

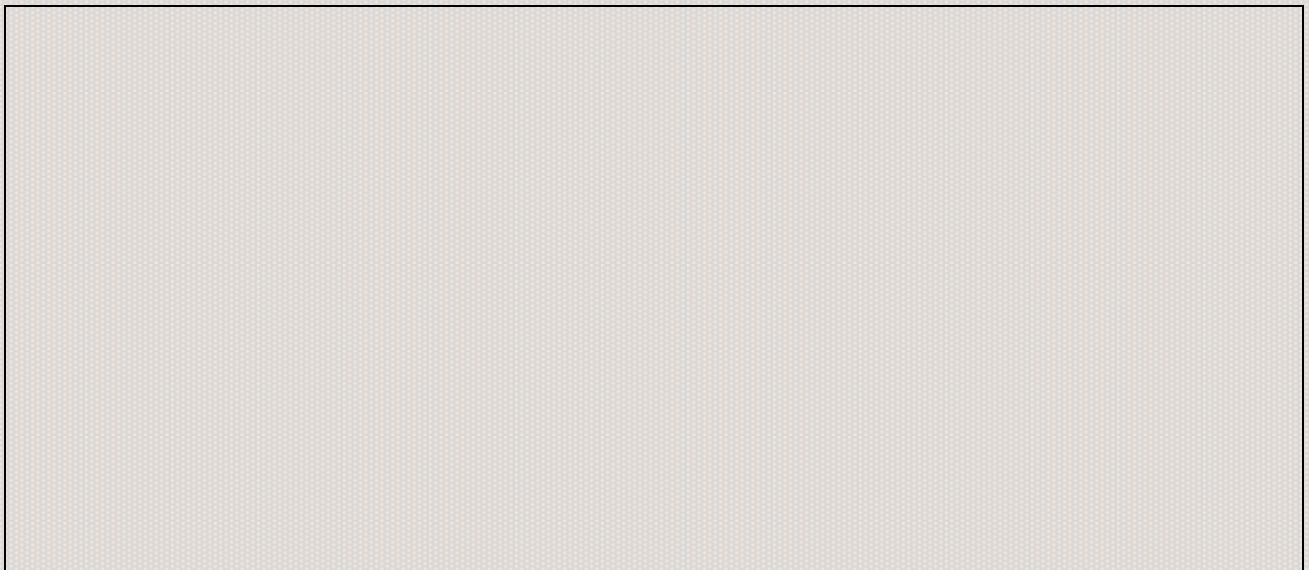
# How to Handle Stress

## (And Even Use it to Your Advantage)

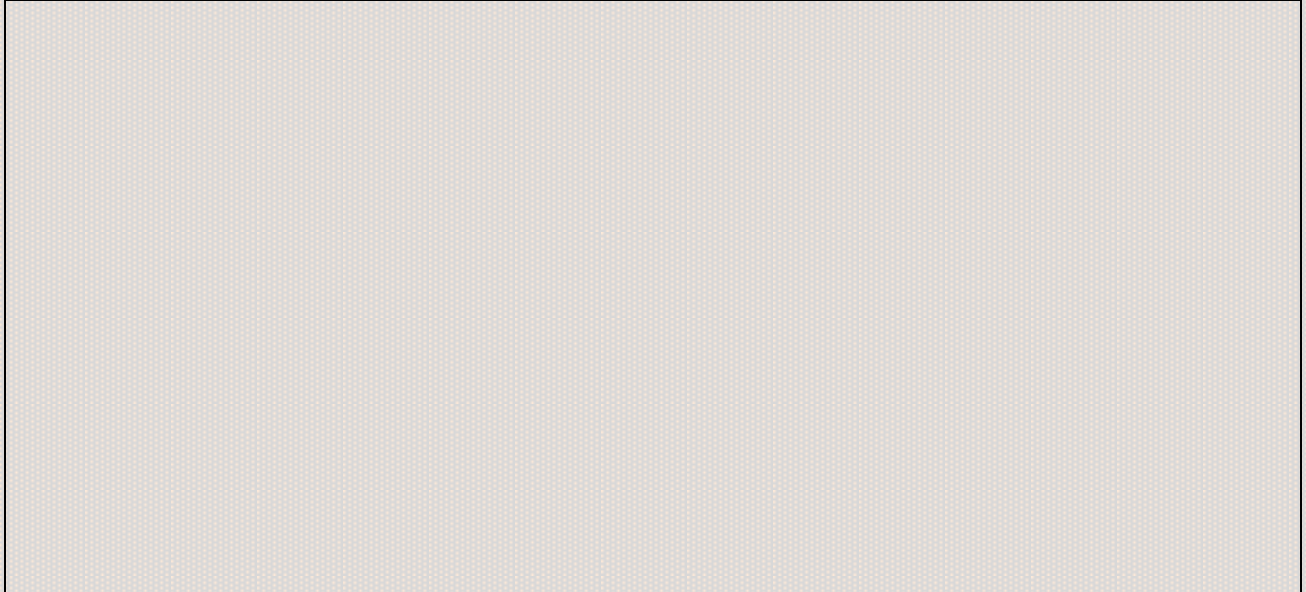
Think of a time when you were stressed. Write about that experience here:



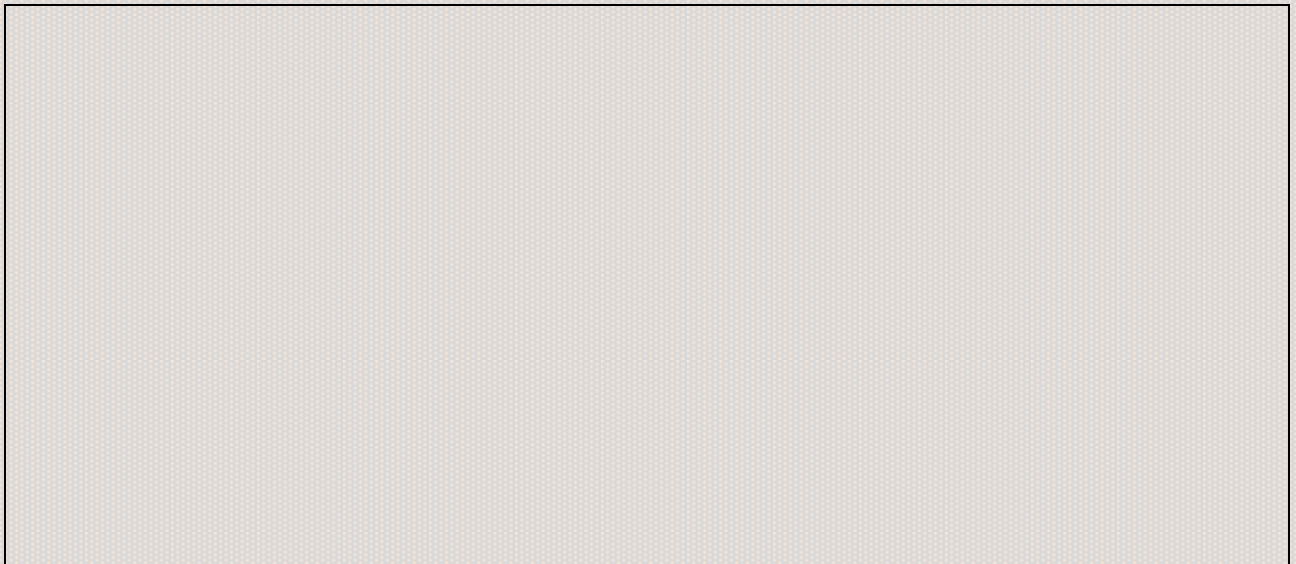
What were some of the negative results of that experience? (I.e. physical, emotional, relational)



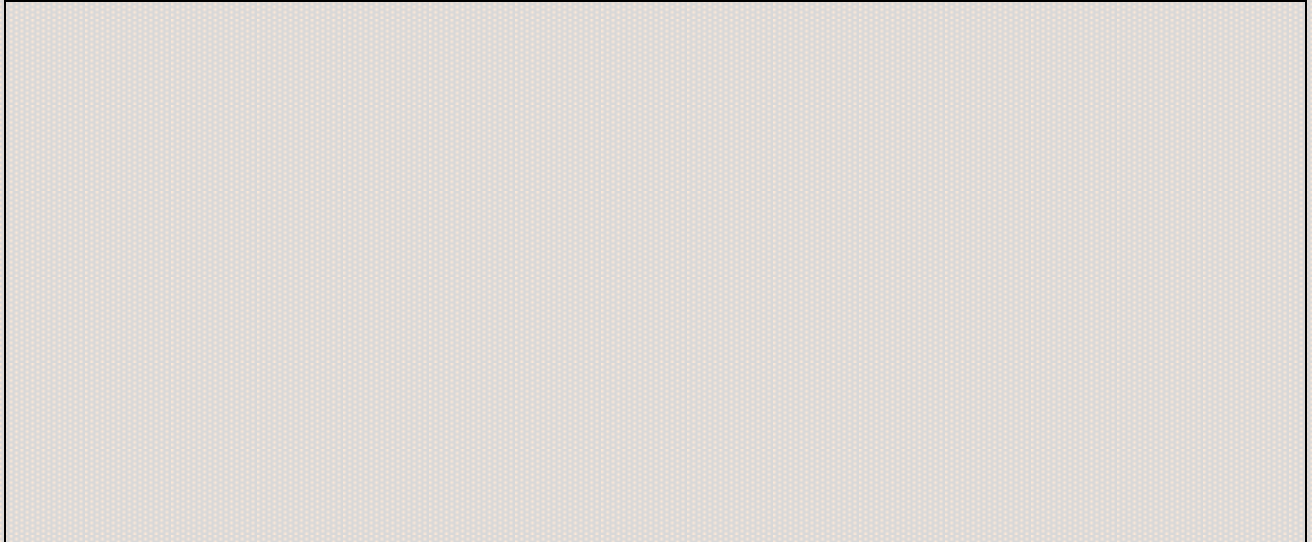
**What were some of the positive results of that experience?**



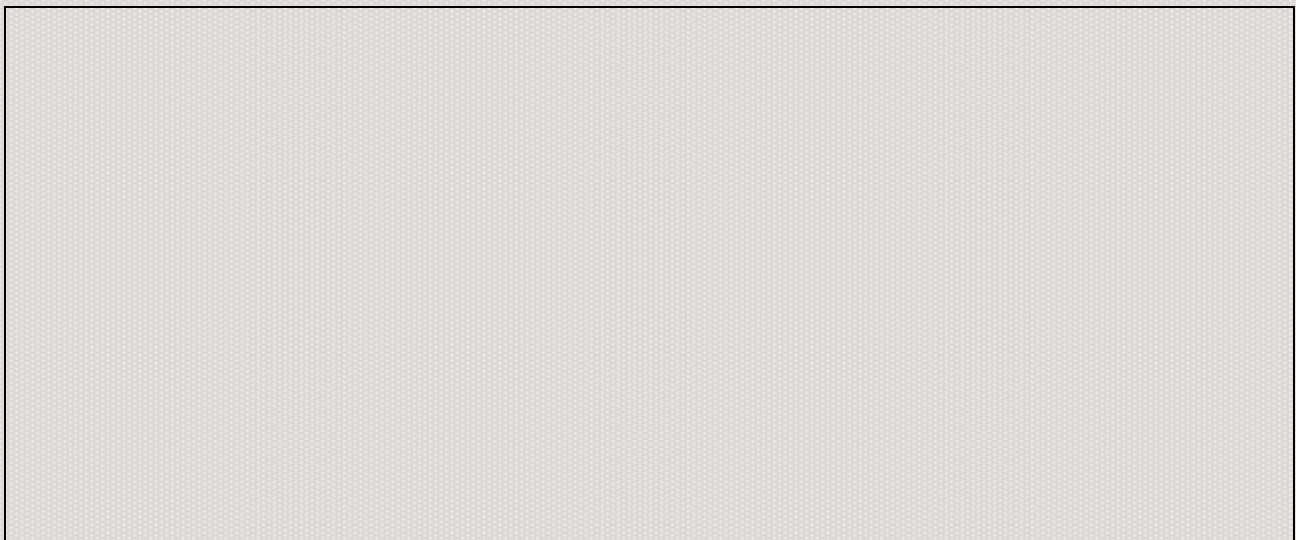
**WHY were you stressed?**



How could you reframe that WHY to something positive? (Example: "I was stressed because the hours were long and the work difficult" could be reframed as "I was stressed because it meant a lot to me. If I succeeded, I would get a promotion.")



How did you react to the stress? List all of the ways you reacted here. (i.e. "I withdrew," "I ate too much," "I lashed out in anger.")



Now, go back and mark each reaction as positive, negative, or neutral.

**The key with stressful events it to focus on:**

- Your why (why are you truly stressed). Find the positive why.
- The positives that can come from stress (bonding as a team, opportunity to shine, increased focus, etc.).
- Identifying your stress reaction.

Once you have identified your stress reactions, the key is to replace them with positive or neutral ones that you already use.

**Here are some examples:**

REACTION : When stressed, I overeat junk food.

REPLACE WITH : When stressed, I just need to escape and go for a long walk.

REACTION : When stressed, I raise my voice with co-workers.

REPLACE WITH : When stressed, I obsessively clean.

Find the ones that don't harm anyone and use those to handle stress better.

The next time you are stressed, use the exercise on the next page (print it out by itself if needed).

## I AM Stressed. Now What?

- Step 1:** Pause.
- Step 2:** Sit down and breathe slowly. 15 seconds in, 15 seconds out. Take at least six deep breaths.
- Step 3:** Ask: Why am I stressed?
- Step 4:** Reframe: What is the positive reason I am stressed? What good can come out of this?
- Step 5:** Breathe.
- Step 6:** Ask: What positive results could I (and others) get from this event?
- Step 7:** Focus: Focus on those positive results.
- Step 8:** Breathe.
- Step 9:** Ask: How am I handling the stress? Which reactions are hurting me?
- Step 10:** Replace: What negative reactions can I replace with positive or neutral reactions?
- Step 11:** Breathe.
- Step 12:** What is your action plan? Focus on the positive WHY, the positive results, and the positive reactions.