



LINDNER  
CENTER OF HOPE

# Chronic Stress, Chronic Relaxation

Peter White, M.A., LPCC, LICDC, Outpatient Therapist, Lindner  
Center of Hope

# Take Aways

- Stress and Relaxation are our ability to manage living.
- Mindfulness is awareness of our stress and relaxation responses.
- Chronic stress can challenge our wellbeing.
- Chronic relaxation maintains health and growth.



# Stress Definition



Your Body's Response to  
a Situation That Requires  
Attention or Action  
Elizabeth Scott, Ph.D.



# Stress Mechanics

- To respond to situations that require action, your mind and body have a number of mechanisms to quickly prepare the body to fight, flee, or freeze:
  - The Endocrine System Produces Stress Hormones – Cortisol, Adrenaline
  - The Mind activates the Sympathetic, (vs. Parasympathetic) system

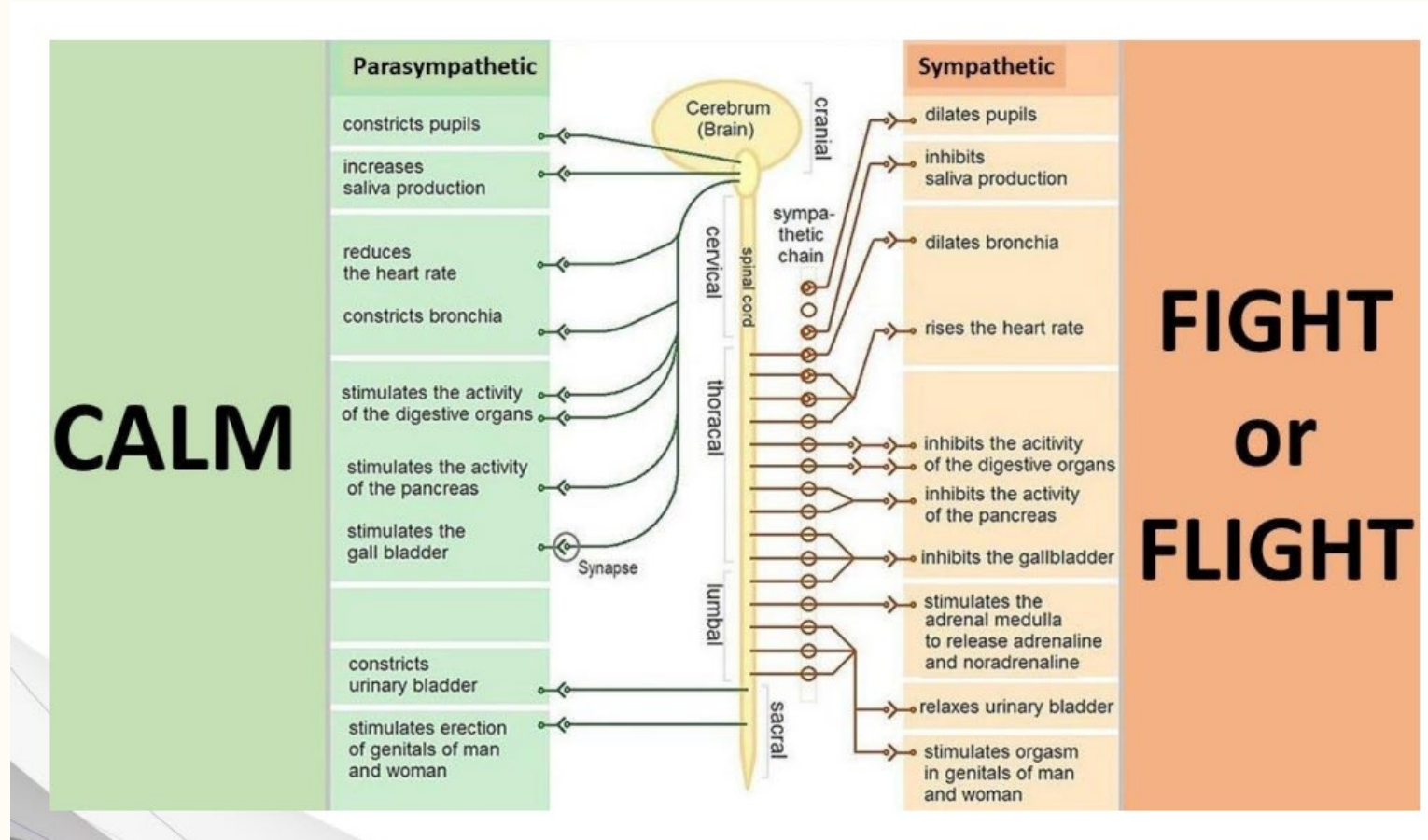


# Relaxation Mechanics

- The Stress Response works very well in the short term, because it gives way to the Relaxation Response for the body to rest and digest:
  - The Endocrine System Produces Relaxation Hormones – dopamine, endorphins, oxytocin
  - The Mind activates the Parasympathetic, (vs. Sympathetic) system



# Stress and Relaxation are Mind & Body



# But Stress Doesn't Seem to End



# Signs of Chronic Stress

- Physical: Headaches, muscle tension, fatigue, G.I. issues
- Sleep: Trouble getting to and staying asleep
- Mental: Trouble concentrating, working memory and indecision
- Emotional: Irritability, anxiety, numbness, and lack of joy
- Behavior: Dysregulated habits – substances, eating, isolation



# Chronic Relaxation Fixes Chronic Stress



- G: Gentleness and Gratitude- awareness of our blessings



- R: Relaxation- practicing our grace and ease



- A: Accomplishments- awareness of our simple good works



- P: Pleasure- awareness of our simple joys



- E: Exercise- moving our bodies with fun



- S: Social- participating with our loved ones and their love for us



# Signs of Chronic Relaxation

- Will increase your familiarity and capacity to activate the Relaxation Response, even with stress
- Will reinforce appreciation of what helps you feel safe, secure, connected, and growing
- Will help you build a life worth living even when coping with life's stress and suffering
- Will help people enjoy you, and help you enjoy people



# Mindfulness

Intentional  
awareness of  
the present  
moment

Without  
judgement

Without  
attachment

With kindness



# Attitudinal Foundations of Mindfulness

Non-  
judging

Patience

Beginner's  
Mind

Trust

Non-  
striving

Acceptance

Letting Go



Thank you for  
coming!

We'd  
appreciate  
your feedback.



Feedback Survey

