

# STRESS BUSTER SERIES

*SHAKE STRESS, MANAGE WELLNESS*

*BOOK #1 IN A STRESS BUSTING SERIES*

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Any errors are mine.

## **Dedication**

There are so many people who have  
been with me on this journey,  
I can't begin to name them all.

The easiest, of course, are  
my family and friends.

There have been so many  
mentors and guides who have  
helped me along the way as well.

Thank you all for your belief in me.

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## **CHAPTER 1. DO YOU BELIEVE YOU KNOW ABOUT STRESS?**

Stress is extremely prevalent in our society and influences everyone to some degree or another. It's become a great buzz word or catch all phrase. But it is so important for you to understand it and how it influences the whole of your life.

You may think you know what stress is but the chances are good that you don't really know about stress.

I have spent years reading studies and other articles on stress. I have read currently published books on stress and I notice that there seems to be something missing.

Contexts, meanings, explanations and the Mindbody identity are rarely discussed. You have a wonderful opportunity to explore these new and exciting discoveries in this book.

The nature of Kindle books means that you, the reader, can have a preview. Because it is important that you get all you can from this series, I have organized it a little differently.

Each book in the Kindle series will contain some of the same information so readers can have the important stuff no matter which book is bought or where you start in the series.

Therefore, the best way to read this book is to know the appendix has lots of valuable information. Refer to it if you have some questions.

Let's dive right in!

Find out how it ends so you have a clear beginning!

## CHAPTER 2. THERE IS NO MINDBODY CONNECTION

**There is more wisdom in your body than in your deepest philosophy.**

- **Friedrich Nietzsche**

You will find that even recent terminology needs some updating. When the concept of Mindbody was first introduced, there were still some misconceptions floating around and influencing the new concepts.

It has been a challenge to not only address and correct these misconceptions, but also to create terminology that actually reflects the new understandings and emerging concepts.

Some of these terms are very recent and are based in the new science of Mindbody *as an identity*.

What does that mean?

Throughout history, there has been a great debate raging as to the nature of being human. Is there a basic separateness in humans? Is mind separate from the body and is each, in and of itself, completely separate?

Recent science and new studies has determined that there is no separateness, no distinct line between the mind and the body. What happens in the mind, happens in the body. What happens in the body, happens simultaneously in the mind.

Thus the term “Mindbody connection” was coined. This term implies that there is still a separateness or a connection between mind and body. When I hear the word connection, I think of a bonding or a plug being inserted into an outlet. These

connections can be separated, therefore there isn't a complete whole. The whole is separated into parts that need connecting.

To help clarify this concept, imagine a balloon. When I touch a place on the balloon, the whole balloon is affected. There is a whole balloon response to the touch on a specific place.



Throughout this Kindle series, you will see the term Mindbody; read this with an implied meaning of Mindbody as being an identity. Identity means a completeness, a wholeness, no single point of connection but rather a unity where the whole is affected.

It is the identity of mind, body, soul, spirit, the energy body – the identity of Self.

## **CHAPTER 2. FIVE SERIOUS STRESSORS**

### **WHICH ONES ARE YOU LIVING?**

**Adopting positive thoughts and beliefs can readily convert a negative stress into a positive one.**

**- Dr. Steph**

WHAT ARE THE 5 SERIOUS STRESSORS?

1. LIVING IN DRAMA. “AWFULIZING” AND “CATASTROPHIZING” ALL THE TIME.

2. AVOIDING PEACE.

3. AVOIDING LEARNING.

4. AVOIDING CHANGE.

5. LIVING ONLY IN THE PAST OR IN THE FUTURE.

Each of these stressors will be briefly discussed in this book. The subsequent Kindle books of this series go, one by one, into a more in depth explanation of each of these 5 Serious Stressors. You get a more complete explanation, experience, and more skills to practice for managing stress and mastering wellness in each book.

The first stressor - Living in Drama – was chosen because living in drama is what most people center their daily lives around. It can be very addictive and usually occurs at unconscious levels.

I remember when I was younger (I am going to age myself now), the big thing was to stay home from school to watch soap operas. Or daytime soaps. There aren't many of those shows being produced now because they have morphed into reality TV or talk shows. Even our news shows are designed to illicit the drama reaction. And it is a reaction. It is a sympathetic nervous system response.

The second – Avoiding Peace – may seem like a contradiction in terms. Most people say they want “Peace on Earth, Goodwill toward Men.”

Sandra Bullock highlighted this in her movie, *Miss Congeniality*. I believe the statement she avoided using was World Peace. When she used it, she was accepted.

So why the term “avoiding peace”? There are interesting aspects to BEING Peace that aren't as straight forward as it would seem. Even our nervous system seems to avoid peace. You can find that out in the chapter on it.

The third stressor – “I don't know” isn't an acceptable answer – again seems to be contradictory.

Candace Pert, Ph.D. and author of *Molecules of Emotion*, theorizes that some stress may be created by information overload. Again, there seems to be a contradiction in terms. Why learn more when you may already be in information overload? Because filtering and ordering information that is accurate and true is more important than knowing a lot of stuff.

The fourth stressor – Avoiding Change – is one of my personal favorites. When you read further, you will find that our nervous

system is made to create habits and it is also wonderfully designed to embrace change.

A person who is rigid and unwilling to change generates massive personal stress. A person who constantly seeks to change generates massive stress.

How to resolve this contradiction, you ask? There is more!

The fifth stressor, and by no means the last one, is living in the past or future, not the present.

This is an elusive concept to grasp and yet it is vital to managing your stress.

You may be thinking that I have overstated the case. That isn't true. One of the most valuable stress management skills available is to live in the present moment.

## **CHAPTER 3. WHAT DOES LIVING IN DRAMA ACTUALLY MEAN TO “BEING” YOUR JOY?**

**Drama is life with the dull bits cut out.**

**- Alfred Hitchcock**

What does living in drama mean?

You may think it is self-explanatory, but it really isn't.

There are various predictable elements that result in a person creating drama. These are described more in the second book of the series, *Shake Drama, Create Confidence!*

Living in drama is an interesting dynamic. Humans are actually physically, psychologically and mentally designed to live in drama. Living in drama is a sympathetic nervous system activity and function.

However, living in drama is only supposed to be for short periods of time. Becoming aware of something new, learning something new, and understanding something not known before can be some of the benefits of drama. And humans are designed to come out of living in drama quickly. We're designed to rapidly come back into thriving.

It is easy to get stuck in that “on”-switch of drama and “awfulizing” and “catastrophizing”. I once heard a parent say to his little daughter, who was at the time, suffering from a tremendous illness. She had happened to injure her body. The father was trying to comfort his daughter, but he kept saying,

“Poor little girl, can’t catch a break”, “Poor little girl, can’t catch a break”, “Poor little girl, can’t catch a break”.

I heard him say that, and as listened to the statement, I understood the father’s mind-set. He was actually trying to comfort his daughter, while what he was really doing was “awfulizing” and “catastrophizing” this young, courageous, brave girl’s life by saying, “Can’t catch a break”. This story is full of some subtle clues and hints as to how we can inadvertently “awfulize” and “catastrophize”.

Another example of living in drama is when someone’s life companions has died. There is a normal period of grieving, There are a lot of people who are “awfulizing” and “catastrophizing” for longer than the grief process. They keep living in the drama of what will be missed because the person is no longer with us on the earth.

For some people, moving out of drama can be assisted by a celebration of appreciating and being grateful for what they brought to the people in their lives.

There is a deeper meaning attached to the person’s life. Acknowledging that their kind of service of bringing wonderful and thoughtful things into the physical world has ended. It is very sad, there is no denying it, but there is no benefit in over-dramatizing this loss.

This is challenging when it is an intimate personal loss and many people are grieving. It almost seems disrespectful to be happy too soon after a loss like this.

So we do dramatize things. We’re taught how to do this from watching many T.V. shows – like reality TV. Some of the top T.V

shows are the drama shows, and those types of things, and sometimes as I mentioned earlier, there are people who wouldn't know how to behave if they weren't bathing in stress hormones all day long.

It would be so easy to dramatize everything that happens. A person could actually say, "Oh my gosh, (or worse) isn't that so inconsiderate of that person? or "I can't believe that they're acting like that." and "Oh my gosh, this is so horrific." and "Oh my gosh", "Oh my gosh", and then run around like chicken little, "The sky is falling", "The sky is falling", "The sky is falling".



The important thing to remember is that life everywhere on the planet is loud sometimes, is noisy, is messy, and is chaotic. You can either be drawn into daily drama and be extremely stressed by it, or you can notice it, beware of it and know that it will end soon. Then, make a conscious choice to feel better. To begin thriving again.

This is only a small example of how you can handle drama. Another is by understanding the multiple elements of drama.

There is more about the elements of drama in the second book of this series. You can learn how to recognize when drama is threatening to overwhelm your life, eliminate it and begin shifting into creating self-confidence and thriving.

How you can manage those toxic chemicals or people that are in your workplace? Even when you are just thinking about it,

you begin feel it's the worst thing in the world to be at work. The workplace can be a hot bed for drama.

"This co-worker deliberately upsets me." "The way my boss asked me to do this thing really made me mad." You probably have experienced these types of situations.

What can you do to manage those so that they don't manage you?

### **What else is possible?**

You can make some notes here, if you choose.

### **Notes:**

Notice what you have written here, then write something that feels a little better for you.

Then write something that feels even better than that.



## **CHAPTER 4. PEACE IS A WONDERFUL STATE OF BEING. WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO AVOID PEACE?**

**Peace cannot be kept by force; it can only be achieved by understanding.**

- **Albert Einstein**

Avoiding peace is the 2<sup>nd</sup> of the 5 Serious Stressors.

This is interesting because if you understand the sympathetic nervous system, that reaction can be one of fight, flight or freeze **away** from peace and into fear.

If you haven't already, you can go to the end of the book and review the videos included for your information. You will get a deeper understanding of the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems.

Once you understand your nervous system, you can see how thoughts, feelings and emotions move you into the reality of the mind and its awesome capacity to create change, while also having the awesome capacity to create peace. This doesn't even begin to address the phenomenal capacity of your brain to grow and change.

There is a part of the brain, known as the limbic system. The limbic system is associated with the emotional brain. The limbic system just wants to feel good – kind of like the Cyndi Lauper song, *Girls Just Want to have Fun*.

There's a part of the brain known as the "reptilian" brain stem. This ancient brain just wants to make sure you stay safe. So, it

keeps you hyper vigilant and on red-alert. It is the reactive part of the brain that does what has been programmed into it through repetition.

It is the part of the brain that doesn't need conscious thought or words to direct its activity. Think of this example – remember a time when you are driving your car and something jumped in front of you.



You automatically slam on your brakes. That is the reptilian brain stem taking over the thinking part of the brain to save your life. It also does this when there isn't an emergency and that generates unnecessary stress.

Another interesting idea to think about is that sometimes when you're getting into meditation, the reptilian brain will fight for control. It will actually create stress within itself, because the limbic system wants to feel peace and the reptilian brain system wants to keep you alive and wants to keep you safe.

Talk about conflict! The brain will react without conscious thought when it perceives potential danger. So even a health promoting practice can create internal stress.

How does this avoid peace? Your brain is automatically generating conflict when you are doing something healthy!

Once a person becomes used to living in the danger, the “danger, danger Will Robinson” zone, it soon becomes difficult to know what a peaceful state of being is.

Your reaction then becomes such that when a peaceful state is reached, you notice what’s missing in the peaceful state, rather than what’s present in that peaceful state. Again, a subtle sense of conflict is activated.

In a world where it is an ongoing challenge to generate a sense of safety from the noise, the lack of peace, the fear element, combined with the stress hormone production, peace becomes almost impossible. When these stress elements are not present, it can feel almost scary because a you are so used to having conflict go on and on and on and on.

The peaceful state almost feels empty and can be scary because of that emptiness. When given the opportunity, deeply explore peace, for the sake of BEING peace.

When you notice the fear, and think that something is just not quite right, you quickly move out of the state of peace and into the avoidance of peace. You might be thinking, “Why does it feel like something’s not right there? I am not sure I want to BE peace.” You can find yourself doing whatever you can do to avoid peace.

You go into a cycle of thinking thoughts that you know will destroy your newfound sense of BEING peace, then trying to get back into feeling peace. You might find yourself dredging up old memories or emotions to prove to yourself that peace is an illusion, again to take yourself out of peace.

The illusion you have bought into is that really you are not peace. Remember, you are both conflict and peace. You just can't be in both these states at the same time.

You do have choice. You can choose peace. And choose it as many times as possible, as soon as you notice you are avoiding peace.

Choose it because peace is one of the natural states of being, and it's where you can refresh and restore. Being peaceful, being mindful, being present moment are all very healthy states.

If you have attempted to be peaceful and scared yourself out of that peaceful state, you may realize the many ways that you unconsciously avoid peace.

Living in conflict all the time means you're actually living in a very serious stressful state, producing stress hormones and living in the sympathetic nervous system non-stop.

This is just one of the 5 Serious Stressors. And again, some of these you may be doing at a sub-conscious level or unconscious levels. That's why it's good to get very quiet sometimes, and really be present to what's going on.

When you avoid peace, you create a negative self-image. When you embrace peace, self-reflection and consciously choose what is in your highest good, you create confidence. You generate a more positive sense of self.



## CHAPTER 5. "I DON'T KNOW" ISN'T AN ACCEPTABLE ANSWER.

**The beautiful thing about learning is nobody can take it away from you.**

- **B. B. King**

We're moving into the 3rd Serious Stressor, which is avoiding learning.

There are many people in the world that say, "I know what I know, and I don't want to know anything different. My life is just fine as it is."

They may not realize the incompleteness that having that belief active will create in their life. You are actually designed to learn and grow. Mindbody is uniquely designed to create more cells throughout your body, and now we know that brain cells are included.

Let's explore an old, false and harmful belief that is now being challenged. This belief was that humans couldn't grow new brain cells. New technology has proven, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that you do grow new brain cells, and also that stem cells are being generated to develop into new cells everywhere in Mindbody. Research is published, almost daily, about this capacity.

The old beliefs that were so incorrect about the how the brain functioned that they kept us locked in a state of ignorance about the awesome capacity of Mindbody to learn and grow. One of the ways the brain loves to engage in life is to learn something new.

Instead of saying, “I don’t know.”, you can begin saying, “I’ll find out.” Your Mindbody will greatly appreciate that shift.

It is healthy for you to have a philosophy of learning something new every day. You can either read a book or listen to informational shows. You can have an enlightening discussion of a book or a movie that interests you.

You can listen to various topics discussed on blog casts, radio, TV or other sources of new information. Listen to diverse viewpoints, even if they differ from yours. Your brain will love you for that.

These are easy and simple ways to grow a new brain. Even if you don’t believe it or understand it, you don’t have the same brain that you had yesterday, last year or the year before. It is impossible.

You need to get out of living in that “Groundhog Day”. Remember when Bill Murray made the movie about where you get up and every morning, there is the same old day?



A long time ago, there was a commercial with a Dunkin’ Donuts man. He’d get up every morning to make the donuts, and every day was a repeat of the day before. He’d stagger across the TV screen saying, “It’s time to make the donuts.”

To your Mindbody, that’s kind of boring, and it’s really, really stressful. It’s one of the more serious stressors that you can habituate. If you avoid doing what your body, your mind and

your whole spirit is designed to do, you actually generate huge amounts of stress.

Remember, you're designed to learn something new every day, you're designed to create a new brain, and have new experiences. Embrace that capacity.



You're designed to feel good (eu-stress) and you're designed to feel bad (dis-stress). You're designed to be fluid and flexible within various stages of BEING. You're designed to habituate thoughts, emotions, behaviors, actions and designed to change them.

That's how you're created. And ignoring this marvelous capacity, avoiding it and trying to move away from who you actually are creates a huge amount of stress.

Knowing more about how you're designed, what creates stress and what can relieve stress means that you are actively and joyfully creating the best life possible.

How does it get any better than this?

## **CHAPTER 6. CHANGE (SHIFT) HAPPENS!**

**The secret of change is easy to understand and sometimes hard to do. Focus your energy on realizing the new, not fighting the old.**

- **Dr. Steph**

Avoiding change is the 4th of the 5 Serious Stressors. You actually change every single day. You're not the same person.

I was talking with someone at lunch the other day and I said, "Well this is the oldest I have ever been in my entire life". We laughed about it because it was somebody else's birthday and we were saying, you know how old they are, those types of things.

You don't live the same day. You're a different person every single day. And your body is actually designed to change. Your nervous system is designed to change. And it's designed to be very energy efficient. There is reliable information that every cell in your body is replaced at least one time every 7 years. Many cells have different life spans, so they are replaced multiple times in 7 years.

However, when you try to keep the things same, you're going back to a place that no longer exists. This is one of the harder concepts for people to grasp. Because socially and culturally we are taught something different.

It helps to understand that there is no such thing as time. And there is no such thing as space. When you keep trying to get back to a time and a space where you existed before, that takes

a lot of energy. First of all, the time and space is no longer there. And second of all, you're not the same person you were before. And so going back to a time and space stresses you.



You aren't the same as you were a year ago. You can't go reverse time. You can't get people to be the same they were a year ago. They don't remember how they were a year ago. They can't go back, either.

And you don't remember how they were a year ago. You look at them and say, "Well I am sure you're the same person I knew the first time I met you." That just doesn't work. That's a huge stressor for you, and that expectation is a very huge stressor for them.

Given this, just understand that you're designed to change. And one of the wise sayings is that "The same person doesn't step in the same stream."

Or you could avoid peace and say, "it's always gonna be this way. I am never gonna get a peaceful life."

Or you could avoid learning by saying, "Well I don't know what to do. I don't know how to choose peace." "I don't know how to fix this."

Or you could avoid change by saying, "You know what? It's never gonna change. It's gonna stay the same, and I am stuck

with it. And I might as well be just stuck with it.” “I don’t like doing any of those things to make myself peaceful.”

And that is your choice, too.

## **CHAPTER 7. HOW MUCH ARE YOU LIVING IN THE PAST OR THE FUTURE TO AVOID THE PRESENT MOMENT?**

**The Present Moment is the only moment available to us and it is the door to all moments.**

- **Thich Nhat Hanh**

The 5<sup>th</sup> of the 5 Serious Stressors is living only in the past or in the future.

You're actually designed to be living in the present moment. And if you review the concept just now discussed about there not being a time or a space, you catch a glimmer of what the present moment is.

All of those are constructs so that we humans, living in the physical world, can have an agreement on when we might meet or where we can meet.

Living while imagining that you are in the past or in the future means that you are not present to the gifts that are here in this very moment. You're creating an artificial past, because it no longer exists, and, anyway, you're not the same person who was in the past.

Creating an artificial future, into which you can project all of these expectations. Sometimes you will put "perfect" expectations out in the future so that you can't be disappointed.

There is also the concept of worry. Worry is generating a lot of "might happens", or "could happens" in the present and

packaging them up tightly and shooting them into the future. This is buying trouble and generating stress.

Living in the present moment has a very unique quality of being aware of your past, and of all the living and experiences that brought you to this present moment.

You are also aware of future potentials so that means that you can look into what is possible on several levels and several dimensions. When you do that from while you are in the present moment, you acknowledge what is and that you are here and present. You acknowledge what's in the past and what has potential to be in the future.

Then you can make choices based on being fully present in the present moment. That is one of the greatest secrets to managing some of these 5 serious stressors that you might be living.

You can actually get into the power of these skills.



Begin living in the present moment right now.

You can review this information many times over, because this truly is a skill that you can master. It is such a positive and powerful stress management skill that you can acquire practicing simply by practicing it every day. Practice this skill by simply asking a question, "Where am I other than right here in this present moment?"

You become aware of your differing answers. They will be different from moment to moment. Then you can become more and more present in the moment.

You might want to know that I have a meditation and guided imagery CDs series on Amazon. You can easily order them on Amazon. The CD that relates to this Kindle book is on CD number 2, "The Mindbody Connection." (Note: these CDs were made when I was still using the outdated terminology!)

Although it's not described in those terms, the 5 Serious Stressors really relate to the Mindbody identity. And there are guided imageries specific to getting you into in your body and in the present moment.

If you're interested, then you can go on Amazon and order the entire series or a single CD.

## CHAPTER 8. APPENDIX

**Man should not try to avoid stress any more than he would shun food, love or exercise.**

- **Hans Selye**

Stress is prevalent in our society and influences everyone to some degree or another. You may think you know what stress is but the chances are great that you don't really know about stress and really don't understand it.

You may have said or thought, "I'm feeling stressed" and thinking stress is an emotion. Stress is not an emotion, it produces an emotion and feeling state but it is not an emotion.

What is it, then?

Hans Selye is generally accepted as the premier stress researcher. He was a prolific writer and won many prestigious awards.

Selye wrote that "stress" can be used to describe the non-specific response syndrome" (his words) or a general condition of just "being sick."

He felt that he never quite found the right word to describe the condition. Because he was multi-lingual, he searched various languages to find the most descriptive word. He would have chosen "strain" but by the time he decided that strain would work, stress was already well on its way to being the accepted term.

Selye was also a medical student, and he observed that patients suffering from different diseases often exhibited identical signs and symptoms. To him, the people he examined just “looked sick”. This observation may have been the first step in his recognition of “stress”. He later discovered and described the General Adaptation Syndrome, as a response of the body to demands placed upon it.

In simple words, stress is the normal response of an organism to the demand for change placed on it.

If the adaptive demand for change is unrelenting and severe enough, a person experiences mental, emotional, energetic and physical responses to that demand. It usually results in an illness in the physical body because the immune system gets so “stressed” it can no longer respond appropriately.

Selye was brilliant, but a little limited in his exploration. There are so many scientific advances that weren’t available to him in the era he was researching stress. It would be fascinating to see what he would discover given today’s technology.

Stress isn’t always negative or bad. In short bursts, it can help you perform better under pressure and motivate you to do your best. But when you’re constantly running in the emergency mode, your mindbody ultimately pays the price.

If you frequently find yourself feeling frazzled and overwhelmed, it’s time to take action to bring your mindbody into balance. You can heal yourself by learning what the signs and symptoms of stress are and taking that appropriate steps to reduce its harmful effects.

Together we will discover what all this means for you and your wellness.

# CHAPTER 9. WHAT BENEFITS ARE YOU GETTING FROM READING THIS BOOK?

You will gain a much deeper understanding of what stress is, how it shows up in your life, and what you can do to decrease dis-stress and increase wellness.

You can't eliminate it because, "STRESS HAPPENS."

It's similar to the weather. Weather happens, we can't control it. We can't even predict it accurately.

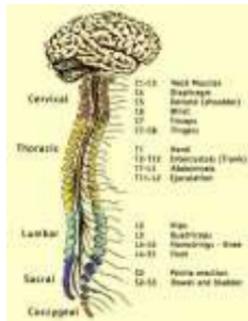
You can manage your reaction or response to weather the same way we can manage stress.

You can't control the weather. It happens. You can't control stress, it happens.

You will get so much more from this series if you understand some simple basics. So let's jump right in.

## Your body has 3 nervous systems.

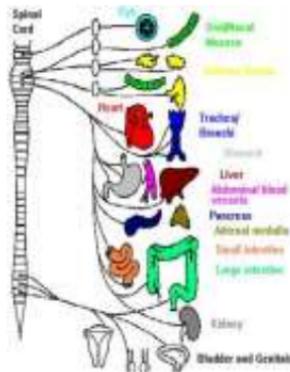
The first one is the Central Nervous System (CNS). It consists of the brain and the spinal column.



The second section of your nervous system is the Peripheral Nervous System (PNS). This system encompasses the nerves that enervate the body from the spine.



The third section of your nervous system is actually composed of two different branches of nerves. These two unique branches have different functions and create different states of being.



Because you want to get the most from this book, it is helpful that you become very familiar with the functions of these two different systems.

The two different branches of these systems are the sympathetic and the parasympathetic nervous systems. The chart illustrates the different activities of these two systems.

<b>Sympathetic N/S</b>	<b>Parasympathetic N/S</b>
Fight, Flight or Freeze	Relaxation, Restoration
Protection, Constriction	Growth, Expansion
Fear	Love
Surviving	Thriving
Reaction	Response

Each book in this Stress Busting Series will explore these qualities and how you can best use them for your optimal wellness.

There are links to two short videos for you to watch to further explain these two nervous system branches.

Click this link to play the first video that covers the Sympathetic/Parasympathetic chart above.

<https://vimeo.com/208929809>

The second video goes into more detail about the functions and activities of the sympathetic/parasympathetic branches of the nervous systems. You can use this information to help you understand the nature of your physical responses and manage them as soon as you become aware of them.

<https://vimeo.com/112422291>

## WHO IS STEPHANIE STANFIELD, PH.D., TH.D.?



**Stephanie Stanfield, Ph.D., Th.D.** has made it her life's mission to learn about stress and the influences stress has on life.

She has several coaching programs designed to help people who suffer from intense headaches and sleeplessness.

She has written several books and has a meditation and guided imagery series on Amazon.

Her online courses have helped hundreds of people. She teaches at the local college. She lives in Western Colorado and has 3 grandchildren that keep her thinking young.

There is more to learn about Stephanie at [amazon.com/author/business](https://amazon.com/author/business)

You can find out more about Stephanie's online courses at [www.makingshiftshappen.com](http://www.makingshiftshappen.com)





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