



STRESS

TENSION

Anxiety

How To Manage the Effects

We all have a sense about what it is

We may have symptoms because of it

We all experience it

We expend a great deal of resources attempting to manage it



• WHAT IS IT?

That is what we are going to discuss today

Define anxiety/ stress

Understand the results of experiencing stress and anxiety

Have some ideas for a plan to manage stress/anxiety



Anxiety:

The automatic reactivity (response) of an organism to a real or imagined threat

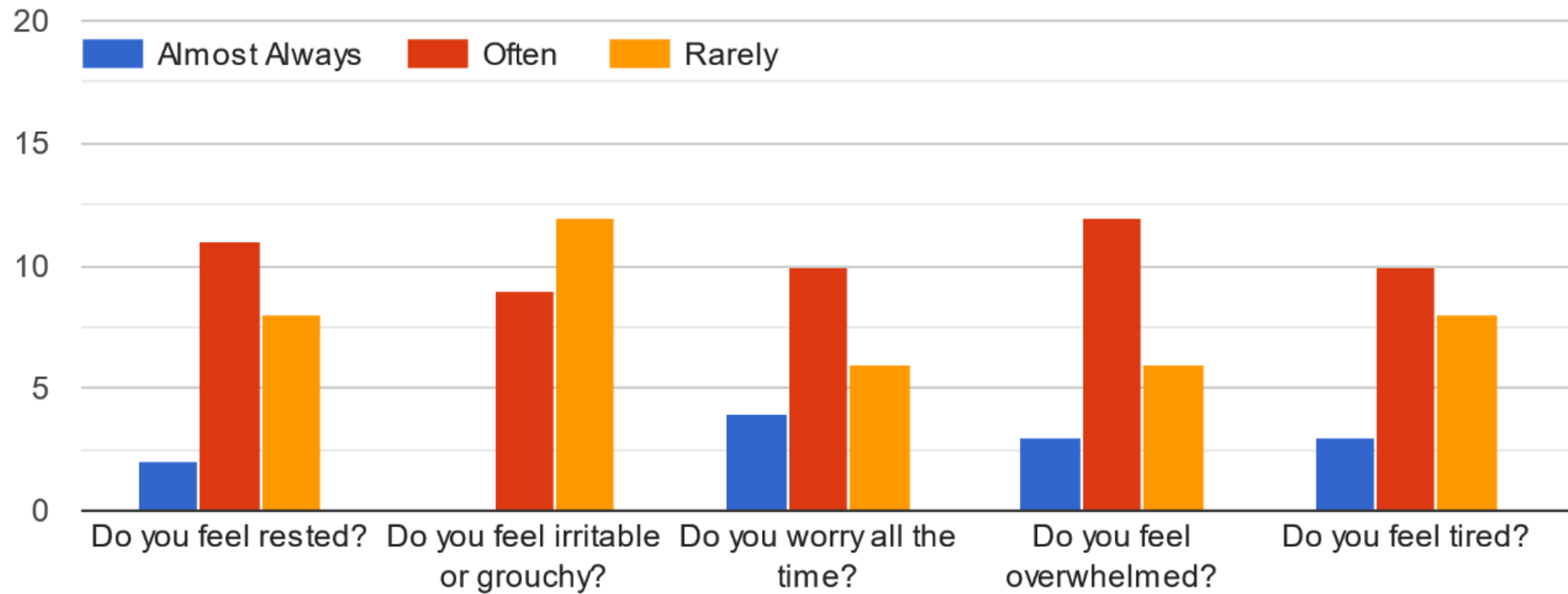
- Based on Bowen, M and Kerr, M. Family Evaluations, 1988. Pg. 112

Results of the preconference Survey

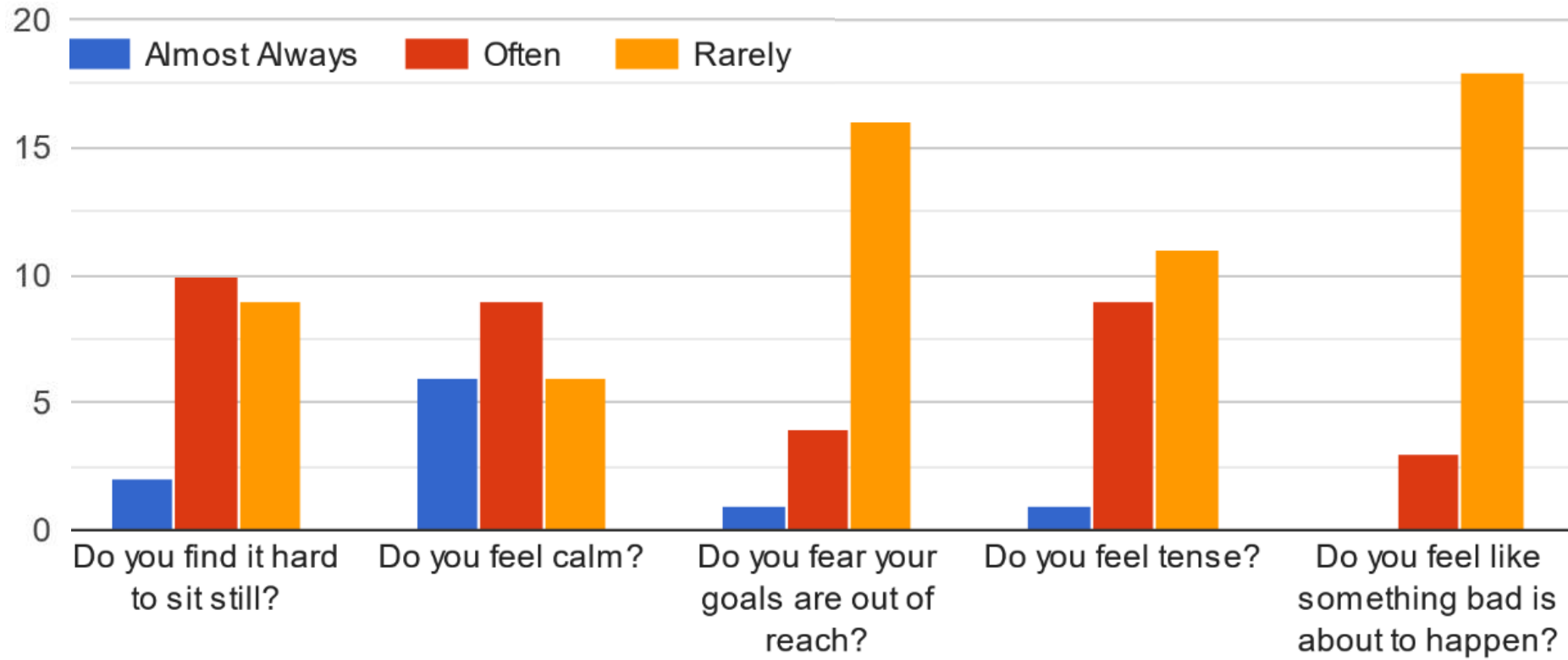
(We are an anxious bunch)



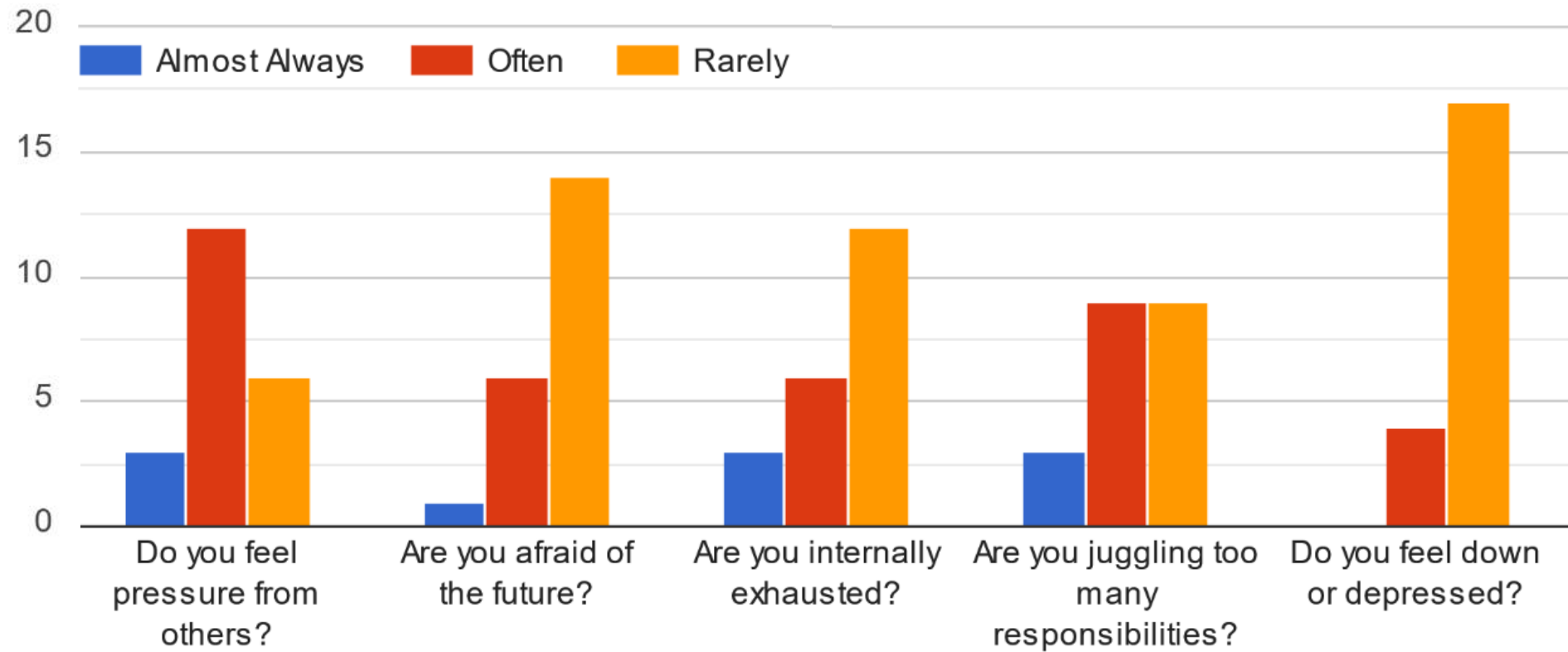
Answer the following with your first response, without taking too much time to think.



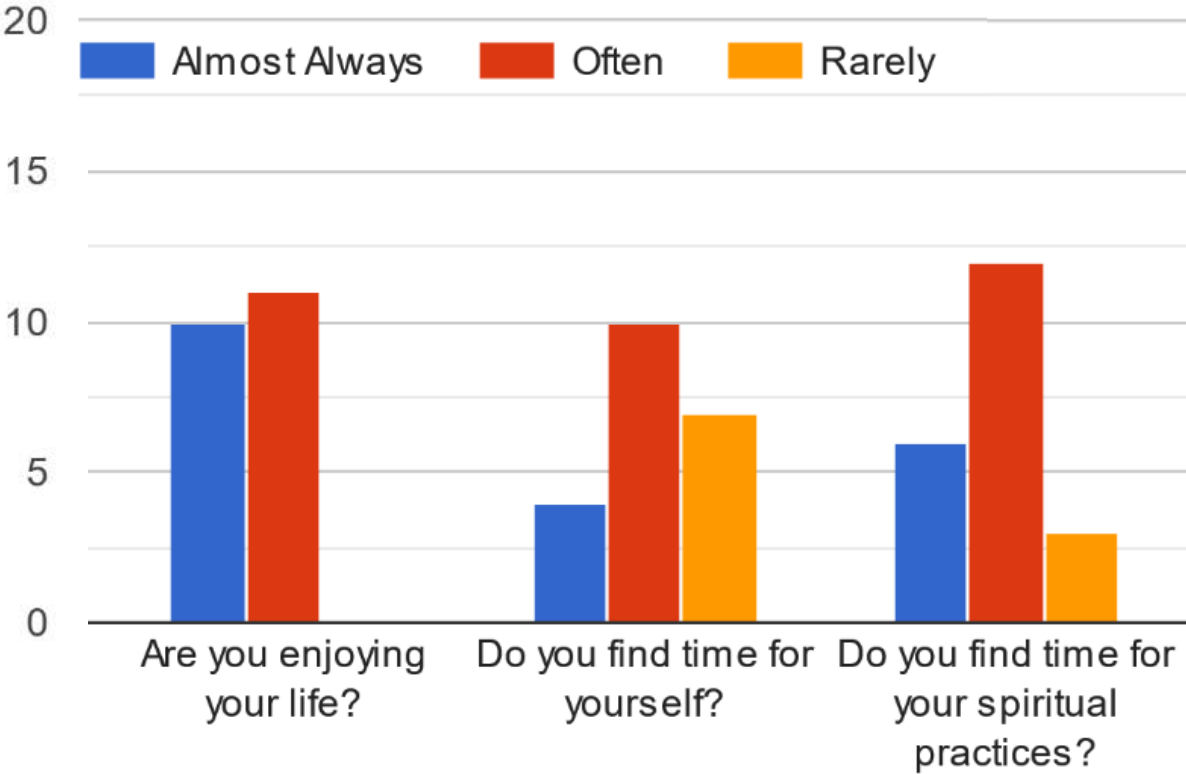
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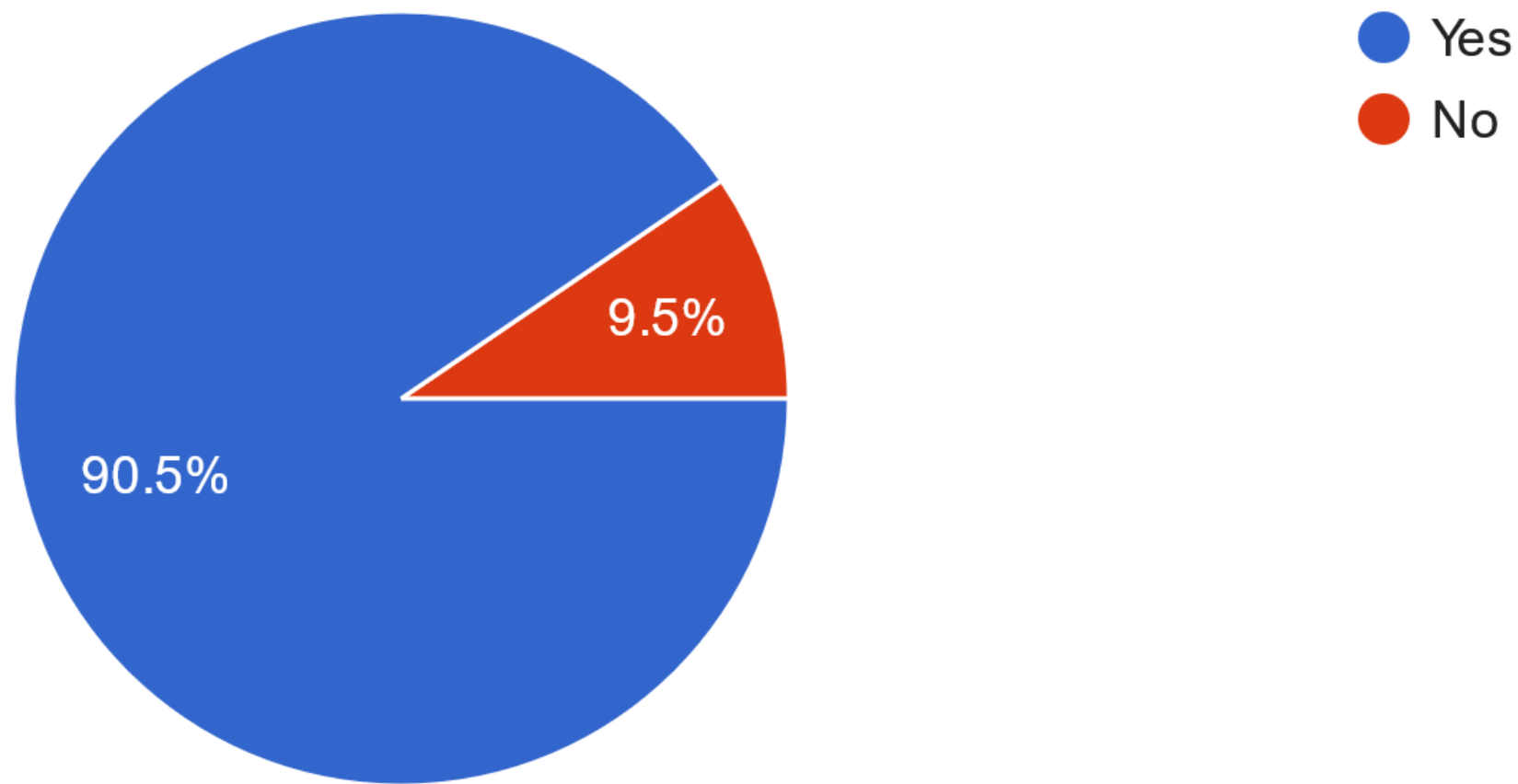


Answer the following with your first response, without taking too much time to think.



Would someone close to you be able to answer the questions above?

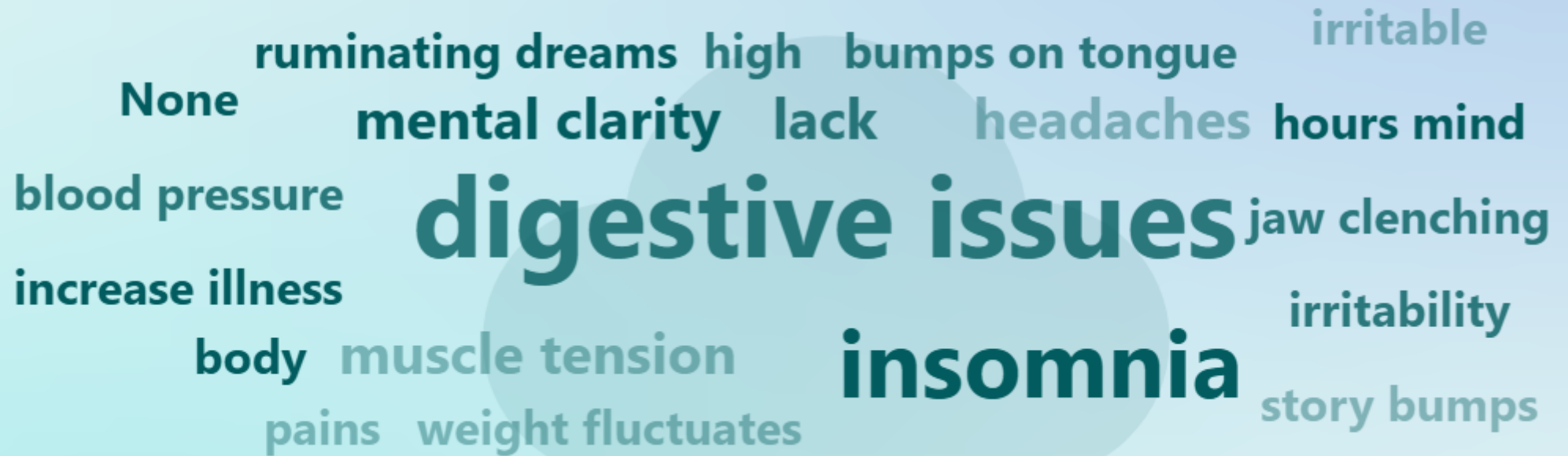
21 responses



What months of the year are you likely to feel most stressed?



What physical symptoms are a sign of stress for you?



A word cloud of physical symptoms of stress. The words are arranged in a circular pattern, with 'digestive issues' and 'insomnia' being the largest and most prominent. Other words include 'irritable', 'headaches', 'muscle tension', 'weight fluctuates', 'blood pressure', 'increase illness', 'body pains', 'ruminating dreams', 'high bumps on tongue', 'mental clarity', 'lack', 'hours mind', 'jaw clenching', 'irritability', and 'story bumps'.

irritable
ruminating dreams high bumps on tongue
None mental clarity lack headaches hours mind
blood pressure **digestive issues** jaw clenching
increase illness **insomnia** irritability
body muscle tension **insomnia** story bumps
pains weight fluctuates

What do you do to prepare for stress?

Think positive Prayer preparation Organize
Reread protocols Jot Map out workload Plan
Drink
Stay Calm Rest Lists Pray Read Scripture
Exercise
Evaluate Trust in Jesus Problem-solving
Look ahead Sleep

- Farmers are **3.5 times more likely to die by suicide than the general population**, according to the National Rural Health Association.
- CDC Statistics breaks out Agriculture to Crop Production, Animal Production, then other ag industries such as logging and hunting and fishing.
- Of these, males in Crop Production is the category with the highest rate of suicide within Agriculture.



What are stressors?



What are stressors?

Any idea, observation, or occurrence that is perceived as a threat, and produces an automatic response



Stressors in our lives

Health issues, ours or someone else's

Enough staff for the workload

Reports of agriculture recession

Work /personal schedules

Sponsor Visits

Equipment Breakdowns

In the field

Rain approaching

Already a crop stage deviation

Debt

Family concerns

Weather

Local, National, and Global issues

What happens when we experience stress?

PHYSIOLOGICAL RESPONSE:

Autonomic response: Catecholamine released to upper brain
(Hormones such as dopamine, norepinephrine, epinephrine)

H-P-A response: Hormones are released across the body
(Hypothalamic Pituitary Adrenal Axis)

Information processing shifts from Objective to Subjective

Decrease in Pre-frontal cortex activity

What happens when we experience stress?

PHYSICAL RESPONSE:

Increase Heart rate and Respirations

Sharper Senses

Tightened muscles

Release of blood sugars and fats

Sweating

Energy drawn from reserves,
impacting digestive system

Increased alertness

What happens when we experience stress?

BEHAVIORAL RESPONSE:

Shift in Mentation

(What information we recognize, how we interpret the information)

Relationship Patterns

(Have the same argument with the same person with the same outcome)

(Repetitive thoughts with judgement attached; “he never listens”, “this work is ____”)

Prefrontal cortex Executive Functions

Working memory

Prefrontal cortex Executive Functions

Working memory

Planning and Problem Solving

Prefrontal cortex Executive Functions

Working memory

Planning and Problem Solving

Regulation of Feeling and Emotion

Prefrontal cortex Executive Functions

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Social and Emotional Reasoning

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Monitoring for Errors

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Monitoring for Errors

Planning and Problem Solving

Flexible Behavior

Regulation of Feeling and Emotion

Social and Emotional Reasoning

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Prefrontal cortex Executive Functions

Working memory

Monitoring for Errors

Planning and Problem Solving

Flexible Behavior

Regulation of Feeling and Emotion

Decision organization based on objectivity and using past experiences to inform current options

Social and Emotional Reasoning

Inhibition

Two quick checks to self identify stress levels

Decrease in creativity in all areas:
thoughts, ideas, future visions, humor

Decrease in available vocabulary.
Increase in signals to and from emotional fields,
resulting in swear words, crude or inappropriate language, expletives

- This is a good system

- Very useful when in an anxious situation



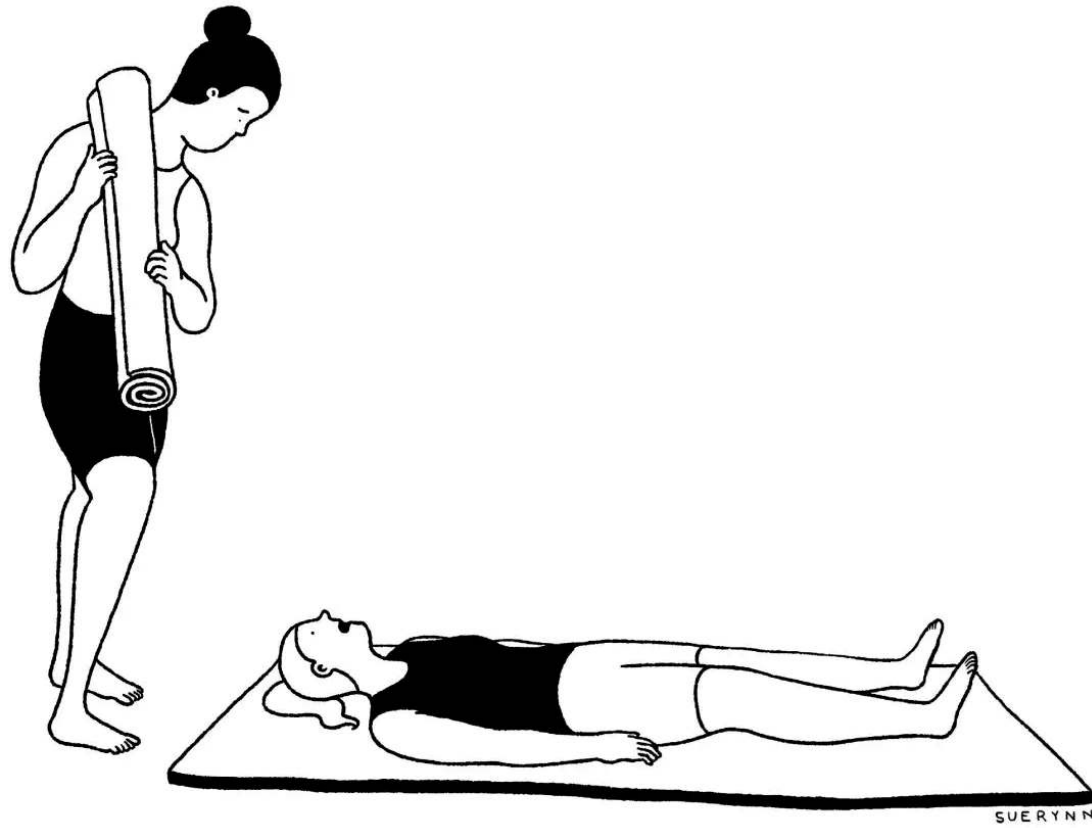
Acute anxiety is useful:

Efficient response to an actual threat

Mobilization of energy for the automatic response of an organism

Motivation to deal with an otherwise avoided/ ignored/ less priority situation





*“I let go of all my tension and lost
my will to get up.”*

Real or imagined Threat

QA

Research Tech





Sympathetic Nervous System Overload

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Physiological response when the SNS is in a high state of arousal for long periods of time

Heightened sensitivity, fearful

Brain Fog

Increased imagined threats

Motivation Challenges

Fatigue from constant energy drain

Describe self as “half-empty” or “can’t take it” Helplessness

Seeking a way out (food, drink, leave, avoid, etc.)

When energy demand greater than energy supply

Symptoms emerge (headaches, etc.)

Increase in aggression or withdrawal in relationships

Increase in emotional and behavioral lability

Difficulty engaging executive functions (Cognition, Decision making, Analysis)

Seek relief with short term, ineffective means;
Ritualistic repetitions, preoccupation with “controllables” food, exercise,

Relationship Issues:
Fusion with another, Group Think,
Shared beliefs about other, shared perspective on situation

Chronic Stress Physiological and Physical Symptoms include:

Cardiovascular diseases: High blood pressure, heart disease, heart attack, and stroke

Metabolic diseases: Obesity, Type II diabetes, and metabolic syndrome

Immune system diseases: Arthritis, fibromyalgia, and psoriasis

Digestive system diseases: Ulcers, irritable bowel syndrome, and weight gain or loss

Reproductive system diseases: Infections, polycystic ovarian syndrome, and infertility

Mental illnesses: Depression, anxiety disorders, and mood disorders

Addiction: Alcohol, nicotine, prescription drugs, the internet, food, or gambling

Sleep problems: Insomnia, awaking in night, Nightmares

Headaches: Tension headaches, migraine

Stress ulcers: Stress ulcers can occur in the stomach and proximal duodenum



Is it hopeless?

Stress Management



- No magic drug or cure
- Small steps
- Training
- Cross country, start short
- Baby steps
- Leaning into the wind
- Develop over time



Parasympathetic Nervous System

Helps the body return to neutral after SNS Activation

Slows heart, Dilates blood vessels, Increases Digestion, Breathing changes, many more



We can activate and strengthen the PSN

Deep breathing, Count to 10

Relaxation techniques

Take a physiological sigh

Pray, Recite Scripture, Poem,
Saying, or phrase

Time in Nature

Short breaks during the day

Talking to trusted person

Regular Exercise, Balanced Diet,
Consistent Night Routines

Listen to/sing calming music

Cold Exposure Therapy
Acupuncture

More we can recognize and work on acute anxiety, the more we can work on chronic anxiety;
Lower the baseline

Battling your Bias of Negativity around the farm

Opportunities for farmers to plant seeds of mental wellness

Ag daily articles Hand out Here

Continuums of Anxiety for Management



Approach Anxiety Like A Scientist

Observe

When am I the least Flexible in my thinking?

How do others respond when I think it is “my way or the highway”?

Curious/ Inquisitive

What would it take for me to listen to a different idea?

To whom would I be the most willing to listen?

How would I seek an idea or demonstrate I am interested?

Experiment

When I feel my shoulders tense, I will take 10 deep breaths

I will ask Joe his opinion on minor issues 3 times a week

I will ask Joe his thoughts of my plan during an anxious situation

Evaluate

Am I more aware of when my shoulders are tense?

Am I remembering to take deep breaths and does it help?

How? How can I improve?

Am I more flexible to listen to Joe's ideas when I am calm?

A little anxious? Highly anxious?

Repeat

Thinking Through Strategies for Success

Principles; including
spiritual beliefs and
incorporating practices

Once the hormones are
released, no calling
them back



The image features a white background with several abstract geometric elements. On the left, there are two vertical blue dashed lines, a green square outline, and a purple circle. In the upper right, there is a green L-shaped line and a blue circle. A large orange semi-circle occupies the right side of the frame, containing the text "Stress Can be Managed" in white. In the lower left, there are three blue dashed lines of varying lengths and orientations.

Stress Can be
Managed