



You Are Seen:  
Pain is Stressful and Exhausting

Self-Care Strategies for Pain Reduction  
Presented by Adrienne F. Asta, Licensed Massage Therapist

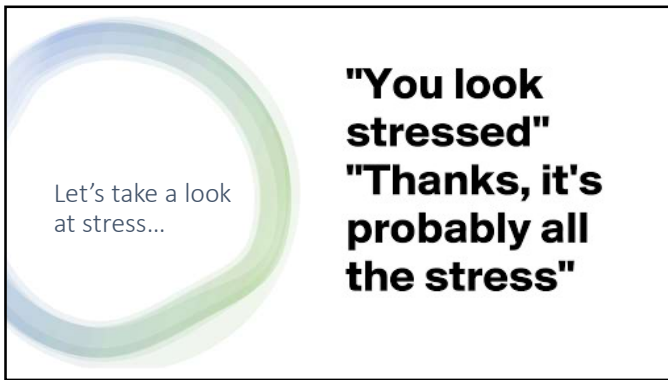
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A little about me...

- Practicing massage for over 2 decades
- Worked in a variety of clinical and massage education environments
- Trustee and chairperson for the Massage Therapy Foundation
- Living and practicing in Tucson, AZ
  - You can take the girl outta Jersey...

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Let's take a look at stress...

**"You look stressed"  
"Thanks, it's probably all the stress"**

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True or False

Stress is bad

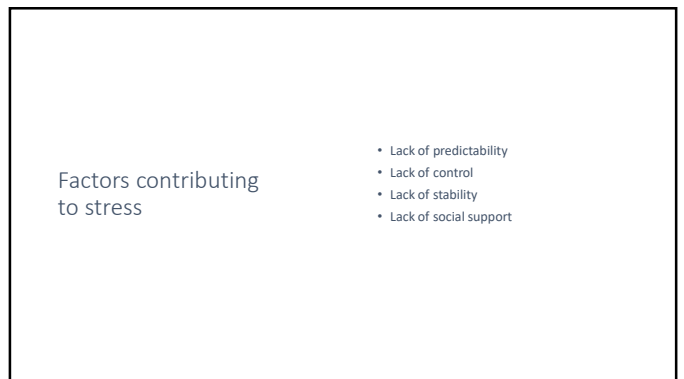
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FALSE

- Stress = change in environment
- We need stress to get out of danger
- We need mild stress to grow, learn, adapt, become resilient

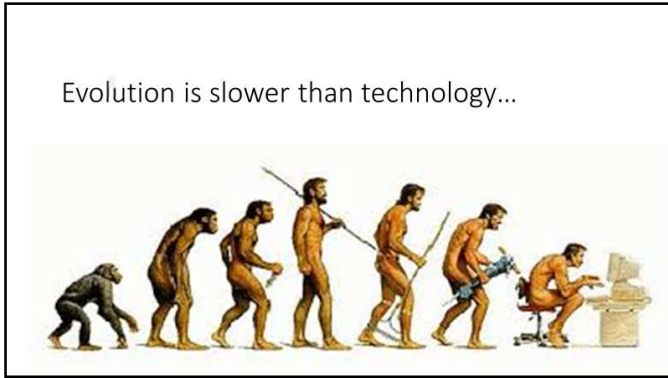
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Factors contributing to stress

- Lack of predictability
- Lack of control
- Lack of stability
- Lack of social support

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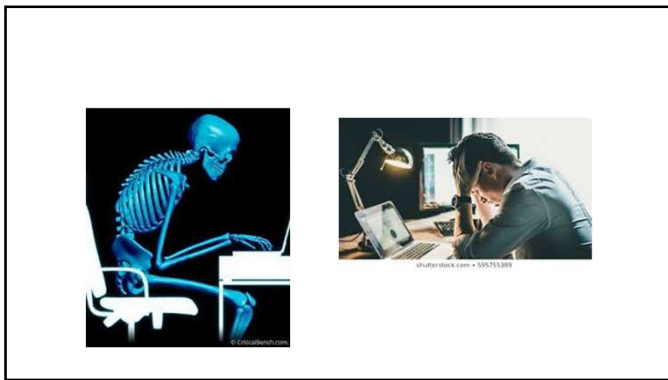


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Tired from not moving?

- Muscles still working
- Collapsed breathing mechanisms
- Mental work takes up what seems to be a disproportionate amount of energy – up to 20% oxygen use
  - Mental stress is physically stressful

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Properties of muscle tissue

- Some muscles can sustain a contraction for a long period of time before fatiguing
  - Often, it's the ones that curl us up into a fetal position
  - These muscles need to be stretched
- Some muscles fatigue very quickly
  - The muscles that do the *opposite* of curling us up into the fetal position
  - These muscles need to be strengthened
- Almost always these muscles lie on the opposite side of a joint

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Properties of connective tissue

- Most abundant tissue in the body
- Made of solid and liquid components
- Varying degrees of collagen for strength and flexibility
- Supports, compartmentalizes, connects, and communicates with all structures of the body

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Self-Care Approach for Pain and Stiffness

Lengthen then Strengthen

- More long-term relief when we consider both sides of a joint
- Lengthen the chronically short muscles first
  - Self-massage
  - Stretching
- Strengthen the chronically elongated muscles
  - Self massage
  - Posture reversal “strengthening” techniques

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Let's do some Self-Care



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### Self Massage General Rules

- Trust your body, be gentle with yourself
- Harder pressure is not necessarily better
- Everyone is unique - not every stroke is beneficial for every person
- The purpose is to help mitigate pain and stress, so if any technique causes either one of these, ask for modification or eliminate the technique
  - There is no loss of effectiveness because one technique isn't working for you
  - Self-Care is as unique to you as you are to the world

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### Self Massage Routine

- Scalp massage ("shampooing")
  - Try different speeds
- "cat's paw" on back of neck
  - Slow and small "yes and no" movements
- Compression and fingertip walking on the upper trapezius
- Petrissage (kneading) on upper arm
- Spiral forearm
- Thumb pressure on palms, knead/compress areas of more muscle
- Palm compressions on quadriceps (front of thigh)
- Finger pad circles on hamstrings (back of thigh)
- Finger pad circles of calves
- Thumb pressure on sole of foot

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### Tennis Ball Therapy

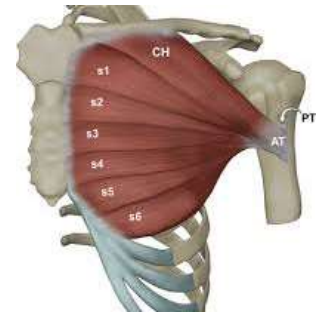
Use the tennis ball along the muscle fibers to lengthen the pectoralis major

Place the ball between you and the wall (this gives you more control of pressure)

Start at the midline and work toward the arm

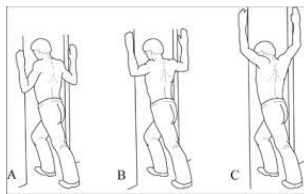
Move very slowly

Hang out where you feel areas of tenderness or tension.



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Open your heart! Stretch your pecs!



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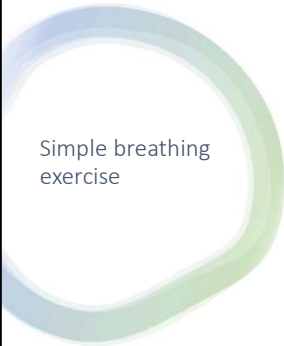


### Iliopsoas (hip flexor) Stretch

1. Place one foot behind (kickstand, little weight)
2. Tuck tailbone by "scooping" pelvis
3. Squeeze the glute
4. Lunge forward
5. Arm up in the air

(see demo on Instagram @center4selfcare)

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Simple breathing exercise

- Inhale for a count of 6
  - Fill up your belly
  - Then your lower lungs
  - Then your upper lungs
- Hold for a count of 3
- Exhale for a count of 6
  - Reverse the order: upper lungs, lower lungs, belly

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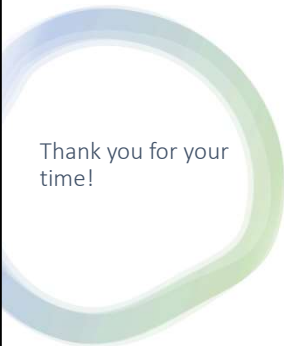


Remember you have control of your body

- Breathing techniques
- Water
- Sleep
- Nutrition
- Move your body
- Keep in touch with your loved ones

*Self-Care is proactive. Make decision for which your future self will thank you!*

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Thank you for your time!

- Any questions?
- Adrienne@yourpartnerinhealing.com

Resources:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N0dTv3k\\_9SE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N0dTv3k_9SE)  
Instagram: @center4selfcare (post on 8/8/2020)

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