

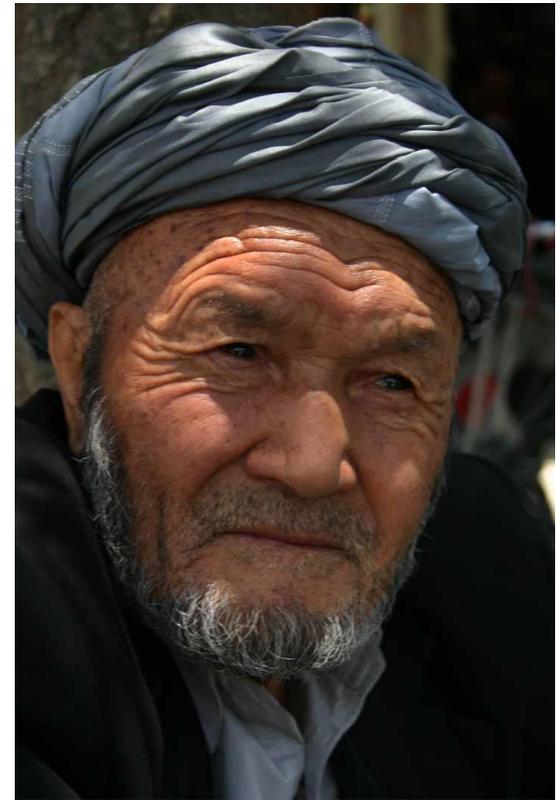
“Self-Care is Not About Self-Indulgence..” The Family Connections Approach to Well-Being



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Brazelton Touchpoints Center

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Who Do You Take Care Of?



What is Self-Care?



**Self-care is not about
self-indulgence, it's
about self-preservation.**

Audre Lorde

Why Do I Need Self-Care?





Too much to do????

Warning Signs – Too Much Stress What Are Your Signs?



Thinking the worst in every situation.

Over-reacting or under-reacting.

Never taking any time for you – down time.

Increased use of alcohol or other substances.

Forgetting what you love about your child, your partner, your friends.



Warning Signs – Too Much Stress

What Are Your Signs?



Constantly not getting enough sleep.

Increased arguments with family members, friends, and work colleagues.

Decreased social life.

Body responses – headaches, stomach aches, etc.



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“Don't worry about the world
coming to an end today. It's
already tomorrow in Australia”

Charles Schultz



Stress



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- Stress is a physical, mental or emotional response to events that causes bodily or mental tension.
- Stressors can be external or internal.
- Stress can initiate the "fight , flight, or freeze" response, a complex reaction of neurologic and endocrinologic systems.
- Stress can be positive.
- Stress can also be harmful or toxic. *

*This is the kind of stress that would be helpful to limit and learn to manage in a healthy way

The Body's Reaction to Stress

BREATHING
quickens to
take in more
oxygen

PERSPIRATION
increases to
regulate body
temperature

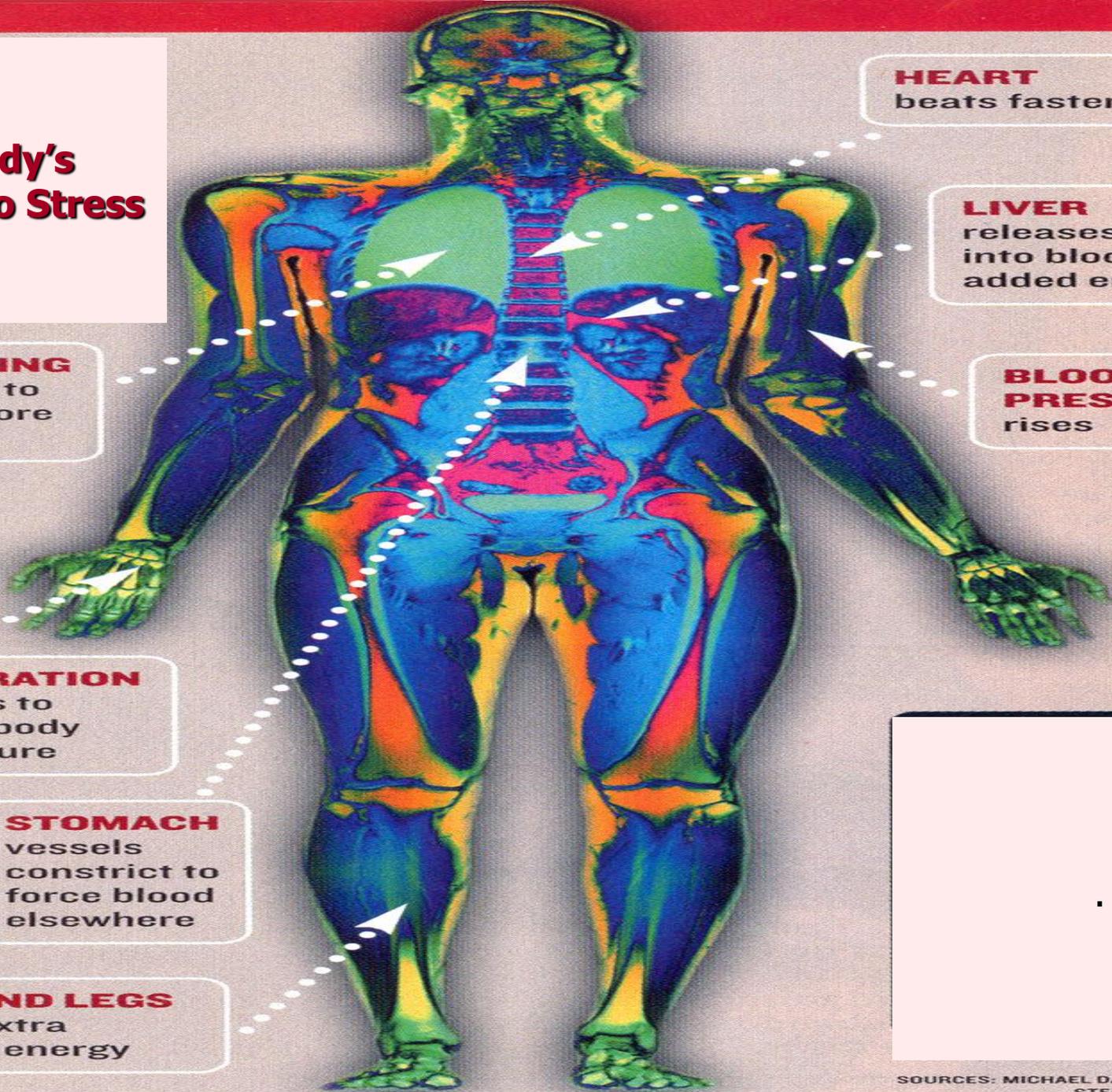
STOMACH
vessels
constrict to
force blood
elsewhere

ARMS AND LEGS
receive extra
blood for energy

HEART
beats faster

LIVER
releases sugar
into blood for
added energy

**BLOOD
PRESSURE**
rises



Positive, Tolerable & Toxic Stress



Positive Stress: Moderate, short-lived increases in heart rate, blood pressure, and stress hormone levels.

Tolerable Stress: A physiological state that could potentially disrupt brain architecture but is buffered by supportive relationships that facilitate adaptive coping.

Toxic Stress: Strong, frequent, and/or prolonged activation of the body's stress-response systems in the absence of the buffering protection of adult support.

Sarah Enos Watamura, Ph.D.

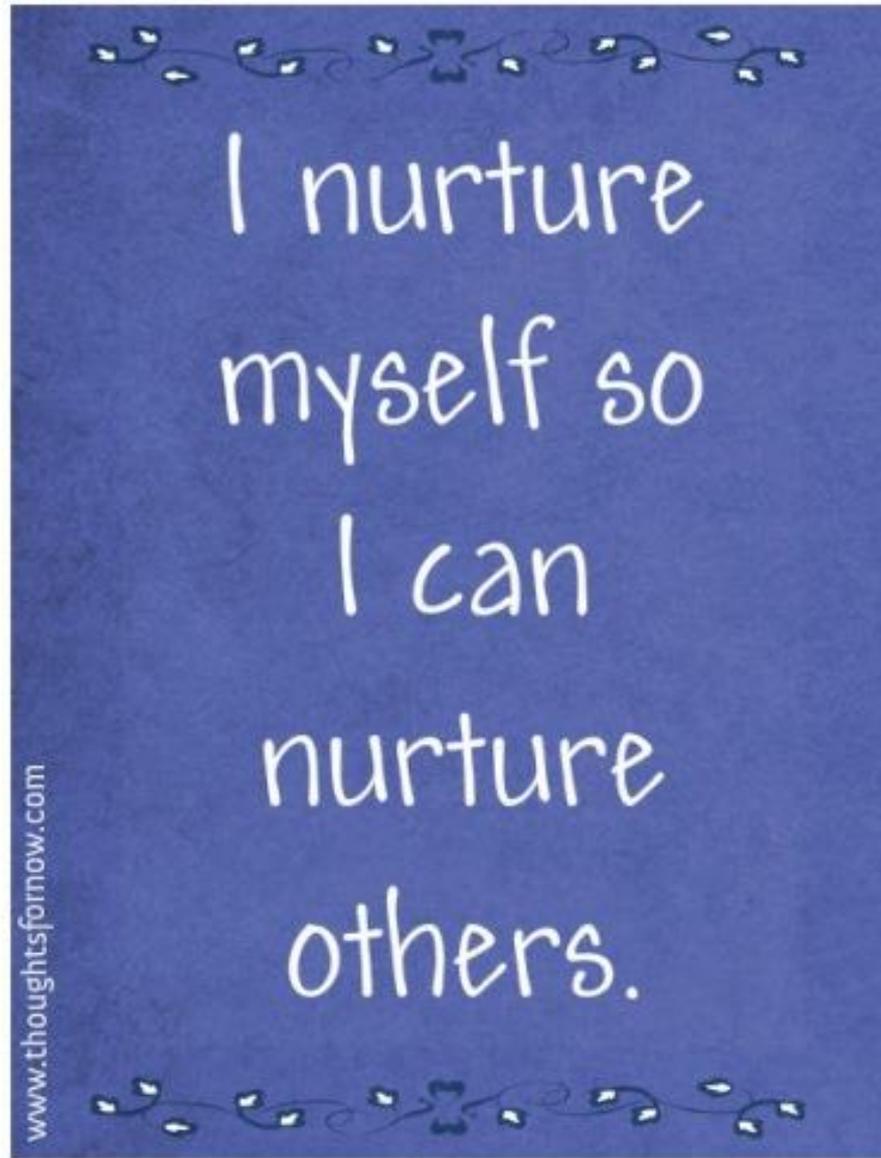
Toxic Stress: Key Features



- Disrupts brain architecture
- Affects other organ systems
- Sets stress-management systems to relatively lower (or higher) thresholds for responsiveness that persist throughout life
- These changes increase the risk of stress related disease and cognitive impairment well into the adult years



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- ▶ Self-reflection
- ▶ Self-care
- ▶ Perspective taking

Build Your Protective Gear



- ▶ Physical self care
- ▶ Psychological self care
- ▶ Emotional Self care
- ▶ Spiritual Self care
- ▶ Workplace Self care

Signs of Emotional Wellness



- ▶ You treat others well.
- ▶ You like who you are.
- ▶ You're flexible.
- ▶ You hold gratitude for your loved ones.
- ▶ You're in touch with your emotions.
- ▶ You have meaning in your life.
- ▶ You value experiences more than possessions.
- ▶ You are not overwhelmed by adversity.

Impacts on Emotional Wellness



- ▶ Health – physical & emotional
- ▶ Temperament & Genetics
- ▶ Education & Employment
- ▶ Positive Family Relationships
- ▶ Protection from Poverty
- ▶ Neighborhood Supports
- ▶ Engagement with peers & community
- ▶ Protection from loss, trauma, & adversity

Institutional Supports for Wellness



- ▶ Strong leadership & system-wide support for staff
- ▶ Embedded professional development
- ▶ Reflective supervision & practices
- ▶ Mental health & related service support for staff
- ▶ Capacity building approaches
- ▶ Preventive, system-wide vision of services
- ▶ Culture, Language, Community Identity

STRESS

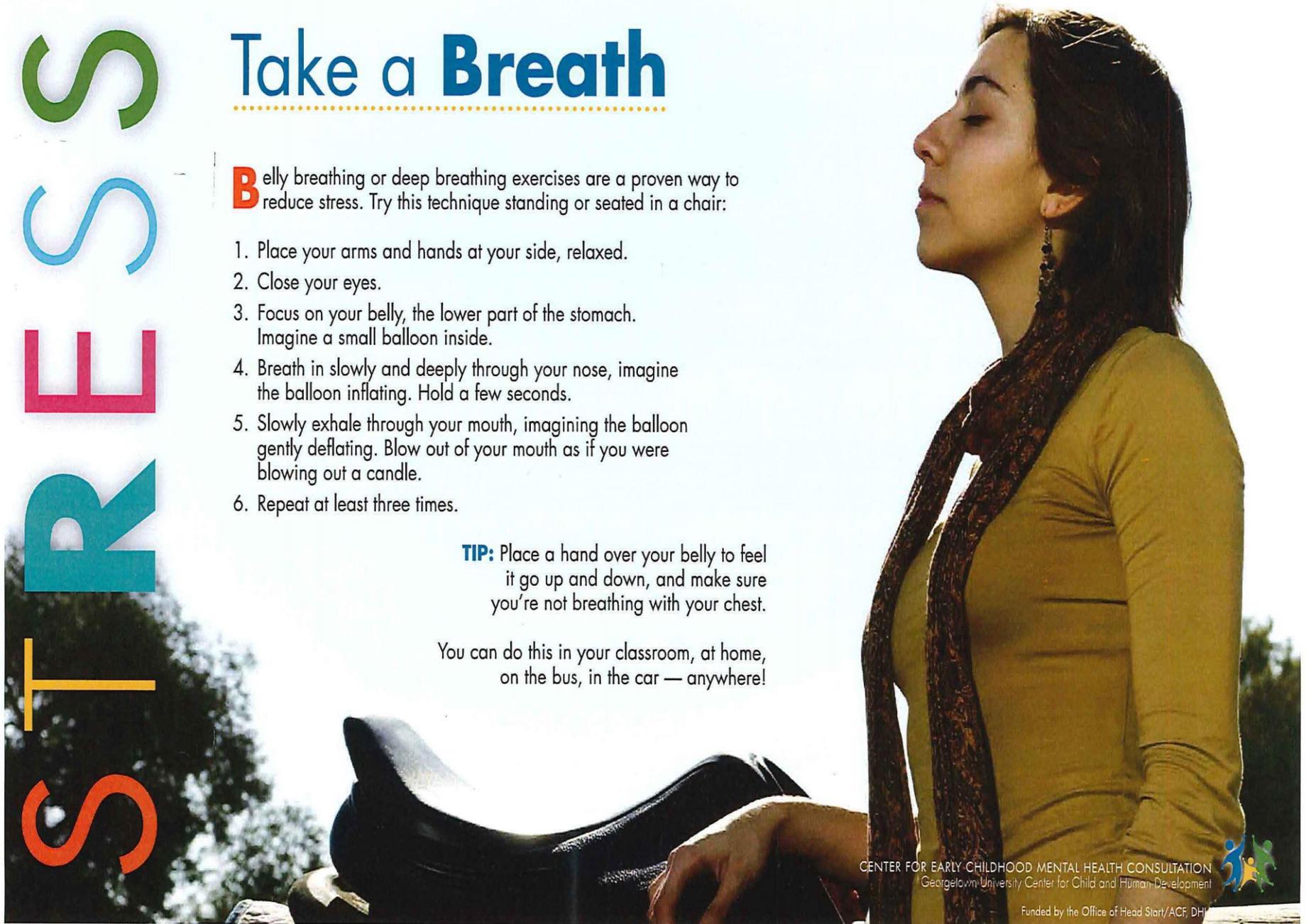
Take a **B**reath

Belly breathing or deep breathing exercises are a proven way to reduce stress. Try this technique standing or seated in a chair:

1. Place your arms and hands at your side, relaxed.
2. Close your eyes.
3. Focus on your belly, the lower part of the stomach. Imagine a small balloon inside.
4. Breath in slowly and deeply through your nose, imagine the balloon inflating. Hold a few seconds.
5. Slowly exhale through your mouth, imagining the balloon gently deflating. Blow out of your mouth as if you were blowing out a candle.
6. Repeat at least three times.

TIP: Place a hand over your belly to feel it go up and down, and make sure you're not breathing with your chest.

You can do this in your classroom, at home, on the bus, in the car — anywhere!





Thank you!

Resources



Family Connections: A Mental Health Consultation Model

<https://www.brazeltontouchpoints.org/offerings/family-connections/>

Trauma Stewardship: An Everyday Guide to Caring for Self While Caring for Others. Van Dernoot Lipsky, Laura & Burk, Connie (2007).

www.traumastewardship.com

What About You? A Workbook for Those Who Work with Others. The National Center on Family Homelessness. (2008).