



Managing Stress

This "PASTOR'S GUIDE SHEET" was developed by Dr. Joe K. Taylor, Senior Pastor, South Reno Baptist Church, Reno, NV • jtaylor@southreno.com
 Scriptures are printed verbatim with references noted but highlights and underlines are added. Quotes and all primary sources are footnoted.

1. An Overview of Stress Management

Source: Dr. Joe K. Taylor, Senior Pastor, South Reno Baptist Church

A. Two types of stress

Eustress – “Eu” means “good”; “stress” means “force”... *Eustress* is the good stress in our lives. It may be a good family, good kids, a good marriage, fulfilling careers, athletics, “life”, etc. *“Remember, it is good stress but it is still stress!”*

Distress – “Dis” means “away” and/or “to deprive of”; “stress” means “force” ... *Distress* is a bad force that *takes force away* from our lives. It may be a tough family situation, bad acting kids, a straying mate, demanding careers, financial problems, “life”, etc.

B. Two denominations of stress

Accumulative – This is a lot of “little stressors” (e.g., *dis* or *eu*) over a long period of time.

Acute - This is a large stress event in a short/immediate time period.

Suggested Therapies for Distress v. Eustress (Based on Stress Denominations)		
DENOMINATION	TYPE	THERAPY
Accumulative	Eustress	<i>“Keep enjoying your life”</i>
Acute	Eustress	<i>“Celebration and personal recovery time.”</i>
Accumulative	Distress	<i>“Intentional stress management”</i>
Acute	Distress	<i>“Intentional grief management”</i>



If we live for the present and forget the future, trials will make us bitter, not better. ... It will move us away from God, not closer to Him. Our prayer to breath is not “God, make this storm cease!” but “God, what are You saying to me in this storm?”

- Dr. Warren Wiersbe

C. Ten Warning Signs of “Burnout” (i.e., “accumulative distress”)

Source: Unknown—but this is a “living list” that has been changed over time.

1. Your devotional life is suffering.
2. Your family is being adversely affected.
3. You have a nagging sense of always being behind.
4. You have difficulty tolerating inconvenience.
5. Sabbath rest is the exception rather than the norm.
6. You experience a sense of overall weariness.
7. Physical exercise is sporadic or nonexistent.
8. Physical ailments are increasing.
9. The sense of serving God with gladness is gone.
10. You fight periodic thoughts of fleeing from the will of God.

“It is very important that we know our “stress voices”—stress can and will have a cumulative effect on us.”

Compassion Fatigue is the fatigue we experience physically, psychologically, emotionally, sexually, intellectually, and spiritually, etc., because of being a caregiver.

2. “Accumulative Stress Management” (e.g., “rust out, don’t burn out”)

Source: Dr. Joe K. Taylor, Senior Pastor, South Reno Baptist Church

You become a candidate for burnout when

1. Devotional time is diminished.
2. Family time is deleted.
3. Recovery time is delayed.
4. “Sharpening time” is denied.
5. Health consideration is delinquent.
6. Focused priorities are deficient.

“Your personal calendar and your ‘to-do-list’ is the battleground!” -JKT

See the “CUMULATIVE STRESS WORK SHEET” at the end of this PASTOR’S GUIDE to help you set good goals in managing your stress and your life.

3. “Acute Stress Management”

Source: Dr. Joe K. Taylor, Senior Pastor, South Reno Baptist Church

1. Identify the specific “stressor”.
2. Gain every insight possible about that stressor.
3. Develop a good support team.
4. Enroll in a good grief management plan.
5. Enlarge the “margins” in your life:
 - i. *Emotional* – (Relationships, “attunement”, CISDs, Identify when you are “HALT”, etc.)
 - ii. *Physical* – (Exercise, sleep, nutrition)
 - iii. *Time* – (“What are we cutting?”... to get personal, family, sharing, and/or God time, etc.)
 - iv. *Financial* – Develop a budget, (Finally, settle the issue of Lordship of God over finances, “simplicity”)

“Of the 210 country groups on our globe, we spend more money in the US eating out than the GNP of 200 of those nations. (Source: Dolores Curran Study on “The Home and the Impact of Finances”)
6. “THE TWO BIG QUESTIONS” – “What blesses you?” and “What stresses you?”
7. Grasp an understanding of good long-term stress management objectives (cf., Section 2, page 2).
8. Develop a “Plan of attack” (via a calendar and a “do-list”).
9. Healing goal: ***Process your life story***

4. Ministering to those in “Acute Stress”

1. Acknowledge the “stressor” by your presence, words, and actions.
2. Focus on “active listening” and display attunement (by sincerely matching their emotions).
 - Follow a simplified “Critical Incident Stress Management Model” for ministry (i.e., Let them ‘vent’)
 - A. Outline a basic, but detailed chronology of the events (without an emotional response)
 - B. Ask the victim to identify the different emotions associated with each phase of the emergency
 - C. Observe biblical attunement—“*Rejoice with those who rejoice and weep those who weep.*”
 - D. Offer limited education
 - Do eat (healthy foods)
 - Do sleep
 - Reduce schedule and responsibilities
 - Reduce caffeine
 - Decrease intake of fat and sugar
 - No “big” decisions--none
 - Stay away from the media
 - Maintain some daily exercise
 - Increase water intake
 - If necessary, contact your physician
 - Develop/provide resources that may be needed
 - Don’t allow for too much “idle” time—do something (some “busyness” is okay)
 - Journal “feelings”
 - “Watch the crowd” (“too many”, people who drain, people who talk to much, etc.)

Throughout the process use words of care, comfort and mourning:

"I'm so saddened by all that you're feeling..."

"I feel a great deal of sorrow as I hear you say..."

"My heart is hurting for you because..."

"You are responding normally to an abnormal situation."

3. Offer/organize practical helps (e.g., food, cleaning the house, yard work, errands, ice, trash bags, etc.)
4. Offer to call others whose presence would encourage them. (e.g., heroes, ministers, family, friends, etc.)
5. Remember that people who are suffering from "acute stress" need to be rescued and ministered to.
6. Monitor daily and two weeks, then weekly for two months, then monthly for one year.

5. Closing about stress and care giving

- *"You manage your stress or your stress will manage you."*
- *"People need information in a major stress event."*
- *"As a caregiver, everybody needs something from you; seldom will something be given back."*
- *"Don't seek a short-term fix for a long-term problem."*
- *"Don't lose sight of 'compassion satisfaction'—your task is a valiant one for God."*



Slow me down, Lord!

Slow me down, Lord!

Ease the pounding of my heart by the quieting of my mind.

Steady my hurried pace with a vision of the eternal reach of time.

Give me, amid the confusion of the day the calmness of the everlasting hills.

Break the tension of my nerves and muscles with the soothing music of the singing streams that live in my memory.

Teach me the art of taking minute vacations—of slowing down to look at a flower, to chat with a friend, to pat a dog, to smile at a child, to read a few lines from a good book.

Slow me down, Lord, and inspire me to send my roots deep in the soil of life's enduring values, that I may grow toward my greater destiny.

Remind me each day that the race is not always to the swift; that there is more to life than increasing its speed. Let me look upward to the towering oak and know that it grew great and strong because it grew slowly and well.

- Orin Crain

6. Suggested Scriptures for the Stressed

Scriptures are printed verbatim with sources noted. The words of Jesus are printed in Red.

Psalm 73:25-26, NIV - ²⁵ Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you. ²⁶ My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. ... ²⁸ But as for me, it is good to be near God. I have made the Sovereign Lord my refuge; I will tell of all your deeds.

Job 8:20-21, NIV - ²⁰ "Surely God does not reject a blameless man or strengthen the hands of evildoers. ²¹ He will yet fill your mouth with laughter and your lips with shouts of joy.

Job 8:20-21, NLT - ²⁰ "But look, God will not reject a person of integrity, nor will he lend a hand to the wicked. ²¹ He will once again fill your mouth with laughter and your lips with shouts of joy.

Psalm 119:49-50, NLT - ⁴⁹ Remember your promise to me; it is my only hope. ⁵⁰ Your promise revives me; it comforts me in all my troubles.

Psalm 9:9, NLT - ⁹ The Lord is a shelter for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble.

Psalm 23:1-4, NLT - ¹ The Lord is my shepherd; I have all that I need. ² He lets me rest in green meadows; he leads me beside peaceful streams. ³ He renews my strength. He guides me along right paths, bringing honor to his name. ⁴ Even when I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid, for you are close beside me. Your rod and your staff protect and comfort me.

Psalm 18:2, NLT - ² The Lord is my rock, my fortress, and my savior; my God is my rock, in whom I find protection. He is my shield, the power that saves me, and my place of safety.

Psalm 30:5, NLT - ⁵ For his anger lasts only a moment, but his favor lasts a lifetime! Weeping may last through the night, but joy comes with the morning.

Psalm 31:7, NLT - ⁷ I will be glad and rejoice in your unfailing love, for you have seen my troubles, and you care about the anguish of my soul.

Psalm 46:1-2, NLT - ¹ For the choir director: A song of the descendants of Korah, to be sung by soprano voices. God is our refuge and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble. ² So we will not fear when earthquakes come and the mountains crumble into the sea.

Psalm 55:22, NLT - ²² Give your burdens to the Lord, and he will take care of you. He will not permit the godly to slip and fall.

Psalm 71:20, NLT - ²⁰ You have allowed me to suffer much hardship, but you will restore me to life again and lift me up from the depths of the earth.

Psalm 103:13, TLB - ¹³ He is like a father to us, tender and sympathetic to those who reverence him.

Psalm 126:5-6, NLT - ⁵ Those who plant in tears will harvest with shouts of joy. ⁶ They weep as they go to plant their seed, but they sing as they return with the harvest.

Psalm 147:3, NLT - ³ He heals the brokenhearted and bandages their wounds.

Isaiah 41:10, NLT - ¹⁰ Don't be afraid, for I am with you. Don't be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand.

Isaiah 43:2-3, NLT - ² When you go through deep waters, I will be with you. When you go through rivers of difficulty, you will not drown. When you walk through the fire of oppression, you will not be burned up; the flames will not consume you. ³ For I am the Lord, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.

Matthew 5:4, 10-12, NLT - ⁴ God blesses those who mourn, for they will be comforted. ... ¹⁰ God blesses those who are persecuted for doing right, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs. ¹¹ "God blesses you when people mock you and persecute you and lie about you and say all sorts of evil things against you because you are my followers. ¹² Be happy about it! Be very glad! For a great reward awaits you in heaven. And remember, the ancient prophets were persecuted in the same way.

Jeremiah 29:11-13, NLT - ¹¹ For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope. ¹² In those days when you pray, I will listen. ¹³ If you look for me wholeheartedly, you will find me.

Lamentations 3:31-33, NLT - ³¹ For no one is abandoned by the Lord forever. ³² Though he brings grief, he also shows compassion because of the greatness of his unfailing love. ³³ For he does not enjoy hurting people or causing them sorrow.

Matthew 10:29-31, NLT - ²⁹ What is the price of two sparrows—one copper coin? But not a single sparrow can fall to the ground without your Father knowing it. ³⁰ And the very hairs on your head are all numbered. ³¹ So don't be afraid; you are more valuable to God than a whole flock of sparrows.

John 14:1-6, NLT - ¹ "Don't let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me. ² There is more than enough room in my Father's home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? ³ When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am. ⁴ And you know the way to where I am going." ⁵ "No, we don't know, Lord," Thomas said. "We have no idea where you are going, so how can we know the way?" ⁶ Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.

John 14:27, NLT - ²⁷ "I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don't be troubled or afraid.

Matthew 11:28-30, NLT - ²⁸ Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light."

Matthew 11:28-30, MSG - ²⁸ "Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. ²⁹ Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. ³⁰ Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly."

John 16:33, NLT - ³³ I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world."

Romans 8:28, NLT - ²⁸ And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.

Romans 8:35, NLT - ³⁵ Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love? Does it mean he no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or hungry, or destitute, or in danger, or threatened with death?

1 Corinthians 1:3-7, NLT - ³ May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace. ⁴ I always thank my God for you and for the gracious gifts he has given you, now that you belong to Christ Jesus. ⁵ Through him, God has enriched your church in every way—with all of your eloquent words and all of your knowledge. ⁶ This confirms that what I told you about Christ is true. ⁷ Now you have every spiritual gift you need as you eagerly wait for the return of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 4:8, NLT - ⁸ We are pressed on every side by troubles, but we are not crushed. We are perplexed, but not driven to despair.

2 Corinthians 4:16-17, NLT - ¹⁶ That is why we never give up. Though our bodies are dying, our spirits are being renewed every day. ¹⁷ For our present troubles are small and won't last very long. Yet they produce for us a glory that vastly outweighs them and will last forever!

2 Corinthians 12:7-10, NLT - ⁷ even though I have received such wonderful revelations from God. So to keep me from becoming proud, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger from Satan to torment me and keep me from becoming proud. ⁸ Three different times I begged the Lord to take it away. ⁹ Each time he said, "My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness." So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me. ¹⁰ That's why I take pleasure in my weaknesses, and in the insults, hardships, persecutions, and troubles that I suffer for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Hebrews 2:14, NLT - ¹⁴ Because God's children are human beings—made of flesh and blood—the Son also became flesh and blood. For only as a human being could he die, and only by dying could he break the power of the devil, who had the power of death.

Hebrews 4:15, NLT - ¹⁵ This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses, for he faced all of the same testings we do, yet he did not sin.

1 Peter 4:12-14, NLT - ¹² Dear friends, don't be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you. ¹³ Instead, be very glad—for these trials make you partners with Christ in his suffering, so that you will have the wonderful joy of seeing his glory when it is revealed to all the world. ¹⁴ So be happy when you are insulted for being a Christian, for then the glorious Spirit of God rests upon you.

Revelation 21:1-5, NLT - ¹ Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the old heaven and the old earth had disappeared. And the sea was also gone. ² And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven like a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. ³ I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, "Look, God's home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. ⁴ He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever." ⁵ And the one sitting on the throne said, "Look, I am making everything new!" And then he said to me, "Write this down, for what I tell you is trustworthy and true."

Matthew 25:34-40, MSG - ³⁴ "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Enter, you who are blessed by my Father! Take what's coming to you in this kingdom. It's been ready for you since the world's foundation. ³⁵ And here's why: I was hungry and you fed me, I was thirsty and you gave me a drink, I was homeless and you gave me a room, ³⁶ I was shivering and you gave me clothes, I was sick and you stopped to visit, I was in prison and you came to me.' ³⁷ "Then those 'sheep' are going to say, 'Master, what are you talking about? When did we ever see you hungry and feed you, thirsty and give you a drink? ³⁸ And when did we ever see you sick or in prison and come to you?' ⁴⁰ Then the King will say, 'I'm telling the solemn truth: Whenever you did one of these things to someone overlooked or ignored, that was me—you did it to me.'

7. Quotes for those who minister to the stressed.

Scriptures are printed verbatim with sources noted.

“Every person you meet in need is a person through whom you can love our resurrected Lord.”

- Tony Campolo in *Power Delusion*.

“As Jesus engaged in His Father’s work, so must we. An anonymous writer vividly captured the essence of pastoral stewardship before the Lord with his exhortation to do God’s work God’s way according to God’s Word:

Stick with your work. Do not flinch because the lion roars; do not stop to stone the devil’s dogs; do not fool away your time chasing the devil’s rabbits. Do your work. Let liars lie, let sectarians quarrel, let critics malign, let enemies accuse, let the devil do his worst; but see to it nothing hinders you from fulfilling with joy the work God has given you.

He has not commanded you to be admired or esteemed. He has never bidden you defend your character. He has not set you at work to contradict falsehood (about yourself) which Satan’s or God’s servants may start to peddle, or to track down every rumor that threatens your reputation. If you do these things, you will do nothing else; you will be at work for yourself and not for the Lord.

Keep at your work. Let your aim be as steady as a star. You may be assaulted, wronged, insulted, slandered, wounded and rejected, misunderstood, or assigned impure motives; you may be abused by foes, forsaken by friends, and despised and rejected of men. But see to it with steadfast determination, with unfaltering zeal, that you pursue the great purpose of your life and object of your being until at last you can say, “I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do.”

- Dr. John F. MacArthur in *Rediscovering Pastoral Ministry : Shaping Contemporary Ministry With Biblical Mandates*.

“Ministry is not something we do for God; it is something God does in and through us.”

- Dr. Warren W. Wiersbe in *The Integrity Crisis*.

“Jesus did not reach nor heal everybody that came to Him—shall we expect to do more than did the Son of God?”

- Dr. Barney Self in *Setting Healthy Boundaries in Ministry*

STRESS MANAGEMENT WORKSHEET

For those who want to “rust out” and not “burn out!”

GROWTH AREA	AREAS FOR CONSIDERATIONS	SPECIFIC GROWTH GOALS
<p>Devotional Time</p>	<p>Worship Attendance, Prayer Time, Bible Reading Time, Ministry Opportunities, Other Church Commitments, Reading, Scripture memorization, Personal retreats, Christian Music, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • •
<p>Family Time</p>	<p>Date nights, Family Nights, Family Weekends, Couch time, Reading books about marriage issues, attending seminars, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • •
<p>Recovery Time</p>	<p>Days off, Guy’s “Garage time,” Ladies “Girl time,” any “down town,” camping, fishing, reading, hobbies, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • •
<p>“Sharpening” Time</p>	<p>Accountability Group, Encouragement Group, Prayer Group, any regular, planned, interaction that has the purpose of “sharpening” who you are in the Lord, etc</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • •
<p>Health Consideration</p>	<p>Regular Exercise and dieting (i.e., lifelong healthy eating habits), medications if needed, regular checkups, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • •
<p>Focused Priorities</p>	<p>“What is really important to you?” What “good” things in your life are robbing you of the “great” things? How does your personal schedule and “to-do list” (maybe even your check book) demonstrate what your priorities are. What needs to go and what needs to stay?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • •