



GRACE HEALTH MOMENT

3 John 1:2: *Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.*

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Stress and the Holiday Blues



What is Stress?

Stress is your body's natural reaction to any kind of demand that disrupts life as usual

- In small doses, stress can be good
 - such as when it helps you conquer a fear or gives extra endurance and motivation to get something done
- However, stress can also be bad
 - Stress caused by worries such as money, jobs, relationships or health, for example
 - it can be sudden and short or long-lasting

Listening to the Warning Signs of Stress

- Feeling stress for too long, whether for several hours, days or months, sets off your body's warning system, both physically and emotionally
- Your body's stress warning signs tell you that that something is not right
 - Stress that is left unchecked or poorly managed is known to contribute to high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity, diabetes and suicide to name a few.

Warning Signs of Stress

- Headaches, muscle tension, neck or back pain
- Upset stomach
- Dry mouth
- Chest pains, rapid heartbeat
- Difficulty falling or staying asleep
- Fatigue
- Loss of appetite or overeating
- Significant weight gain/loss
- Increased frequency of colds
- Lack of concentration or focus
- Memory problems or forgetfulness
- Jitters
- Irritability
- Short temper
- Anxiety

Stress in America

- 1/3 of people in the US reported experiencing extreme levels of stress
- 1 out of 5 people report high levels of stress 15 or more days per month



Managing Stress

- Understand how you experience stress
- Identify your sources of stress
- Learn your stress signals
- Recognize how you deal with stress



Stress Management

Positive/Healthy

- Prayer
- Read the Bible
- Exercise
- Support groups
- Visit loved ones
- Humor/laughter

Negative/Harmful

- Overeating
- Shopping excessively
- Isolating oneself
- Self neglect
- Absent from church

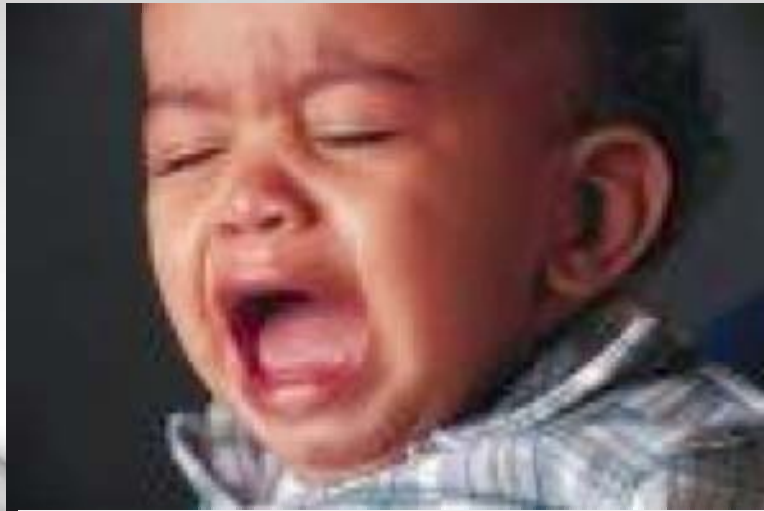
Stress and the Holidays in Tough Economic Times

- Pause, but don't panic
 - Pay attention to what is happening but do not get caught up in the doom-and-gloom hype which can lead to anxiety and possibly bad decision-making
- Identify your financial stressors and make a plan to tithe

Stress and the Holidays in Tough Economic Times (cont'd)

- Recognize how you deal with stress related to money
- Turn these challenging times into opportunities for real growth and change
- Ask for professional support
 - **Credit counseling services**
 - **Financial planner**
 - **Psychologists**

Talking to Your Children about the Economy



- Children are likely noticing the increased stress of their parents during the financial crisis and perhaps, experiencing their own stress as a result

Talking to your children about the Economy



- Children are extremely resilient
- It is important to be honest, but only share information that you think they can handle
- Use your financial situation as an opportunity to manage their expectations for material goods

Resources



- 1-800-LIFENET
- American Psychological Association
www.apa.org
- Association of Black Psychologists
www.abpsi.org

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