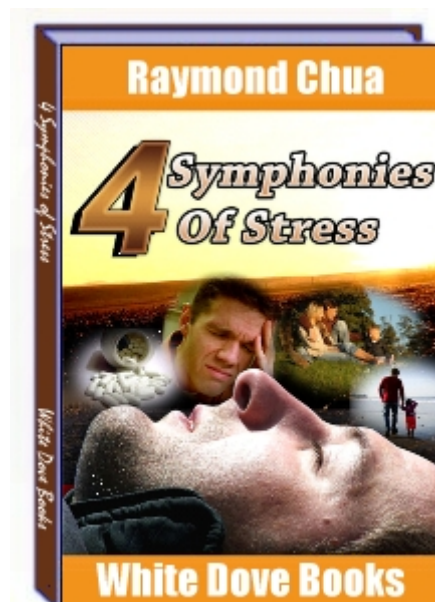


4 Symphonies of Stress

by Raymond Chua

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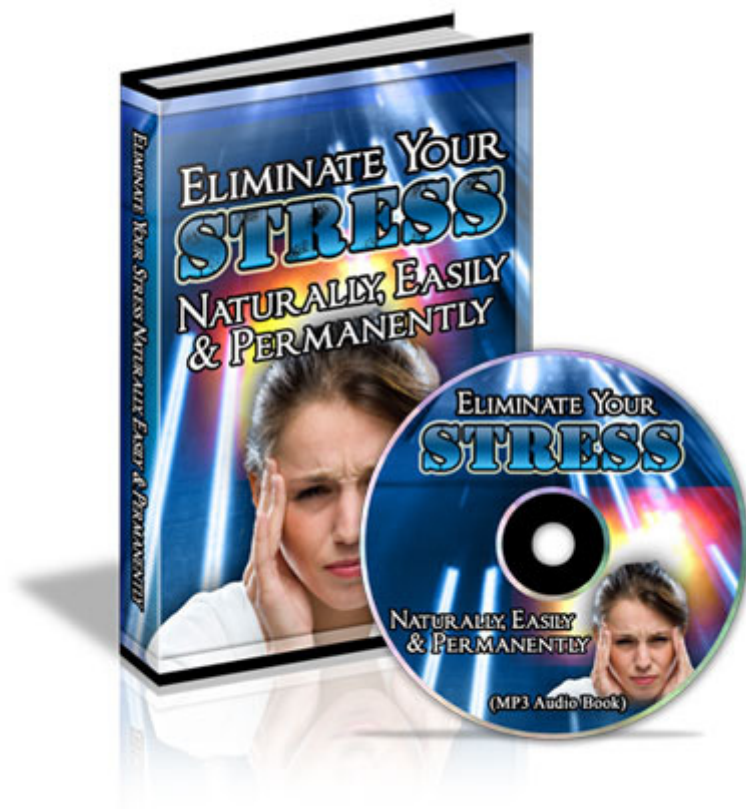
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Symphony #1 – The Soundless Killer

Stress is the effect of emotional and physical pressures on your mental and physical wellbeing. People experience stress differently.

Have you noticed how much the world has changed in the past 150 years? Humans used to travel from one place to another on their feet. There were no cars, motorcycles, buses, no - nothing! We were still using the same method, used for thousands of years before, carrying water from rivers in buckets and pails. In fact, people relied completely on the strength of their limbs and some animals to do most of the work.

In recent years, the rate of change has become almost shocking. A middle-aged person, now living, would have seen all kinds of amazing technological advances within their lifetime; including telegram, car, black and white television, stereo system, ipod etc – and is probably now able to watch everything that's going on in the world on a plasma television from the comfort of their home.

We don't like change – and, in fact, humans tend to find change to be most stressful. In this fast changing world, it is perfectly alright to admit to being stressed. There are many different methods to overcome stress and different people handle it differently. What

works for you may not work for others. Understanding stress and knowing how to control or even eliminate it is the key to freedom in your life.

Why is it that some people can handle stress so effectively no matter what comes their way while some others throw themselves into the sea of depression just because of a tiny thing such as a little change in their routine or because of their assumption of what other people may think of them.

Can it be like some people find pasta is an excellent food while others feel *yucky* about it? I believe that you have heard of the expression "the straw that broke the camel's back". Many people don't know much about that; probably because they have never owned a camel (lol).

Well, every camel has a limit as to the weight which it can carry. If a camel has carried the maximum weight, an extra tiny weight of a feather can break its back ... literally.

The same thing goes with stress. It accumulates and accumulates and accumulates until out of the blue, you blow up over a silly little thing such as a door left open by one of your family members.

You will undoubtedly look very unreasonable as you "scream" about the door. But of course, it is not really about the door, it is about the build-up of stress.

When you do not feel comfortable about something, a regular nagging of anger, fear or frustration generates negative feelings and some unwanted reactions in your body, resulting in pains, aches or bad temper.

A person who gets stressed easily tends to quarrel with family members, friends and co-workers more frequently; and that leads to fights, arguments, aggressive attacks, over-reactions, changes of jobs, shying away from society and impulsive driving of vehicles.

Failure to identify the warning signals and the constant experience of stress may lead to someone ending up in a hospital or, worse, in a coffin. A bit harsh? Well, it's no joke - I have actually seen this on several occasions.

Now, let's see what causes stress ...

Symphony #2 - The 7 Culprits

Stress is like air. It is everywhere (if you choose so see it). But here's the good thing: you have some options here. You can choose to inhale the stress into your body or you can choose to exhale it out of your body.

Stress is mainly caused by anxiety and depression which may be brought to you through these events and conditions:

1. Specific events and happenings such as argument with loved ones or suffering from loss.
2. Health - including mental health (e.g. loneliness) and physical health (physically disabled).
3. Marriage
4. Sex
5. Financial
6. Job
7. Bad habits

There are many more things that you do in your life daily that add stress in your *stress bucket* where you may not realize that you are helping to escalate the problem.

Here are some causes of stress and how you can change a bad habit into a more productive and less stressful habit.

1. Spending the future money - While a credit card is a great tool for us to carry our money or future money around, always remember to spend wisely. Make sure you have the ability to pay it off so that it won't get you into bad debt which will increase your stress.
2. Empty gas tank - I always drive on an empty gas tank because I love challenge and I will only look for a gas station when the fuel in the tank is really low and I will only get my gas from my favourite gas station (brand, not a specific location). In the end, I'll have to do anything to reach the next gas station such as switch off the unnecessary stuff that consumes gas, drive more slowly with less braking.

However, this may not be the case for everybody, most people (based on my experience) get stressful when they begin to imagine that they'll have to push their car or call

somebody to tow their car which causes unnecessary inconvenience and expenditure.

3. Drinking - not water but alcohol. Some people drink with the intention to wash away their stress but in the end, the opposite happens. When you drink, you have a high tendency to make mistakes that serve to increase stress.
4. Using tools or machinery with potential problems - Let's take the car for example. If you drive a problematic car, here are the questions that might be in your head. Will the car start? Will the tires go flat? Will it start to smoke? Will it explode? This is an absolute no-no. Too much stress for you.
5. Do not know how or when to say no - Have you ever promised somebody to do something and then felt stressed when you can't make it or don't like to do it? For instance drive your friend's kid to school when you would rather spend the quality time with your family. Just say "NO" (I have a whole chapter talking about this topic in my [Eliminate Stress Naturally, Easily and Permanently](#) ebook)

Next, you will discover how your body reacts to stress ...

Symphony #3 - Ask The General to Retreat and Relax

Your physiology changes when you feel stressful. Why? It's because your body is designed to protect itself from harm. It is like a huge battalion of an army that protects the castle of your body from intruders that appear to be dangerous. Thus, it will fight against the negative effects brought about by the uninvited stress.

As soon as your stress level rises, the general, which is the hypothalamus gland in your brain begins to send out the command to the pituitary gland to release ACTH hormone. The ACTH hormone will then activate the adrenal gland in your kidneys to fire out both adrenalin and non-adrenalin into the blood stream where they can meet other hormones.

All these hormones are ready to receive the sugar released by the liver to be activated. Now, your blood stream is filled with the energized and activated hormones. This causes your heart to beat faster and raise the temperature of your body.

They are all ready to charge to 'war' and slash the stress to pieces. The walls of your arteries tighten and your blood pressure increases.

The whole attention of your army is now focused on the STRESS, the enemy. The entire attention of your body is now on the nasty stress. The activation of the mental alertness causes you to feel excited or frightened and you'll become highly sensitive.

As for physical changes, you sweat more, your muscles tighten, your face turns whiter, your concentration skyrockets, your mouth becomes dry; and other body functions such as digestion, defecation and urination stop entirely.

There are times where stress can lead to diarrhoea and urination. Your body feels cold as all the energy and attention is focused to fight against the stress.

It's a very vulnerable experience when your body suffers from an immune system breakdown. In another words, when the foreign body such as bacteria or virus comes to attack your body, your immune system is not ready for it and thus it causes you to lose in the battle easily.

It is like when you have every single soldier standing by guarding the main gate preparing to attack the "Stress" enemy, another group of "Fever" enemies attack you from behind when the whole castle is in the lowest level of security. Since all the attention of

your body's defence system is focusing on the Stress army and is not aware of the existence of the Fever army, the Fever army will surely win the battle. That's how easily for you to fall sick when you are under stress.

The only way to defend against both armies is absolute relaxation of your body as a whole. This will not only erase your stress but also alert you of the intrusion of other foreign body (the Fever army, in this case).

By relaxing yourself, the soldiers and guards in your body would go back to their original position and be able to guard your body from every direction. Once the balance is restored, you will regain your physical and emotional strength.

Symphony #4 - Simple Actions to Get You Smiling Again

Stress can smash up your physical and mental health. It is also the seed of many diseases and disorders. Reducing stress is a must for better living and a healthy life. A simple change in your lifestyle can produce a huge impact in your life.

Here are some simple and easy-to-follow ways to eliminate your stress naturally:

Relaxation - Our body gets fatigued when we work continuously. Relaxation helps to restore the energy back to our body. Yoga, meditation or even some simple breathing exercises can increase the ability to handle stressful situations. Relaxation not only helps to increase remedial hormones and lower your blood pressure but also increases your creativity and productivity.

Play - Yes, just one word. Play! When was the last time you played? And how does it feel when you really go and play hard? This simple activity can, very effectively, activate the immune system of our body.

Laugh - Have you heard of the phrase, "Laughter is the best medicine"? This technique can not only cure stress but literally any disease in your body since most of the sicknesses are created by the stress in your body.

Did you know that the average adult laughs 15 times per day, while the average child laughs 400 times per day? This is really something worth pondering.

"Humour is the great thing, the saving thing. The minute it crops up, all our irritation and resentments slip away, and a sunny spirit takes their place."

- Mark Twain

When we laugh, endorphins are released from our body. Endorphins reduce stress, boost our immune system, eliminate pains and lower our blood pressure. I have a friend who used laughter to cure her cancer within 3 months. That's how powerful your laughter can be.

Get a pet - A pet is one of man's (woman's) great friends. Their company can enhance and enrich your life and erase the stress away.

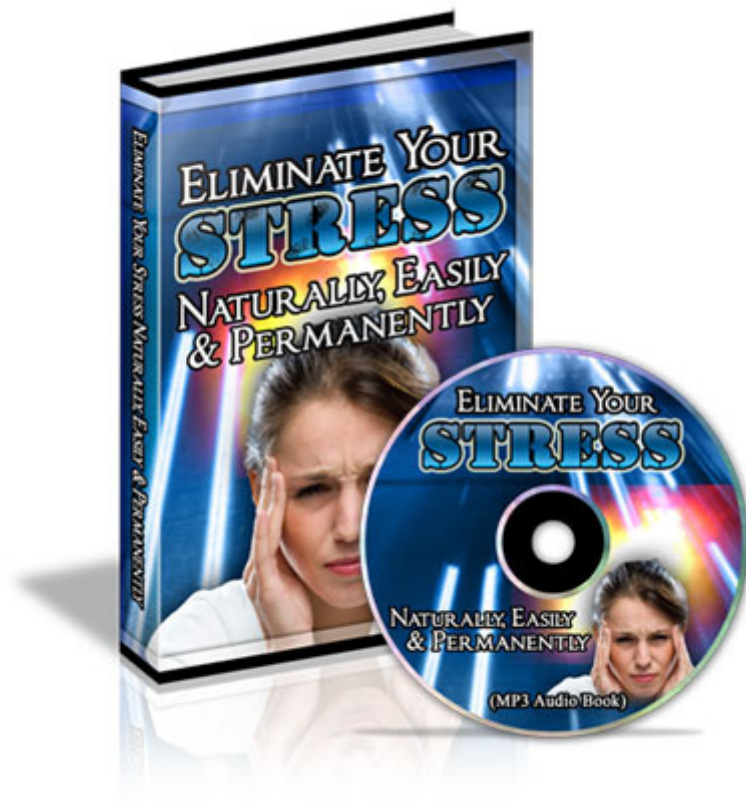
Friendship - Being in the company of friends can help you to stay happy and forget all your worries. If you do not have many friends and are too shy to make friend with others, you may consider using

technology for this purpose. With the power of the internet, you can always go to websites such as facebook, Myspace and Friendster and easily make new friends there.

Hobbies - Anything that you enjoy doing and it's not a part of your daily routine is your hobby. Hobbies give you a break from your hectic life and give you the opportunity to do what you really enjoy doing. They are a fantastic stress reducer because when you do something you really love, you will feel happy, calm and relaxed.

I Recommend You Read *Eliminate Your Stress Naturally, Easily & Permanently* for more Advanced Techniques.

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Here's to your stress-free life,

Raymond Chua

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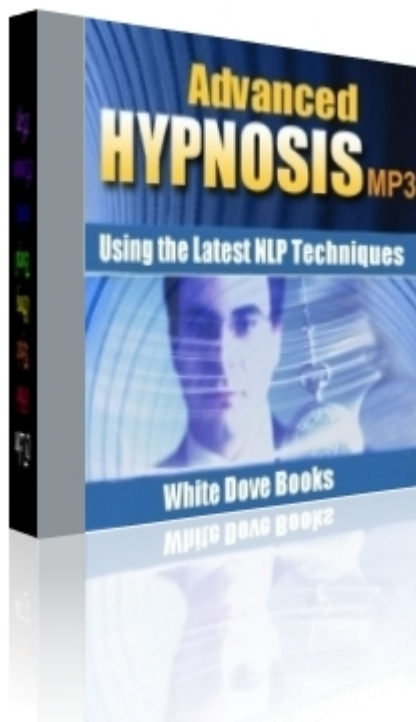
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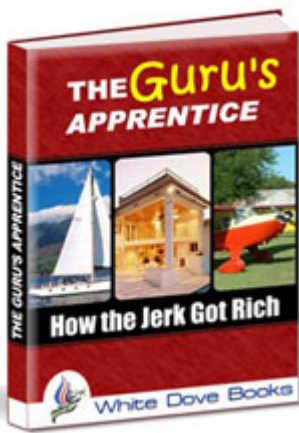
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Will Edwards is the founder of [White Dove Books](#) - the internet's leading website for Self Improvement and Personal Development. A graduate of the University of Birmingham, he develops and teaches Personal Development workshops and is a published author.

Within its first three years, White Dove Books was recognised as one of the internet's leading sites for self help and personal development; breaking into the top 100,000 sites on the internet at the end of 2005.

The INSPIRATION newsletter was started in 2005 as a way of providing helpful information including tips, articles and free inspirational eBooks to our visitors.

Today White Dove Books works in partnership with many authors and on-line publishers of inspirational material to provide a quality on-line service that serves thousands of people in many countries across the world.

Our mission is to help people to develop their own unique talents, abilities and passion in order that they may lead more meaningful, joyful and fulfilled lives.