

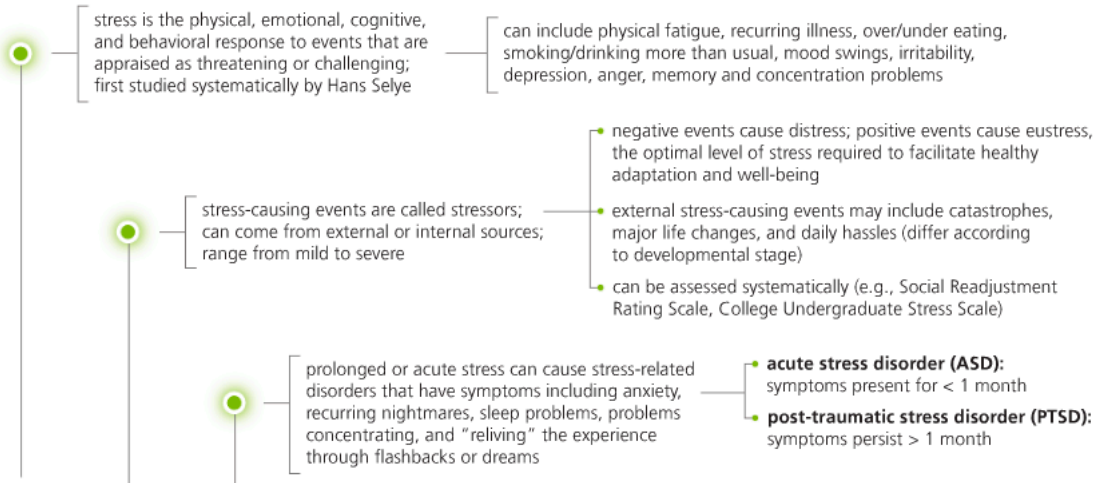
Table 11.1 Sample Items from the Social Readjustment Rating Scale (SRRS)

MAJOR LIFE EVENT	LIFE CHANGE UNITS
Death of spouse	100
Divorce	75
Marital separation	65
Jail term	63
Death of a close family member	63
Personal injury or illness	53
Marriage	50
Dismissal from work	47
Marital reconciliation	45
Pregnancy	40
Death of close friend	37
Change to different line of work	36
Change in number of arguments with spouse	36
Major mortgage	31
Foreclosure of mortgage or loan	30
Begin or end school	26
Change in living conditions	25
Change in work hours or conditions	20
Change in residence/schools/recreation	19
Change in social activities	18
Small mortgage or loan	17
Vacation	13
Christmas	12
Minor violations of the law	11

Table 11.2 College Undergraduate Stress Scale (CUSS)

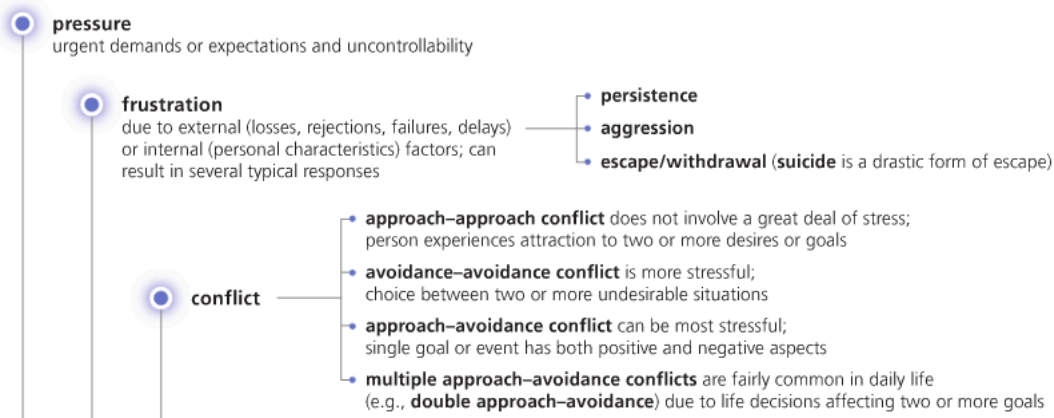
EVENT	RATING
Being raped	100
Finding out that you are HIV-positive	100
Death of a close friend	97
Contracting a sexually transmitted disease (other than AIDS)	94
Concerns about being pregnant	91
Finals week	90
Oversleeping for an exam	89
Flunking a class	89
Having a boyfriend or girlfriend cheat on you	85
Financial difficulties	84
Writing a major term paper	83
Being caught cheating on a test	83
Two exams in one day	80
Getting married	76
Difficulties with parents	73
Talking in front of a class	72
Difficulties with a roommate	66
Job changes (applying, new job, work hassles)	65
A class you hate	62
Confrontations with professors	60
Maintaining a steady dating relationship	55
Commuting to campus or work, or both	54
Peer pressures	53
Being away from home for the first time	53
Getting straight A's	51
Fraternity or sorority rush	47
Falling asleep in class	40

11.1-2



Stress and Stressors (part 1)

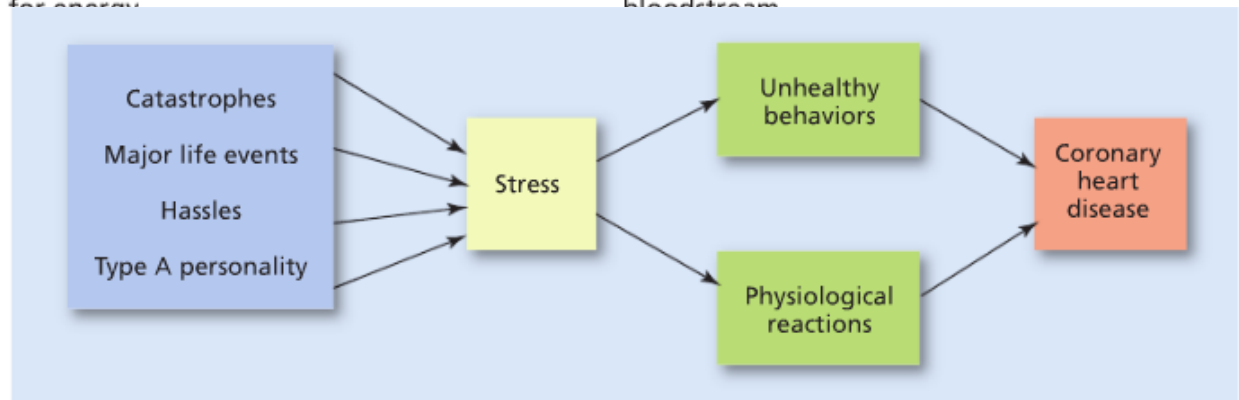
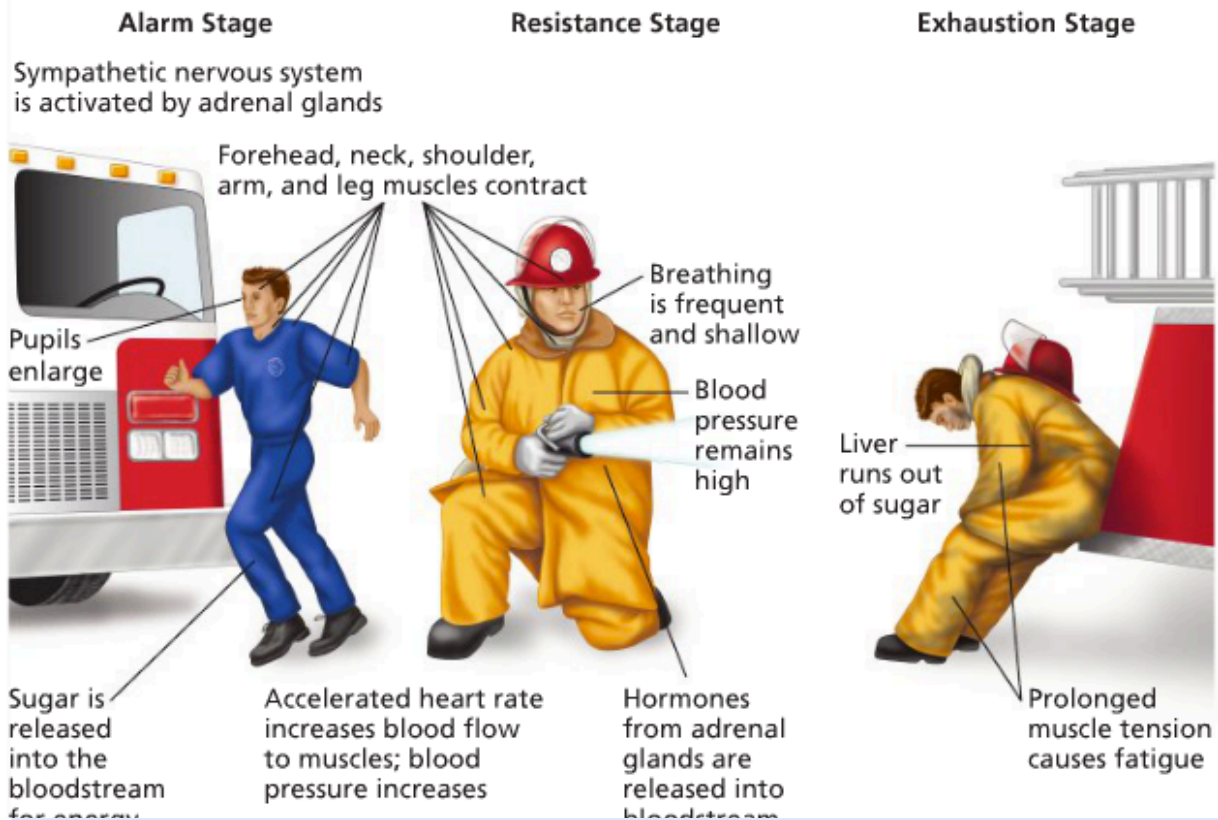
11.3



Stress and Stressors (part 2)

(psychological stressors are often related to external events)

(continued)



11.4-5

the **autonomic nervous system (ANS)** figures prominently in the body's physiological reactions to stress

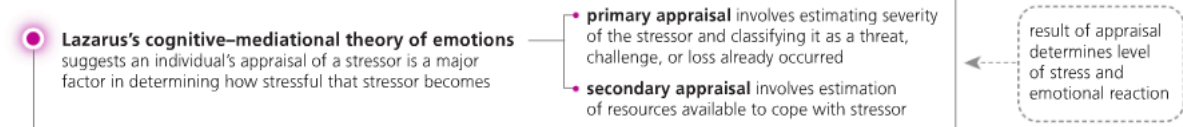
Physiological Factors

Hans Selye identified the **general adaption syndrome (GAS)**, the sequence of physiological reactions the body goes through when adapting to a stressor

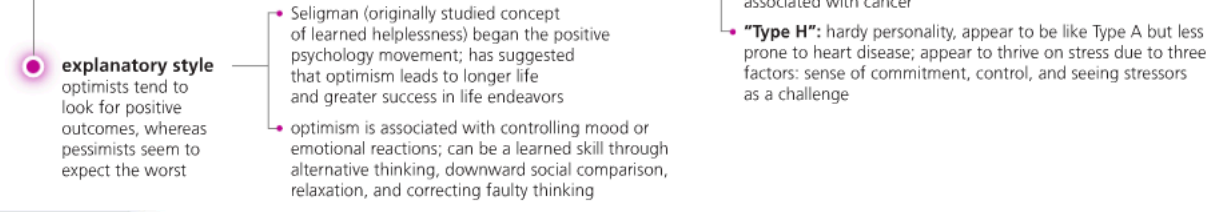
- alarm:** sympathetic nervous system is first activated
- resistance:** continued activation of sympathetic activity until organism's resources are depleted
- exhaustion:** prolonged stress response coupled with depleted resources can lead to stress-related diseases or death of the organism; if stressor is stopped, parasympathetic division is activated and body attempts to replenish resources

the field of **psychoneuroimmunology** focuses on the effects of stress on the immune system

- stress-related responses similar to those triggered by infection — increase in white blood cell count, enzymes, and antibodies
- body is engineered for short-term, acute stress; prolonged stress/depletion of resources results in reduced functioning of immune system



Cognitive and Personality Factors



11.6

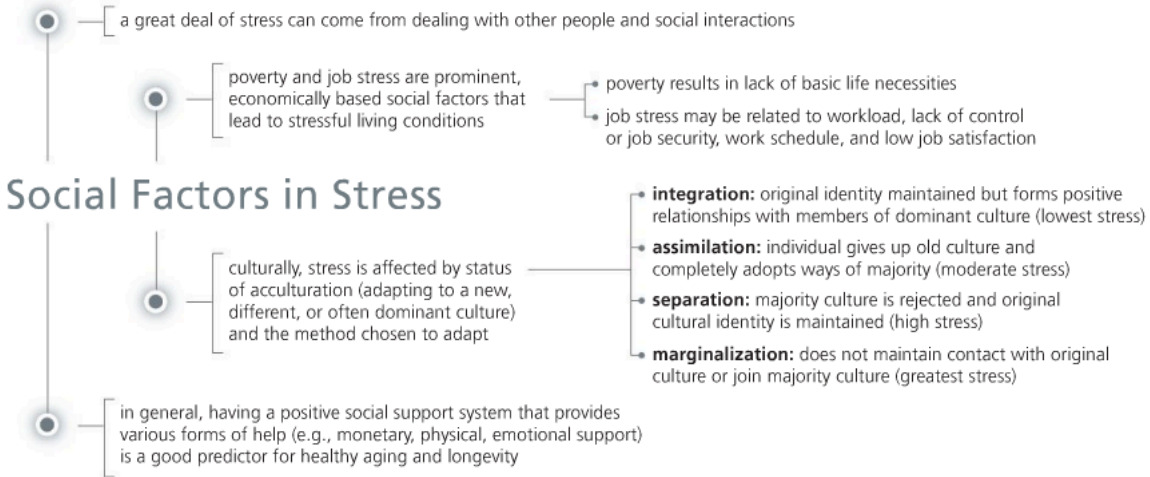


Table 11.3 The Psychological Defense Mechanisms

DEFENSE MECHANISM AND DEFINITION	EXAMPLE
Denial: refusal to recognize or acknowledge a threatening situation.	Ben is an alcoholic who denies being an alcoholic.
Repression: “pushing” threatening or conflicting events or situations out of conscious memory.	Elise, who was sexually abused as a child, cannot remember the abuse at all.
Rationalization: making up acceptable excuses for unacceptable behavior.	“If I don’t have breakfast, I can have that piece of cake later on without hurting my diet.”
Projection: placing one’s own unacceptable thoughts onto others, as if the thoughts belonged to them and not to oneself.	Keisha is attracted to her sister’s husband but denies this and believes the husband is attracted to her.
Reaction formation: forming an emotional reaction or attitude that is the opposite of one’s threatening or unacceptable actual thoughts.	Matt is unconsciously attracted to Ben but outwardly voices an extreme hatred of homosexuals.
Displacement: expressing feelings that would be threatening if directed at the real target onto a less threatening substitute target.	Sandra gets reprimanded by her boss and goes home to angrily pick a fight with her husband.
Regression: falling back on childlike patterns as a way of coping with stressful situations.	Four-year-old Jeff starts wetting his bed after his parents bring home a new baby.
Identification: trying to become like someone else to deal with one’s anxiety.	Marie really admires Suzy, the most popular girl in school, and tries to copy her behavior and dress.
Compensation (substitution): trying to make up for areas in which a lack is perceived by becoming superior in some other area.	Reggie is not good at athletics, so he puts all of his energies into becoming an academic scholar.
Sublimation: turning socially unacceptable urges into socially acceptable behavior.	Alain, who is very aggressive, becomes a professional hockey player.

● **coping strategies**

are behavioral and psychological actions taken to master, tolerate, reduce, or minimize the effect of stressors

● **problem-focused coping**

involves working to change or eliminate the stressor itself

● **emotion-focused coping**

involves changing the way a person feels or emotionally reacts to a stressor

several unconscious psychological defense mechanisms were proposed by Freud (see Table 11.3); originally psychoanalytical in nature, still useful to describe some thinking and behavior



various methods and behaviors exist to help individuals in dealing with stress

- meditation, in its various forms, helps to promote relaxation, calm anxiety, improve sleep, and lower blood pressure
- an individual's culture and/or religious beliefs can affect the appraisal of events as more or less stressful, the coping strategies adopted, and support systems that can offer assistance

Coping with Stress

(continued)