

# Stress

We hear a lot about stress these days. We hear about it from various health professionals and we experience it first-hand almost on a daily basis. It appears as though stress is becoming a national epidemic, according to a recent (2007) study published by the American Psychological Association (APA). The study states that mental stress can take its toll on our bodies and cause an array of symptoms including “fatigue, headache and upset stomach.”

Associated psychological or “mental” stress can manifest as “irritability or anger, feeling nervous and lack of energy.” The APA study concluded that roughly three quarters of those surveyed have experienced these physical (77%) and psychological (73%) stress symptoms.

What causes us the most stress?

The study indicates that work, children, family and housing concerns cause Americans the most stress.

It should be of no surprise to those distressed Americans that stress could have negative effects on our relationships. For example, work stress can impact our relationships at home, and vice versa. Lack of appropriate stress management can exacerbate this. However, the study shows that many Americans utilize unhealthy coping mechanisms to manage their stress, such as smoking and alcohol use, skipping meals, over-eating, or consuming junk food.

Most Americans are aware of the importance of mental health treatment to combat stress (69%), however, only 7% actually reach out for help with stress management, according to the study.

Overall, the study aims to bring into awareness the relationship between mind and body health.

At any time of the year, and especially during this holiday season, stress management is critical to our health.

How can we better manage our stress?

Many stress management techniques help both our minds and bodies. For example, proper nutrition, physical exercise and rest have been recommended for years for optimal health. Other practices such as meditation and yoga are becoming increasingly popular.

When we take care of our bodies, we feel better mentally. Conversely, if we take care of our mental health needs we can also experience stress reduction and feel better physically.

As we seek to understand the mind-body connection, we can experience how making positive changes in one area can positively impact the other.

If we may assist to help you cope with any mental or emotional stressors you are experiencing during this season, please contact us at your convenience.

We will be happy to discuss treatment options with you.

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## GARY BREUER, MA, LPC



My private practice is located in North Scottsdale, within the offices of PsychArizona. I work with children (ages 6 and older), pre-teens, adolescents and adults. I work with individuals, couples and families with issues of anxiety, depression, trauma, grief and loss, career, academic and workplace issues, relationship issues, LGBT concerns, personal growth and spirituality.

I use various therapeutic approaches depending on the needs of the client. These approaches include developmental, humanistic, cognitive-behavioral, existential, family-systems, mindfulness-based, transpersonal, and EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing). EMDR is a model used for the treatment of trauma, and has also been found to be successful in the treatment of various other disorders as well.

I have experience providing professional counseling in clinical, business, and school settings.

Apart from my private practice, I am also a Reiki Master and have a great appreciation and respect for alternative as well as conventional treatment approaches.

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