

Lindner Center  
of HOPE |  Health™

# What Is Stress and How Do We Manage It

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# Stress Origins

- Comes from the Latin word – *strictus*, meaning to tighten
- Relax comes from the Latin word – *re+laxare*, meaning to loosen

# Stress Definition

Your Body's Response to a Situation  
That Requires Attention or Action

Elizabeth Scott, Ph.D.

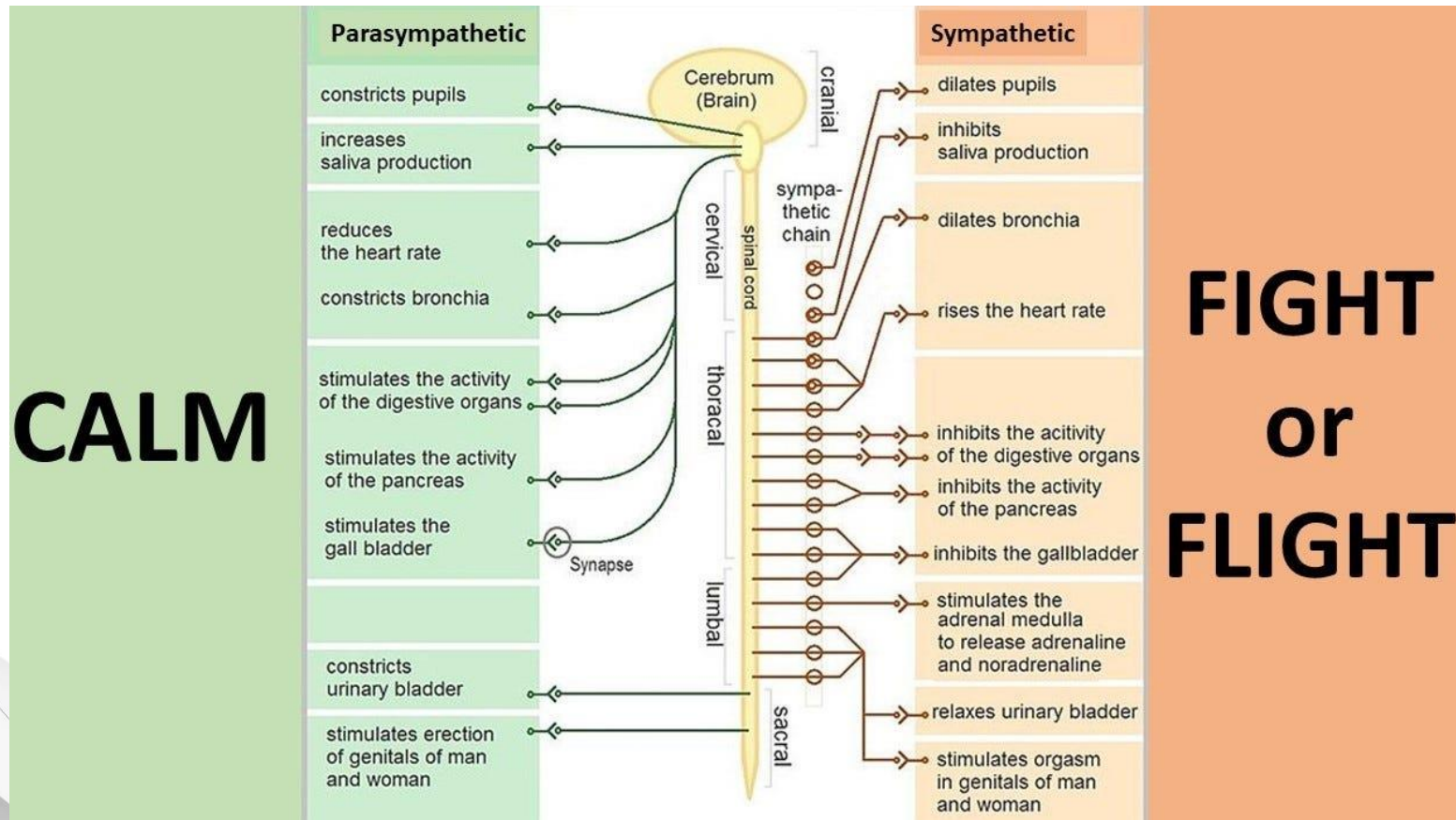
# Stress Mechanics

- 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

# The Body Tightens and Loosens



# But What if Stress Doesn't End



# How to Cope with Chronic Stress?

- **With Chronic Relaxation!**
  - **G: Gentleness and Gratitude-** your blessings
  - **R: Relaxation-** your grace and ease, practiced
  - **A: Accomplishments-** your simple, good works
  - **P: Pleasure-** your simple joys
  - **E: Exercise-** your body moving with fun
  - **S: Social-** your loved ones and their love for you



# Chronic Relaxation

- Will increase your familiarity and capacity to activate the Relaxation Response
- 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