STRESS and the MIND/BODY CONNECTION

**FIGHT, FLIGHT, or FREEZE RESPONSE**

**High Activation—Faster, Stronger for Survival**
- **Muscles**: Tense Up, Poised for Action
- **Mind**: Instinctive; Higher thinking shuts down
- **Stress Hormones** Released: Adrenalin, Cortisol (immune repair shuts down)
- **Heart Rate**: Speeds Up (blood flows to muscles)
- **Breathing**: Shallow and Quick
- **Stomach**: Digestion shuts down; “butterflies”
- **Sweat Glands**: Activate
- **Emotions**: Fear, Anger, Panic, Nervousness

**FACTS ABOUT STRESS**
- Mind, Body, & Emotions react the same as to physical danger
- Only Human Beings carry stress around in their minds: Worries, Fears, Expectations, Regrets, Self-Criticism
- We do not have a natural release valve for Psychological Stress
- Our stress level is determined more by our reaction to the stressor than by the stressor itself.
- Letting go of Psychological Stress takes awareness & training

**Release Valves for Psychological Stress Build-up**

**CHANGING OUR THOUGHTS**

**EXERCISE**

**RELAXATION TECHNIQUES**

**STRESS BUSTERS**
- Plan Breaks for Rest and Fun
- Develop Realistic Expectations
- Prioritize
- Eat Well
- Get Enough Sleep
- Exercise Regularly
- Practice Relaxation throughout the day
- Learn to Tolerate & Manage Emotions

**Resting or Working Nervous System Activity**
- **Muscles**: Contract as Needed; then Relax
- **Mind**: Focused. Thinking Clearly. Memory good
- **Heart Rate/Blood Pressure**: Normal, good circulation
- **Breathing**: Smooth, Deep, Slow
- **Stomach**: Digesting normally
- **Sweat**: As needed to cool off
- **Emotions**: Manageable

**THE STRESS RESPONSE**

**Physical Threat / Danger**

**With time and effort...**

We can train our MINDS & BODIES to maintain lower NS activity, feel calmer, and function well amidst the stresses of modern life.