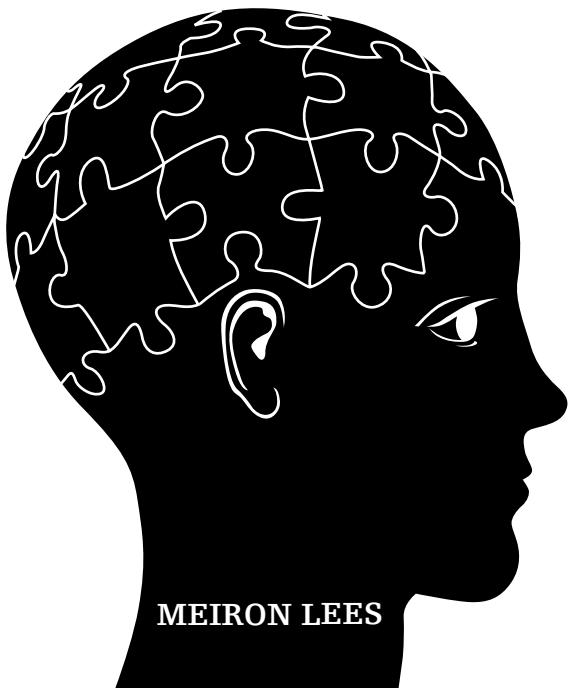


FREE EXTRACT &
STRESS HEALTH CHECK

D-STRESS

Building Resilience in Challenging Times
7 Simple Techniques



MEIRON LEES

D-STRESS

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7 Simple Techniques

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InnerCents

DEVELOPING PRODUCTIVE, LOYAL PEOPLE



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Stress health check

What causes us to feel Stressed?

The notion of stress is extremely subjective; what may be stressful to one person may not seem stressful to another.

What is important is that most of the stress we feel, regardless of what causes it, is harmful.

If we can reduce it we'll not only live happier, healthier and more contented lives, we'll also be able to carry out our work with more focus, performing closer to our highest potential.

What causes us to feel stressed?

We often feel stressed in a situation when we are not in control of the outcome or when we feel that we have limited or no options available to change it.

Here's an example to illustrate this.

Mike, a business owner, is about to board a train to a client meeting where they will make their final decision whether or not to sign his proposed \$1,000,000 contract.

Business has been tough for Mike and this contract could determine whether he continues with his own business or starts applying for employment. He has been working day and night for months on the proposal and there's a lot at stake. Two senior executives have flown in from out of town and he has been told that the meeting can be no longer than one hour.

The arrival time for the train approaches and an announcement is made informing passengers that the train has been delayed by 20 minutes. Mike realises that he will never make his meeting on time and begins to feel extremely stressed.

His stress is caused by the fact that he feels he has no control over the arrival of the train and limited options at his disposal to resolve the problem.

We often believe that the events in our lives are responsible for our feelings of stress and that our circumstances determine the way we feel.

To challenge this notion picture this:

You are driving down the street and someone speeds past and cuts you off. You may think to yourself:

What an idiot! How dare they drive so dangerously? They should be taken off the road!

You may even start to feel angry at this person, curse them or stretch out a finger or two.

If I stopped you at this point and asked you why you were feeling so worked up you might say:

This idiot just cut me off! How else would you like me to feel? I almost had an accident!

This is a good example of how situations can determine the way you feel. In this example a reckless driver caused you to feel angry and stressed. You have allowed yourself to become a victim to the actions of others. So why are you placing your feelings at their mercy? When do the situations or actions of others stop becoming the cause for the way you feel and at what point do you start to take control of your feelings and emotions?

The answers to these questions lie in your understanding of how your feelings and emotions come about.

The process most often works like this:

Event | We experience an event, a situation or circumstance.
▼

Thought | We then have a thought about the event.
▼

Emotion | We then experience a feeling from the thought.

Sometimes it works the other way around and we may experience an emotion before we even have time to think about what's happening to us.

Event ▶ Emotion ▶ Thought

Let's use our driving example to see how it fits into the **event ▶ thought ▶ emotion** process:

Event | You are driving and someone cuts you off



Thought | You think: This person should be taken off the road



Emotion | You start to feel angry

Now think about this:

It's your thought about a situation that determines the way you feel.

Let's continue our driving story.

A few kilometers down the road our reckless driver does the same thing to someone else. That person gets a fright but thinks: Thank goodness they didn't crash into me! I hope there is no emergency that has caused this person to be in such a dreadful rush. She continues her journey feeling grateful and appreciative that she wasn't harmed and feels a sense of compassion for the driver.

Let's think about these two events for a moment. Both people have experienced the same event but have had two very different responses.

What was the reason for these different responses? What made one person respond with anger and the other with appreciation and compassion?

It wasn't the event itself, otherwise they both would have had the same response. What differed were the thoughts they had about the event. One had thoughts that fuelled anger while the other had thoughts that generated gratitude. It was the choice of thought that made the difference to the way they felt.

So how does stress relate to your choices of thought?

Stress is a feeling and what causes that feeling is what you're thinking. Generally, you don't have a stressful feeling without first having a stressful thought. But why do you have stressful thoughts in the first place? Why can't we just think happy and positive thoughts all the time?

To know the answers to these questions you first need to understand a little bit about the mind and how it

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You have

60,000

thoughts a day.

90%

of these **thoughts**
are the **same ones**
you had yesterday and
the **majority** of them
are **negative.**

It's time for a change.



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