

# Stress = The Body's Alarm System

## Normal Stress

### Response

Heart Pounding  
Rapid Breathing  
Muscles Tense Up  
Fight or Flight  
Feel Excited or Worried  
Feel Frustrated/Determined  
Seeing/Thinking Clearly  
Acting Rapidly  
Facing Problems  
Taking on Challenges  
Clear Memories  
Creating Solutions  
Feel Angry or Scared  
Feel in Control  
Feel Good About Yourself

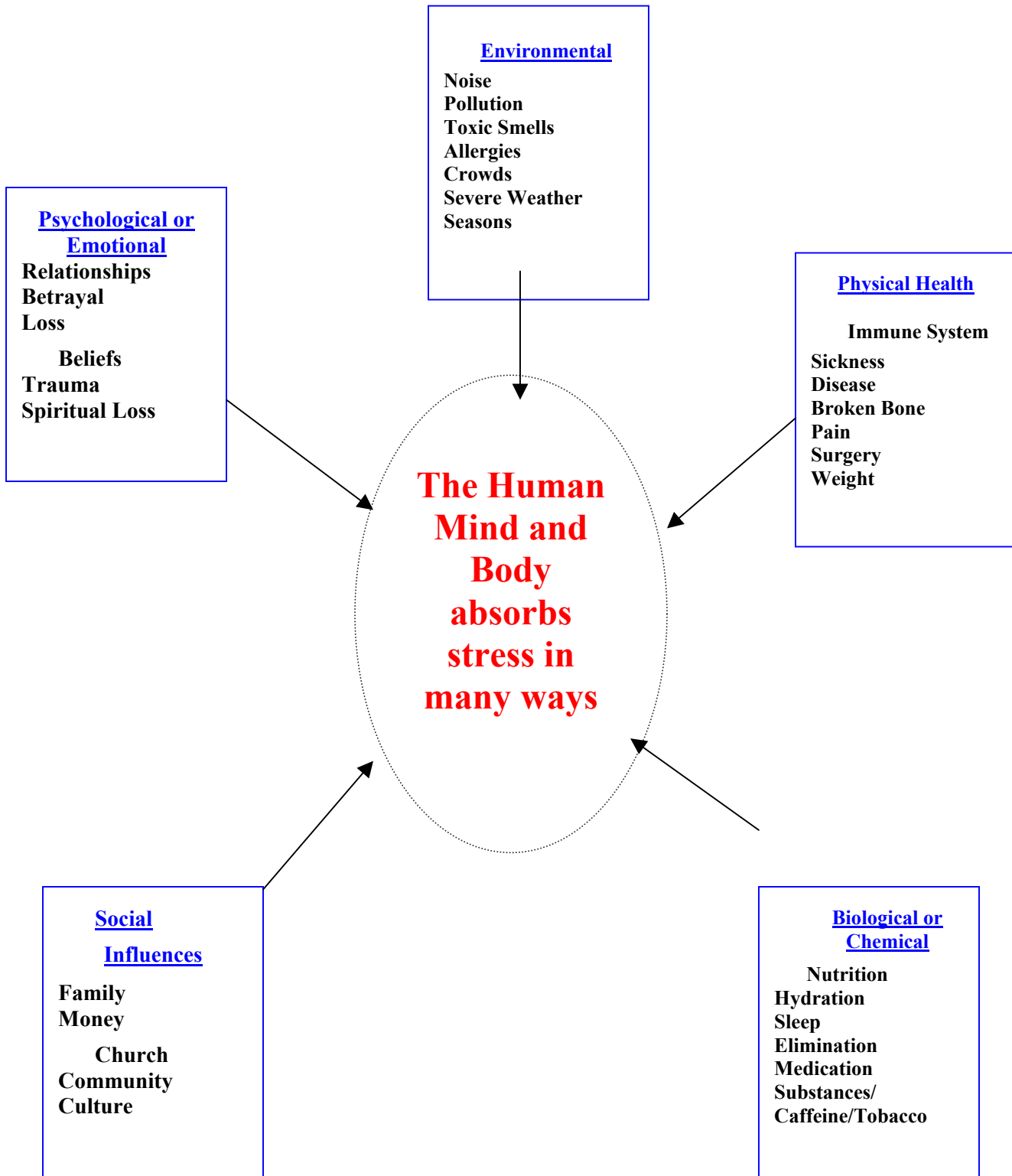
## Extreme Stress

### Reaction

Heart Feels Like Bursting  
Gasping, Feeling Smothered  
Muscles Feel Like Exploding  
Just Try and Get Through It  
Feel Terrified or Panicked  
Feel Enraged or Aggressive  
Confused, Mentally Shut Down  
Automatic Reflexes or Freezing  
Desperately Avoiding Problems  
Taking Foolish Risks  
Memory Like a Broken Puzzle  
Making a Mess of your Life  
Feel Hopeless or Doomed  
Feel Helpless or Out of Control  
Feel Worthless, like a Failure

# Different Types of Stress That Impact the Mind and Body

Session 1



# Possible Maladaptive Coping Strategies

Raging

Drinking

Drugging

Eating (Over or Under)

Gambling

High Risk Sexual Behavior

Toxic Relationships

Violence (Domestic or otherwise)

Excessive Caregiving

Shopping

Sleeping

Pornography

Excessive Exercising

Procrastination or avoidance

Risky High Speed Activities

Isolation via Computer, Television or Reading

Excessive Hours spent at Work

## **EXTREME STRESS SYMPTOMS**

<b>Mental Shutdown (Dissociation)</b>
My mind feels spacey, like I'm in a daze.
I feel detached from the world around me, like people and things are not real, or like it's all a dream.
I feel as if I don't know who I am and I'm watching myself from outside, or like there are separate parts of me that take control of my life.
<b>Trying to Feel Safe/In control by Extreme Eating</b>
I won't let myself eat or I make myself throw up because I am afraid of losing control of my eating and gaining weight.
I find myself eating large amounts of food to help me feel better.
<b>Problems with Sexuality</b>
I feel preoccupied with sex- I think too much about sex..
I find myself avoiding sex, not wanting to think about it or not wanting anyone to touch me at all.
I am more sexually active than I really want to be.
<b>Extreme Risk-Taking or Self Harm</b>
I find myself in dangerous situations, such as driving recklessly or being in places or with people where I could get hurt badly or even killed.
I get relief from feeling stressed by cutting, punching, or hurting my body in some other way.
<b>Hopelessness and Self-Blame</b>
I think about dying as a way of ending the misery I feel.
I feel that religion and the spiritual aspects of life are worthless, or that they are bad and hurt people.
I feel I'm a bad person- I'm guilty whenever bad things happen even if they really aren't my fault.
<b>Too Much or Too Little Involvement in Relationships</b>
I focus my attention on others in my life, avoiding my own needs and desires.
I feel I'm really different from everyone around me-no one can understand what I've been through.
I feel no one can be trusted, that everyone lets you down or uses you and hurts you sooner or later.
<b>Breakdown of the Body</b>
Physical pain, illnesses, or other physical health problems that doctors can't explain or help me with.