’s a must have in any practitioner’s/educator’s library. I eagerly await the next edition of the book.”

—Lisa Knowles, M.Ed., LMHC, NCTTP

“I have used Luke’s book *Managing Stress* in not only my own personal life but also as a book for my nursing students to rely on during nursing school. I even used this book in a church retreat to teach my church members how to manage their stress. This book gives so much great information that I cannot even begin to describe how it helps. There is information on just about anything stress related you would want to know. I HIGHLY recommend this book for anyone who is teaching stress or just wants to understand stress better in their own lives.”

—Kim Holden, Ph.D., MPH, RN, AHN-BC,  
CHPN, HWNC-BC, CA, HSMI

“*Managing Stress* has not only been the favorite resource for myself, it has been the constant reference for my Health, Wellness, and Life coaching programs as well. Stress, fear, anxiety, and past limiting beliefs keep us from feeling and living whole, and this book offers the tools for learning, reframing, reviving and sustaining health and wellness, all within an intellectual, scientific, holistic, and spiritual environment. It will be your continued tool for stress management and living well

long after you first used it as a textbook. Brian Luke Seaward gifts us with his deep passion for sharing how mind, body, and spirit wellness is the key to living well and thriving in a constantly changing and challenging world.”

—Ceseli Milstein, RN, Life Coach, Mystic, CT

“*Managing Stress* is a wonderful resource. As a board-certified mental health psychiatric nurse, and mom of six, stress is part of my daily life, at work and at home. The tools I have learned from Brian Luke Seaward’s textbook have helped me in my holistic life. For example, I have facilitated psycho-educational groups and helped a teen through geometry test anxiety with the research and tools in this holistic stress management essential textbook. Though I took this course a couple of years ago, this text remains my go to on everything stress management. That Brian Luke Seaward focuses on holistic stress management is very important for me and my clients. There is so much help for us all during these shifting times between its covers.”

—Elizabeth A. Carroll, BSN, PMHRN-BC,  
Holistic RN, Usui Reiki Teaching Master


“*Managing Stress* has been my go-to textbook for years. I have worked in hospitals and small primary care clinics and have been able to use Brian Luke Seaward’s content to teach stress management techniques to patients and healthcare professionals. Luke has a way of explaining the physiology of stress in an easy-to-understand manner and also provides concrete paths to resolving or alleviating stress, not to mention ways to prevent it in the first place. This is *the* book on stress and stress management.”

—Lisa Davilia, RN, Colorado

“Brian Luke Seaward’s book, *Managing Stress*, is the most comprehensive resource I have seen on the topic of holistic stress management. Using wit and wisdom, he tackles the subject with great attention to detail, including real-life examples and the latest research. He not only effectively explains the tremendous health consequences of our stressful lifestyles, but more importantly, he offers hope in the form of a treasure trove of tools and techniques for stress management and reduction. Considering the tremendous impact that these methods can have on health and wellness, *Managing Stress* should be required reading for us all.”

—Amy L. Prestridge, BS, CNHP, Cincinnati, OH





*“Managing Stress* is THE most comprehensive text that contains ‘all you need to know about stress management!’ Dr. Brian Luke Seaward is insightful and creative in his writings and, in addition to the text being informative, it is enjoyable to read! I highly recommend this book as ‘the’ go-to resource on this topic.”

—Charlotte Cuneo, RN, Boston Medical Center,  
Boston, MA

“This comprehensive, must-have book is chock full of the necessary tools and pertinent information to cope with stress from a positive and holistic perspective. As a board-certified nurse wellness coach, I’ve been using the skills and strategies for years with remarkable results. The author communicates clearly and realistically on how to deal with stress, build resistance, and balance your life to unite mind-body-spirit for health and happiness. Highly recommend.”

—Jan Kinder, RN

“Brian Luke Seaward has a special ability to get us to ‘tap in’ and trust in ourselves, cultivating that trust to reach our highest levels of potential, envisioning a better world in which together, we can accomplish most anything. His textbook is a treasure trove filled with ageless wisdom, future insights, and boundless creativity, all while weaving a web of timeless beauty through sharing the very essence of ‘love.’ A learning tool that will be passed down for generations to come, leaving an imprint on each soul that aspires. Its delightfully illustrated graphics, inspired quotes, and creative activities make this book a joy to behold.”

—Patricia Brock





# Introduction

During the Renaissance, a philosophy shaping the direction of medicine in the Western world started taking hold. This philosophy, promulgated by René Descartes (1596–1650), stated that the mind and body are separate entities and therefore should be examined and treated differently. This dichotomy of mind and body advanced the understanding of the true human condition. Albert Einstein’s revolutionary unified field theory, which at the time was regarded as ludicrous, began to lead Western science back to the ancient premise that all points (energy and matter) connect, each significantly affecting all others, of which the human entity (mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual components) is very much a part.

Only recently has modern science taken steps to unite what Descartes separated over 375 years ago. The unity of the body, mind, and spirit is quite complex, especially as it relates to stress management. But one simple truth is emerging from the research of the late twentieth century: the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects of the human condition are all intimately connected. Mental imagery, entrainment theory, *pranayama*, divinity theory, split-brain research, Jungian psychology, and beta-endorphins all approach the same unity, each from a different vantage point, and each supporting the ancient axiom that “all points connect.”

Given the dynamic changes in our society since the coronavirus pandemic, stress, mental health, self-care, resiliency, work–life balance and optimal health have become critical, if not essential, topics in the American culture today. The popularity of good stress management/resiliency skills has grown from the dire need to get a handle on this condition—to deal with stress effectively enough so as to lead a healthy and happy life. But dealing with stress is a process, not

an outcome. Many people’s attitudes, influenced by their rushed lifestyles and expectations of immediate gratification, reflect the need to eradicate stress rather than to manage, reduce, or control their perceptions of it. As a result, stress never really goes away; it just reappears with a new face. The results can and do cause harm, including bodily damage. Studies now indicate that between 70 and 80 percent of all disease is strongly related to, if not directly associated with, stress. So-called lifestyle diseases, such as cancer and coronary heart disease, are leading causes of death; both seem to have direct links to the stress response. With health-care reform having become a major national issue, the ability of and the need for individuals to accept responsibility for their own health is increasing. But knowledge of the concepts of stress management alone is not enough. Continual application of this knowledge through both self-awareness and the practice of effective coping skills and relaxation techniques is essential for total well-being.

Thus, this book was written to acquaint you with the fundamental theories and applications of the mind-body-spirit phenomenon. More specifically, it offers more than 16 dynamic coping strategies you can use as tools to deal more effectively with the causes of your stress, and 12 powerful relaxation techniques to help you reduce or eliminate potential or actual symptoms associated with the stress response. It is my intention that collectively they may help you to reach and maintain your optimal level of physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being in the years to come. For this reason, I would like to suggest that you revisit the book again and again as time goes by. What may appear today to be “some theory” to memorize for a final exam could one day take on great relevance in your life.

