

STRESS: **WHAT ARE THE TRIGGERS?**

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Are you suffering from day to day stress? How many times have you caught yourself stressing out over the slightest glitch? You are not alone. There are many factors that contribute to why so many people stress out.

What are some of the stress categories? Well to start, *emotional* stress includes fears and anxieties, along with personality traits, such as nervousness and perfectionism, which dictates how you believe people perceive you. Another stressor is *family*. Pressure from family members may lead to tension. Expectations from a member or significant other may drive you to extremes; on the other hand, lack of a family unit makes you feel empty and alone. Many suffer from *social* stress, which arises in the personal community. For example, one person may love speaking in public, but you may be terrified to do the same. It is very much individualized.

This one may seem a bit odd, but *change* can really make a person stress. We, as humans, like stability and control. When change comes about, good or bad, it may catch us off guard, causing volatility. It's not necessarily bad; rather than looking at change as disrupting our delicate way of life, look at it as progressing in life.

Chemical stressors are also apparent with many people. Have you ever had an addiction to a drug, or alcohol, nicotine, caffeine [...]? *Work* also causes stress. A demanding boss, deadlines, family expenses and more may just put you in a tight, uneasy, stressful position. *Decisions*—have you made the right one?

Do you have a *phobia*? Phobias drive people to feel extreme fear. Fear of flying, speaking in public, driving, or anything may cause constant worry. *Physical* stresses—have you bitten off more than you can chew? Your body can only tolerate so much strain. Too much exercise, working long days, going without rest or sleep, pregnancy, and so much more, can really wear your body and mind down. On the same note, if you are suffering from a *disease*, this could also trigger stress. Example, if you are prevented from leaving your bed due to a sickness, this may cause hassle and strain. Same with *pain*; whether it is acute or chronic, pain can be aggravated by stress. Finally, *environmental* problems, such as pollution, noise, extreme heat or cold or even too little space may cause trauma or anxiety.

The triggers are several. Stress is prominent in many people's lives. Nobody is immune to it. But, we are able to take steps to control it. Rather than have it consume our lives, we can face it head on and see what we can make of it. Make the best of whatever you face. If you cannot handle it, tell someone. Seek help. You cannot go wrong with seeking genuine advice from a person you trust. Best advice—don't let it get to you. Understand that you are **not alone** when it comes to stress.