A stylized, colorful illustration of a landscape. In the foreground, there are rolling green hills. To the left, a small green tree stands next to a purple flower and some orange autumn leaves. A small red bird is flying in the sky above the tree. The background features more rolling hills under a blue sky with white clouds.

# Managing Stress and Building Resiliency – Improving Coping during the Pandemic

*Presented by Linda Hutkin-Slade,  
MSW, LCSW, OSW-C*

# As the pandemic enters the third year...

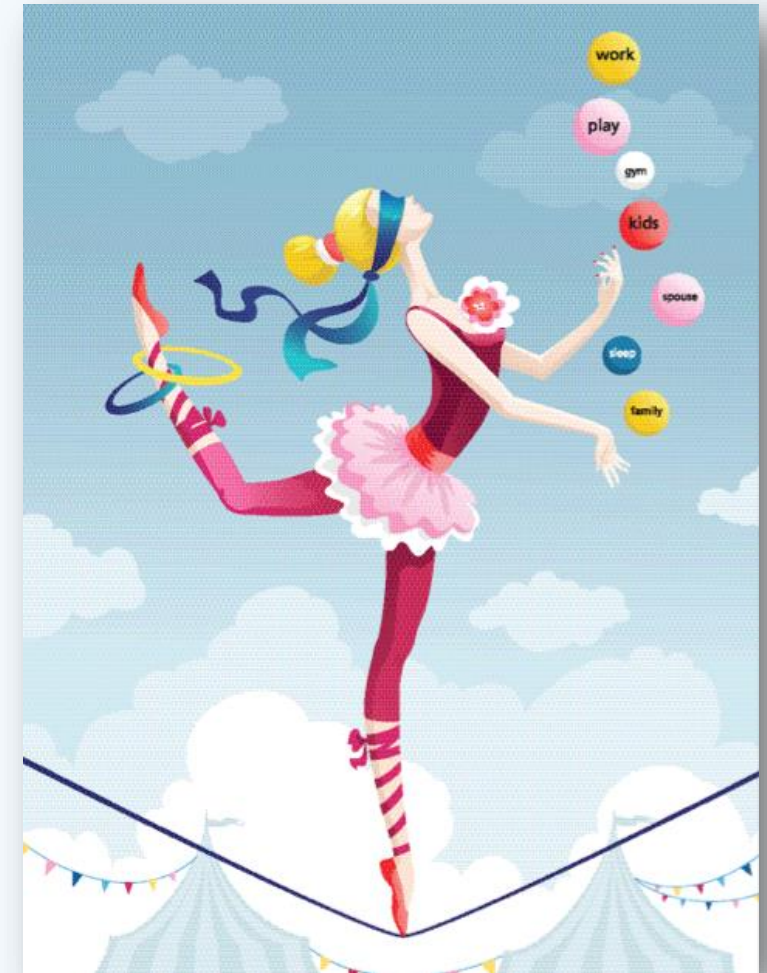
- Morale for educators is low
- After two years of putting the kids first and themselves second, can burnout be far behind?
- Many are choosing to leave the profession
- You can't help the kids if you don't put yourself first





# Teaching during the pandemic is insanely difficult to do

- It's a juggling act while balancing on a tightrope
- So many challenges
  - Difficult working and learning conditions
  - Hybrid vs virtual vs in-person
  - Masks vs no mask
  - Staffing shortages
  - Everyone is divided
  - Negative rhetoric about educators
  - Frustration about constant changes and lack of clarity regarding some policies



# *Many contributors to teachers' stress*

- Remote teaching – done with little training and frequent technical glitches
- Difficulty:
  - Maintaining contact with students and their families
  - Supporting students' social-emotional health
  - Keeping students engaged
  - Planning for things one way or another due to bouncing between online and in-person teaching
- Worried about:
  - Their own health and safety
  - The health and safety of their loved ones

# Findings from Rand Corp Study\* (June 2021):

- Rates of stress were higher among teachers than most other working adults during the pandemic
- More than three in four teachers reported frequent job-related stress, compared to 40% of other working adults
- Even more alarming: 27% of teachers reported symptoms of depression, compared to 10% of other adults
- 23% of teachers — and nearly half of Black teachers — said they were likely to leave their current jobs by the end of this school year

*\*Funded by National Education Association and American Federation of Teachers*



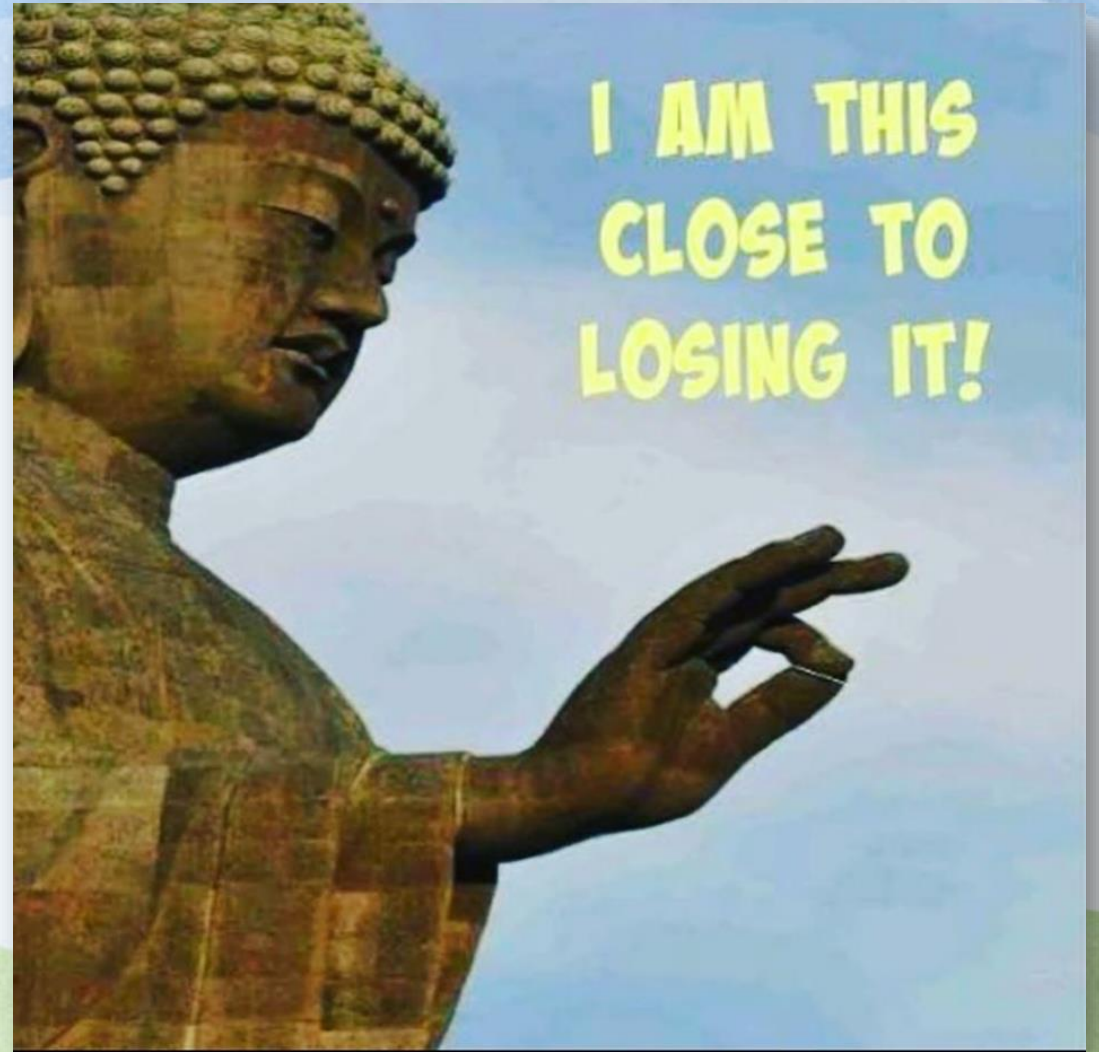
“Stressful working conditions, many of which have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, appear likely to spur some teachers who might not otherwise have considered leaving to consider doing so this year.”

Elizabeth Steiner and Ashley Woo, RAND researchers



Sometimes you can  
because you can.

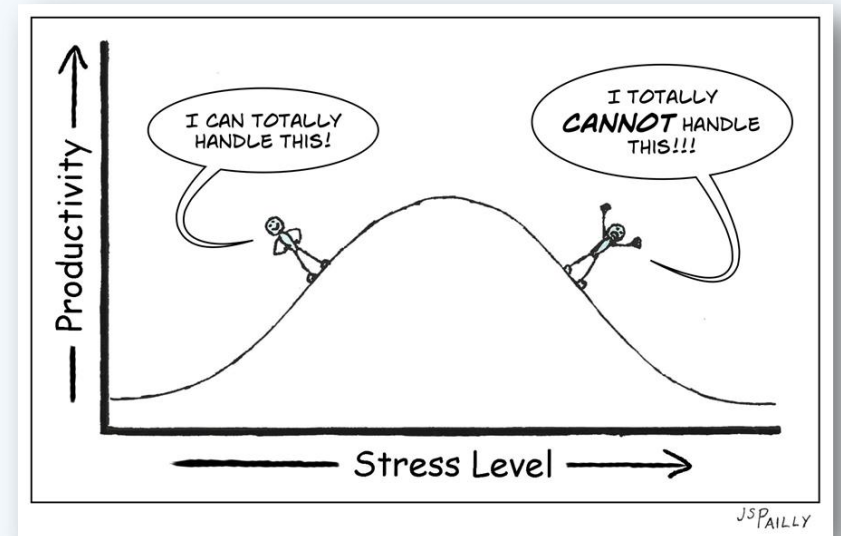
Sometimes you can  
because you have to.





# Stress

- Synonyms: strain, pressure, worry, anxiety, trouble, difficulty, hassle
- A state of mental or emotional strain or tension resulting from difficult or very demanding circumstances
- What we **feel** when we **think** we've lost control of events
- Generally experienced when the demands on you exceed the personal and social resources you are able to mobilize





# General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS)

In 1950 Hans Selye identified three distinct phases of response to long-term exposure to stress:

- 1. The alarm phase:** we react to the stressor
- 2. The resistance phase:** we adapt to, and cope with, the stressor. The body can't keep up resistance indefinitely, so our physical and emotional resources are gradually depleted
- 3. The exhaustion phase:** eventually, we're "worn down" and we cannot function normally

General Adaptation Syndrome

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
<u>Alarm</u> ⚠	<u>Resistance</u>	<u>Exhaustion</u>
Your body reacts to the stress sympathetic nervous system HPA axis	Adaptation to stress sustained release of cortisol in an attempt to maintain arousal	The body's resources have been depleted

# *Stress is part of life & not all stress is equally harmful*

Short-term or acute stress (giving a speech, traffic, test, etc.)



- Time limited
- Subsides as soon as the event passes
- Comes from situations you know you can manage or will be over at some set time

Long-term or chronic stress (pandemic, serious illness, caregiving, unemployment, etc.)

- More damaging
- May last many weeks or months with no definite end point and may make it harder for you to stay healthy
- Chronic stress weakens your immune system, and makes you prone to health conditions such as heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, depression and anxiety

# Stress activates “Fight or Flight”

- Hard-wired, early warning system designed to protect us from bodily harm
- Highly sensitive, set to register extremely minute levels of potential danger which can be real or merely perceived
- Produces a wide variety of mental and physical changes designed to help us survive by running faster and fighting harder
- Leads to **toxic stress hormones** flowing into our bodies for events that pose no real threat to our physical survival
- Serious effects on the body of long-term chronic stress when subjected to repeated arousal





# *Stress is unavoidable*

- When the body senses a threat (or stressor), it goes on high alert, and once the threat passes, the body quickly recovers, or at least that's the way it's supposed to work!
- With unrelenting or too many stressors, your body is on a constant state of high alert, leading to poor concentration, bad moods, professional burnout, and mental and physical health problems
- When stress becomes chronic, the body cannot return to normal functioning and leads to the constant activation of the fight-or-flight response

# Stress affects women and men differently

- Many conditions associated with stress — such as post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and anxiety — are more common in women than men
- There are individual differences, too. Some people are more resilient than others. Stress affects them less or more temporarily, and they might even perform better under stress
- How you respond to stress depends on your history, background and life experiences - everyone has a unique response



# Consequences of stress

Serious impact on our general well-being and relationships, as well as:

- Our ability to do our jobs effectively
- How we work with other people
- Our careers
- Our happiness





# Recognize and counter signs of stress

- Your body sends signals that it's stressed, including difficulty concentrating, headaches, cold hands, tight muscles, a nervous stomach, clenched teeth, feeling on edge, fidgety, irritable or withdrawn
- Knowing how your body communicates can help you deal with stressful moments
- Learn to not only recognize but also to name these feelings, either to oneself or to a friend
- Then, take action to counter their effects, like deep breathing, stretching, going for a walk, writing down your thoughts and taking quiet time to focus can help induce relaxation and reduce tension
- Recognizing individual signals and learning to respond to those signals in new ways can help build the emotional, intellectual and physical strength that comprise resilience, which can help you tackle future stressors

# Common symptoms and responses to stress

## Emotional or Psychological:

- Feeling irritation, anger, or denial
- Feeling uncertain, nervous, worried, anxious or scared
- Feeling hopeless, resentful, guilty
- Lacking motivation
- Feeling tired, overwhelmed, or burned out
- Feeling sad or depressed
- Having trouble sleeping
- Having trouble concentrating

**Physical:** headache, upset stomach, pain, racing heart, shortness of breath, deep sighing, etc.

Long-term stress can also cause:

- Burnout
- Cardiovascular disease
- Stroke
- Depression
- High blood pressure
- Weakened immune system



# *Communicate about job stress!*



- Communicate with your coworkers, supervisors, and employees about job stress
- Identify things that cause stress and work together to identify solutions
- Talk openly with employers, employees, and unions about how the pandemic is affecting work. Expectations should be communicated clearly by everyone
- Ask about how to access mental health resources in your workplace



# Children and stress

**Watch for behavior changes, not all children and teens respond to stress in the same way**

Some common changes to watch for include:

- Excessive crying or irritation in younger children
- Returning to behaviors they have outgrown (for example, toileting accidents or bedwetting)
- Excessive worry or sadness
- Unhealthy eating or sleeping habits
- Irritability and “acting out” behaviors in teens
- Poor school performance or avoiding school
- Difficulties with attention and concentration
- Avoidance of activities enjoyed in the past
- Unexplained headaches or body pain
- Use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs



# Ways to support children

- Talk with children about the pandemic and answer questions and share facts about COVID-19 in a way that the child can understand
- Reassure the child that they are safe. Let them know it is okay if they feel upset. Share with them how you deal with your own stress so that they can learn from you how to cope with stress
- Limit exposure to news coverage of the event, including social media. Children may misinterpret what they hear and can be frightened about something they do not understand
- Try to keep up with regular routines, create a schedule for learning activities and relaxing or fun activities
- Be a role model. Take breaks, get plenty of sleep, exercise, and eat well. Help children connect with friends and family members
- Spend time with children in meaningful activities, reading together, exercising, playing board games, etc.

# *What is resilience?*

- Resilience means being able to adapt to life's misfortunes, difficult situations, and setbacks
- When you have resilience you harness inner strength that helps you rebound from a setback or challenge
  - Job loss
  - Illness
  - Disaster
  - Loved one's death
- If you lack resilience you might dwell on problems, feel victimized become overwhelmed or turn to unhealthy coping mechanisms, like substance abuse



# *Resilience doesn't make your problems go away*

- But gives you the ability to see past them, find enjoyment in life, and better handle stress
- When stress, adversity or trauma strikes, you still experience anger, grief and pain, but you're able to keep functioning, both physically and psychologically
- Resilience isn't about putting up with something difficult, being stoic or figuring it out on your own
- A key part of resiliency is being able to reach out to others for support
- You can develop skills to become more resilient

# *Resiliency and mental health*

- Protects you from various mental health conditions, like depression and anxiety
- Can offset factors that increase risk of mental health conditions, like being bullied or previous trauma
- If you have an existing mental health condition, being resilient can improve your coping ability

Resilience doesn't mean bouncing back to normal.  
It means being transformed toward a new normal.





# *How to build resilience and manage stress*



# If your bandwidth is limited...



- Manage your time wisely
- Figure out what is stressing you
- Concentrate on the things you can control
- Identify what is important
- Prioritize your tasks
- Be aware of your limits
- Develop your assertiveness

# Figure out what is stressing you



- Keep a stress diary to identify the causes of short-term or frequent stress in your life
- As you write down events, think about why this situation stresses you out
- List these stressors in order of their impact
  - Which affect your health and well-being most?
  - Which affect your work and productivity?
- Once these are identified you can make changes



# Concentrate on things you can control

- People who can remain flexible keep their stress low
- Identify those things which you do not have control over and do the best you can with the resources available to you
- ***Sometimes the only thing you can control is how you react to it***
- Think of it as saving your energy to spend on things more important to you
- Increase your control by creating and following a plan for the week or just the next day, whatever period of time works for you
- Stick to your daily schedule and maintain your prior habits as much as you can – for example, don't lounge around in pajamas, shower and dress, keep a set wake and sleep schedule
- Do things you enjoy during non-work hours

# Identify what is important

The pandemic has helped crystalize what's important and what's noise

- Set and manage your priorities
- Avoid multi-tasking
- Check e-mail and Facebook only at certain times
- When you know what is important you can overcome your natural tendency to focus on unimportant activities



# Prioritize your tasks



- Make a list of the things you routinely do, such as work and household chores
- Rank them by importance, “must do” and the things that are most important to you
- If you do not have time to do everything, focus on the tasks and activities at the top of your list
- Breakdown tasks into smaller steps this will make overwhelming problems easier to handle
- For example, instead of spending an afternoon cleaning your entire house, tackle 1 or 2 rooms each day or even one corner for 10 minutes



# Be aware of your limits

- The pandemic has been life-changing, and focusing on the things that matter most makes good sense
- It's okay to politely decline something if you do not have the time, energy, or interest
- Do not feel guilty for saying no
- If saying "no" is hard, tell the person asking what you can do instead - this could be doing a smaller part of the task or having more time to complete the task
- Use a day planner, your phone, or an online calendar to keep track of appointments and activities
- Do not schedule too many activities for the same day or week, especially activities you need to prepare for
- If managing your schedule is exhausting, ask someone you trust to help review your appointments



# *Develop your assertiveness*

**"No" is a complete sentence. It doesn't require justification or explanation.**

- Other people can be a significant source of stress
- Your thoughts, feelings, needs and desires are just as important as everyone else's
- Find ways to get your needs met without sacrificing others' needs in the process
- Learn to say "No"

# Manage your mind

**"The mind is a  
wonderful servant,  
but a terrible  
master."**

---

ROBIN S. SHARMA

- Your mind interprets the body's messages
- Stress often comes from the way you perceive a situation
- Automatic beliefs/thoughts often are behind feelings and moods
- You can reduce your stress by changing the way you think
- Reframe the unnecessary negative thinking and approach situations in a more positive frame of mind



# *Challenge those automatic thoughts*

Employ the Judge and Jury approach

- What's the evidence for?
- What's the evidence against?
- What's the alternative view?



# *See problems through a different lens*



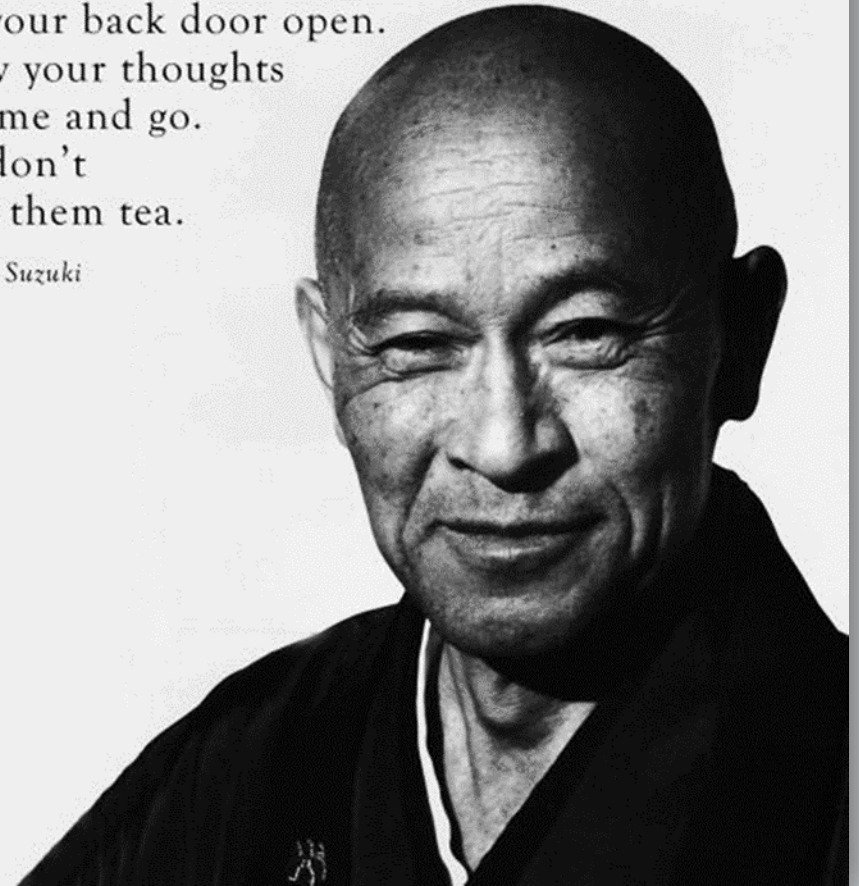
- Keeping situations in perspective is an important way to boost stress resilience
- Practice “reframing” by changing the way you think about and respond to stress
- View sitting in traffic or around the house as an opportunity to enjoy music, podcasts or pleasant views
- Reduce anger in response to rude or aggressive behavior by imagining what might be happening in that person’s life
- Other steps include positive thinking and creating plans before you begin to resolve problems
- You can practice reframing and get better at it over time

# Reflect

- Check in with yourself and get in touch with how you're feeling
- Reflect both on what's hard *and* on what's still good
- Write it down or have a conversation with a friend
- It doesn't matter how you reflect, just that you find time to pause and take stock in the middle of a crisis
- Practice gratitude - find three concrete things each day
- Practice mindfulness - staying focused on the present

Leave your front door  
and your back door open.  
Allow your thoughts  
to come and go.  
Just don't  
serve them tea.

Shunryu Suzuki





# Keep in mind for mindfulness...



If we live tomorrow,  
it's anticipation.

But if we live today,  
we only have that  
one ball to juggle.

We don't have to  
juggle three balls:  
past, present and  
future.

# *Make every day meaningful*

- Do something that gives you a sense of accomplishment and purpose every day
- Set goals to help you look toward the future with meaning
- Take breaks from work to stretch, exercise, or check in with your supportive colleagues, coworkers, family, and friends
- Remain hopeful - You can't change the past, but you can always look toward the future
- Accepting and even anticipating change makes it easier to adapt and view new challenges with less anxiety

# *Learn from experience*

- Think of how you've coped with hardships in the past
- Consider the skills and strategies that helped you through difficult times
- You might even write about past experiences in a journal to help you identify positive and negative behavior patterns — and guide your future behavior
- Remind yourself that each of us has a crucial role in fighting this pandemic
- Remind yourself that everyone is in an unusual situation with limited resources



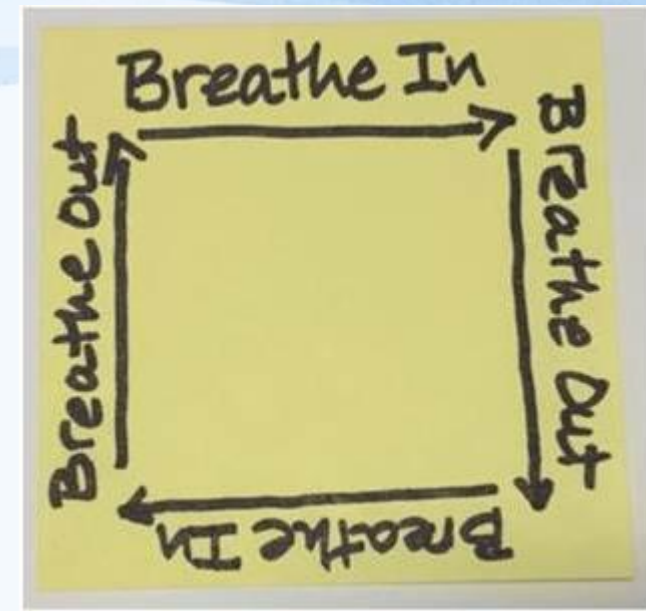
# Don't forget to breathe deeply



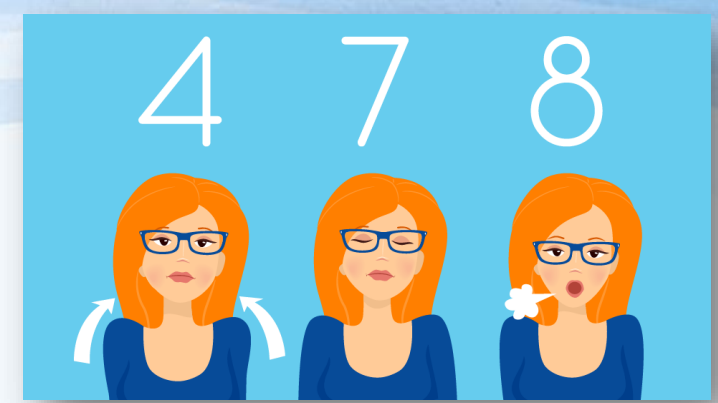
- Deep breathing slows down your physiological stress response
- Use diaphragmatic breathing – a purposeful expansion and contraction of the diaphragm and belly
- Make a conscious effort to breathe slowly and deeply – 5 to 6 deep breaths per minute for a set amount of time each day
- You can't be stressed and relaxed at the same time
- Studies show that people who engage in 15 minutes of breathing 20 times over eight weeks showed improved attention and mood, and lower levels of the stress hormone, cortisol as compared to a group that didn't do the breathing

# Square or box breathing

- A paced breath following a predictable rhythm, and
- Our brains love predictability!
- Knowing a four count is coming balances the parasympathetic (braking system) and sympathetic (accelerator) nervous systems
- The result is a feeling of calm and focus
- Simply draw a square on your palm or on a post-it-note
- As you run your finger under your fingers and down one side of your hand, across the lower palm and again up the other side, focus on breathing in and out
- Focus on the sensation of your finger on your palm
- Do this for a minute or longer and see how you feel!



# 4-7-8 Breathing

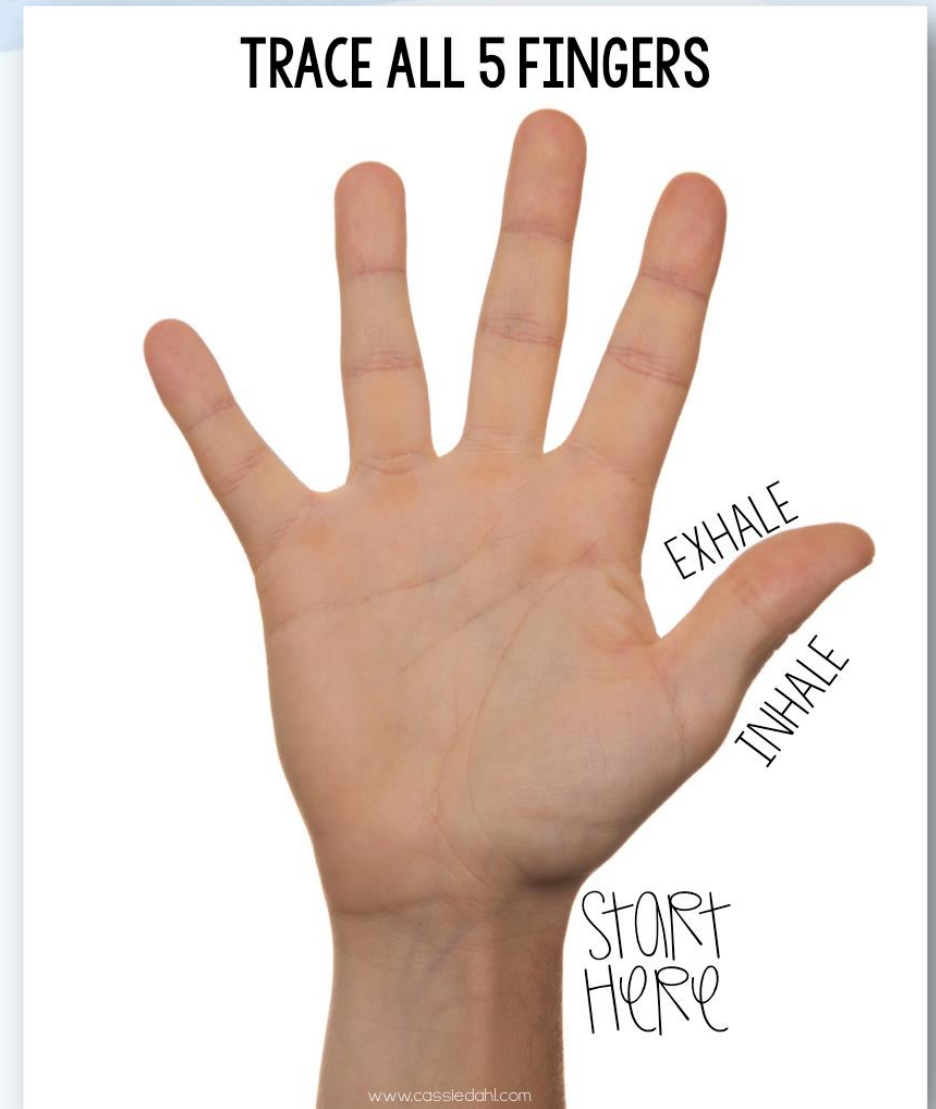


- Exhale completely through your mouth, making a whoosh sound
- Close your mouth and inhale quietly through your nose to a mental count of **four**
- Hold your breath for a count of **seven**
- Exhale completely through your mouth, making a whoosh sound to a count of **eight**
- This is one breath. Now inhale again and repeat the cycle three more times for a total of four breaths



# Take 5 breathing

- Stretch your hand out
- Use your pointer finger to trace your fingers up and down
- Slide up each finger slowly and slide down the other side
- Breathe in through your nose, out through your mouth
- Put it together and breathe in as you slide up and breathe out as you slide down
- Keep going until you have finished tracing your hand
- How do you feel? Are you calm or would you like to take another five breaths?



# *But I can't relax!*

Please consider: this is just a **belief**

To do:

- Tap into the part of you that knows this is needed
- Develop patience: it takes a few moments to shake off tension, & you'll need to repeat
- Recognize that anxiety wants you stay on guard
  - It's just trying to help!
  - Gently pull control back, let that part of you know *it's ok to breathe right now*



# Recognize stress amplifiers

- Major life stressors = adding a brick to the accelerator on our stress system
- Pandemic, global crises, social unrest, work, home, responsibilities, projects, losses, etc.
- More stressors, bigger reactions
- If you are feeling “reactive” – stressed out – this is your body saying:
  - *Fight!*
  - *Flee!*
  - *Freeze!*
  - These are all an effort to **make the problem go away**.
- We are all making room for new stressors all the time
- It's taxing, tiring – we need to give ourselves space





# Complete the stress cycle

- Stress takes place in a cycle: body detects threat, hits the alarm, releases stress hormones ... and then what??
- We are meant to take ourselves out of the stress reaction, discharge the tension through:
  - Movement
  - Breath work
  - Talk to others – connect with loved ones
  - Affection
  - Laugh
  - Cry
  - Sing!

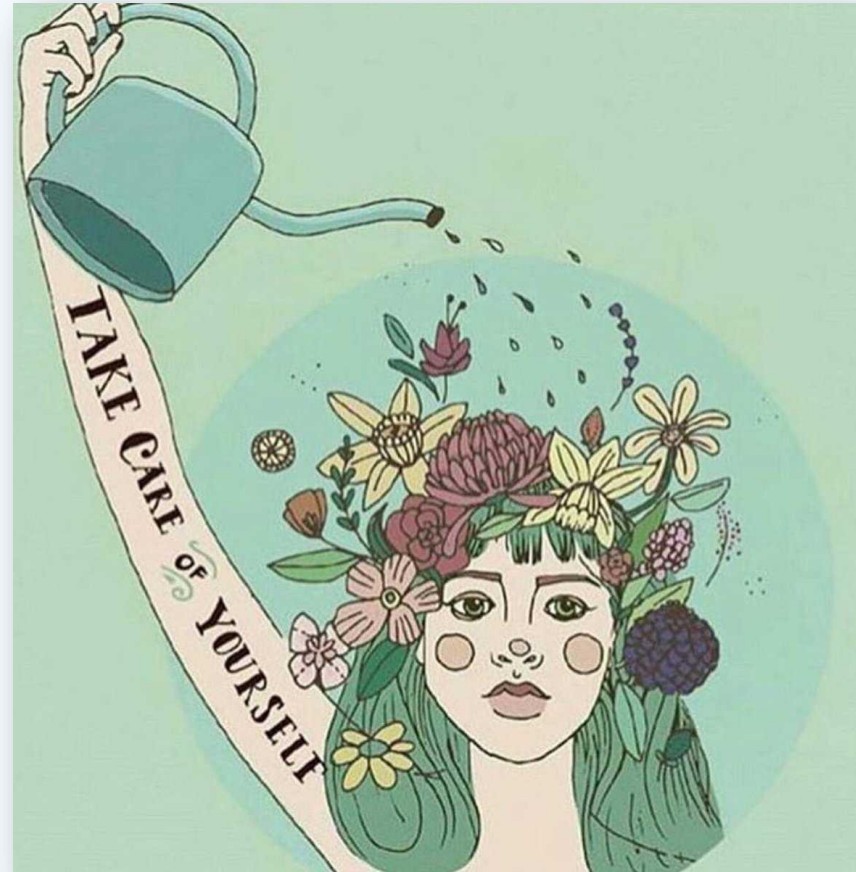
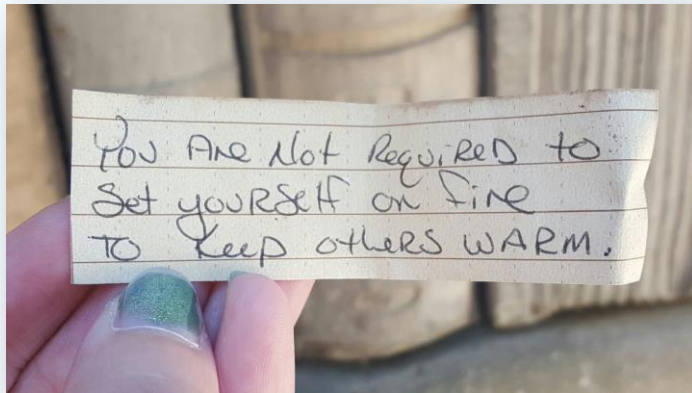


# *How do I know I've completed the stress cycle?*

- **Your body tells you**
- You might experience it as a shift in mood or mental state or physical tension, as you breathe more deeply and your thoughts relax
- You can notice that something in your body has changed, shifted in the direction of peace
- All you need to do is recognize that you feel incrementally better than you felt before you started



# Self care is important



*Self-care is giving the  
world the best of you,  
instead of what's left  
of you.*

Katie Reed

JANIVERIPPER.COM



# Be extra gentle with yourself



- Be kind to yourself and accept the emotions that you're having
- Show yourself true compassion, people are often hard on themselves for how they're coping
- Especially hard when you're robbed of your tried-and-true ways of taking care of your physical and mental health
- Science has shown that exercise, good nutrition and socializing are directly linked to emotional well-being

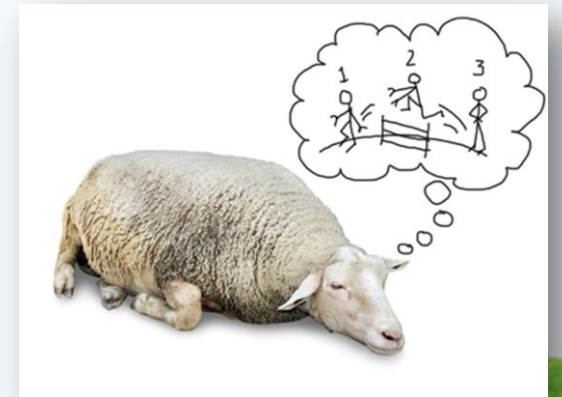
# Eat well and exercise regularly



- Maintaining a healthy diet and getting enough rest and exercise will give you more energy to deal with daily stressors
- The pandemic has disrupted our exercise routines so we aren't getting our usual stress relieving endorphins that exercise provides
- Moderate exercise like a 30-minute walk several times a week can help lower stress
- Even a 15-minute walk can lift your mood
- Elevated levels of cortisol due to ongoing stress can make you feel hungry
- You may crave sweet, fatty foods, which stimulate the brain's reward centers and dampen feelings of anxiety
- Before giving into a food craving, ask yourself :
  - Are you actually hungry or if you are feeling something else, like frustration, boredom, sadness, loneliness, etc.?
  - Once you identify and label your feelings, it's easier to make better choices

# Get plenty of sleep

- Sleep is essential to help the body stay healthy and heal, but stress can get in the way
- A lack of sleep and an abundance of stress can create a vicious cycle – lying in bed with thoughts running through your head, these swirling thoughts can keep you from dozing off
- Use good bedroom sleep hygiene – keep your room cool and dark, stay off electronics
- Use sleep and relaxation apps that block out noise





## Use relaxation techniques

- **Relaxed or deep breathing** - deep, slow breathing while concentrating on filling the lungs and relaxing muscles
- **Mental imagery or visualization** - creates peaceful and relaxing images in your mind
- **Progressive muscle relaxation** – starting either the toes or the head and progressively tighten and release all the muscles across the body resulting in an overall feeling of relaxation
- **Meditation** - learn to relax your mind and concentrate on an inner sense of calm
- **Biofeedback** -relax and control your body's response to stress by paying attention to signals from the body
- **Yoga** - focusing the mind on breathing and posture to promote relaxation and reduce fatigue



# Spend time with nature

- Connecting with nature has restorative effects on your sense of well-being
- Twenty minutes outside can measurably reduce levels of stress hormones
- Sitting near a window that provides sunlight can help improve your sleep and quality of life, which then eases anxiety and stress
- Consider taking a virtual tour of national parks or viewing live cams of waterscapes
- If you are stuck indoors, looking out at a natural setting – trees, lawn, garden – can also reduce stress symptoms, as can having household plants or windowsill herb gardens
- Even looking at still photos of nature can reduce stress



# *Make taking care of yourself a daily routine*

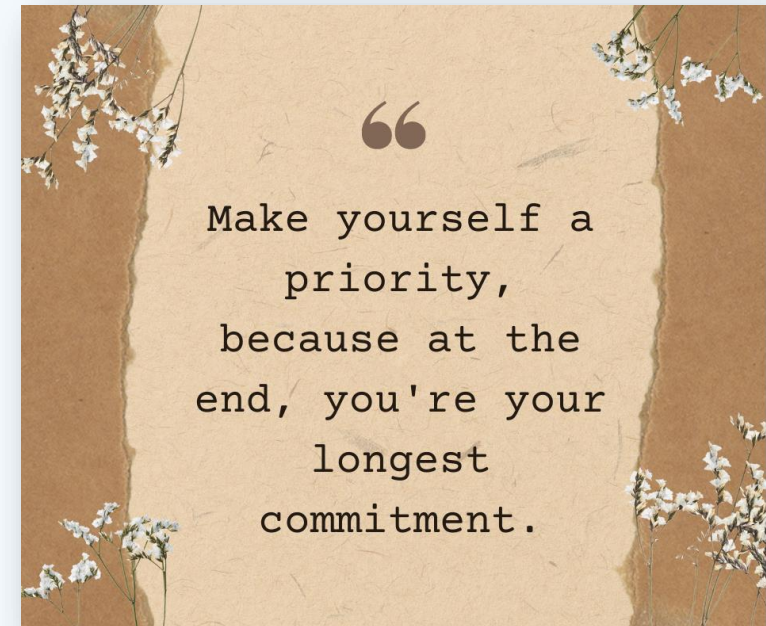
- **Schedule daily relaxing time** – make sure you prioritize time to do an activity you find relaxing, such as reading a book, gardening, or listening to music
- **Do things you enjoy** – order food from a favorite restaurant or watch your favorite television show; laughter reduces stress, so consider seeing a funny movie or reading a humorous book to help cope with stress
- **Write in a journal** - writing about the stresses and events in your life provides a private way to express your feelings and helps develop clarity
- **Learn a new hobby** - engaging in a new and challenging activity gives you a sense of accomplishment and provides a distraction from daily worries





# Make yourself a priority

- Tend to your own needs and feelings
- It's not selfish or self-indulgent to prioritizing yourself along with your responsibilities
- It might require saying "no" to requests
- Start with small changes in your routine to help build resilience to stressful circumstances
- Work in time to exercise, eat healthy foods, participate in relaxing activities and sleep
- Take time to notice the "good minutes" in each day or to do something that you enjoy, which can be a way to shift your attention and focus on the positive rather than the negative
- Schedule bath and bedtimes, and block off time to plan and prioritize tasks - additional structure can provide a daily framework that allows you to attune to your body's signals and take steps to potentially manage stress earlier than you once did



# Know when to shut it down

- After you stop obsessing about what you *should* do, find some things you *want* to do — things that take your mind off your worries during uncertain times
- Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including social media. Hearing repeatedly about the pandemic, and now the war, can be upsetting and mentally exhausting
- Some days are just about surviving — watching trashy TV, listening to gentle music, going to bed early
- Pick a time and shut it down
- That might mean zoning out with a movie, ordering takeout, letting the kids eat cereal for dinner — whatever you need to do
- Accept that some days, especially when you're under a lot of stress, you have only so much bandwidth



# Keep up your connections



- Whatever communities are most important to you – Stay in touch with family, friends and groups - the people who lift you up and point you in the right direction
- Building strong, positive relationships with loved ones and friends can provides you with needed support and acceptance in good and bad times
- Talk with people you trust about your concerns, how you are feeling, or how the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting you
- Establish other important connections by volunteering or joining a faith or spiritual community
- Do good to feel good! Helping others improves your sense of control, belonging, and self-esteem
- Look for safe ways to offer social support to others, especially if they are showing signs of stress, such as depression and anxiety
- Too much togetherness? Make sure you carve out private time for yourself, and let each person you live with do the same



# Becoming more resilient takes time and practice

Don't ignore your problems – be proactive and seek help if needed!

Figure out what needs to be done, make a plan, and take action (this will make you feel more in control)

It can take time to recover from a major setback, traumatic event or loss, know that your situation can improve if you work at it

Many people experience the same day-to-day strains related to caregiving, relationships, health, work and money so look to friends and family, as appropriate, or other trusted individuals or resources for tips and information

If you don't feel you're making progress — or you don't know where to start — consider talking to a mental health professional

With guidance, you can improve your resiliency and mental well-being





# *Talk to a health professional*

- If your thoughts, behaviors, or feelings are preventing you from functioning or being able to get through the day (Including having trouble getting out of bed, or losing interest in activities, or feeling really hopeless)
- If stress is affecting your well-being or you feel you cannot manage the stress you're experiencing
- If stress is harming your relationships or ability to work
- If you feel you may be misusing alcohol or other drugs (including prescription drugs) as a means of coping, reach out for help
- If you are being treated for a mental health condition, continue with your treatment and be aware of any new or worsening symptoms

# Important resources if you...

- Have suicidal thoughts, call the 24/7 National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
- Need help locating a mental health provider, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) offers a site that can assist you at <https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov>
- Have experienced traumatic stress (directly or indirectly experiencing life-threatening and dangerous events) should find a treatment provider who practices trauma informed care — see <https://go.usa.gov/xvydm> for details
- CalHOPE: [CalHOPE Peer-Run Warm Line](#): Call [833-317-HOPE](tel:833-317-HOPE) (4673) 24/7 for non-emergency support specific to COVID-19 stressors
- Check out [Burnout: The Secret to Unlocking the Stress Cycle](#), coauthors Emily and Amelia Nagoski
- If you don't have time, here's a great summary: <https://ideas.ted.com/emotionally-exhausted-burnout-completing-stress-response-cycle/#:~:text=In%20their%20book%20Burnout%3A%20The,effective%20way%20to%20avoid%20burnout> or go to Ideas.Ted.com and search **Feeling emotionally exhausted? 6 things you can do to release your stress**

# *Final review: ways to cope with stress*

- Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including social media
- Take care of your body
  - Take deep breaths, stretch or meditate
  - Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals
  - Exercise regularly, get plenty of sleep
  - Avoid alcohol and drugs
- Make time to unwind; try and do other activities that you enjoy
- Connect with others; talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling
- Find some new diversions or even old ones, like reading, long put-off home improvements, jigsaw puzzles. Doing this gives you new purpose and new accomplishments



# Key Points

- We experience stress when we feel threatened, and when we believe that we don't have the resources to deal with a challenging situation
- Over time, this can cause long-term health problems; and it can also affect the quality of life
- To control your stress, conduct an analysis, so that you know your most important priorities are
- Learn good time management strategies, so that you can handle your priorities effectively
- Try to let go of negative thinking habits, and find an alternative explanation by double checking your unhelpful/automatic thoughts
- Create defenses against stressful situations that you cannot control – use your network, be sure to get enough exercise and sleep, and learn how to relax

# The Empty Pickle Jar

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2MxcNldlY8w>





# *A Lesson on Life*





*When the class started he began to fill the jar with golf balls*



He then asked the students  
if the jar was full.

They agreed  
that it was.






So the professor then picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the jar.

The pebbles rolled into the open areas between the golf balls.







He asked  
the students  
again if the  
jar was full.

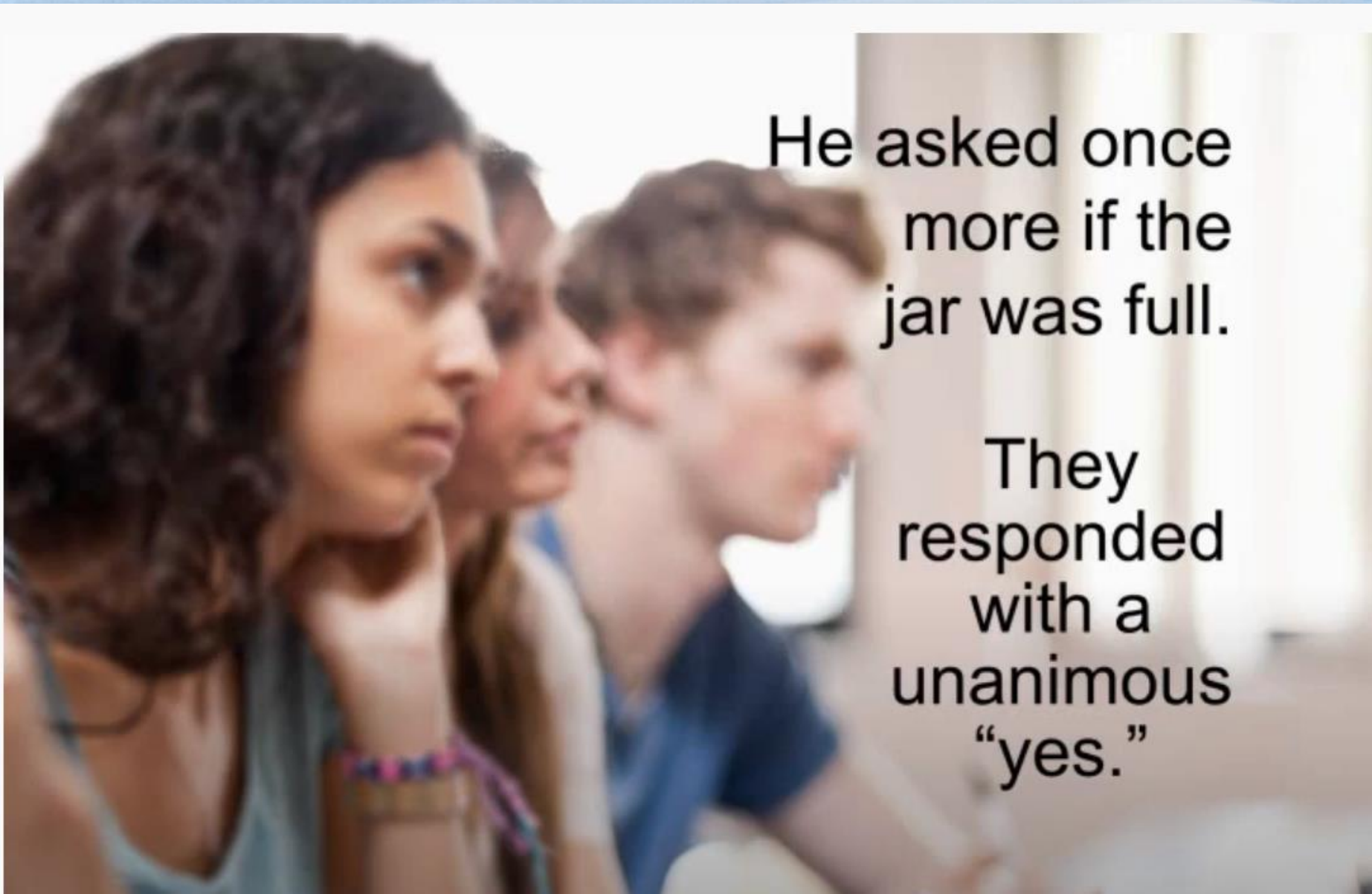
They agreed it was.

The professor next picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar.

Of course, the sand filled up everything else.







He asked once  
more if the  
jar was full.

They  
responded  
with a  
unanimous  
“yes.”





The professor then  
produced a bottle of  
chocolate milk from  
under the table.

He poured it into the  
jar effectively filling  
the empty space  
between the sand.

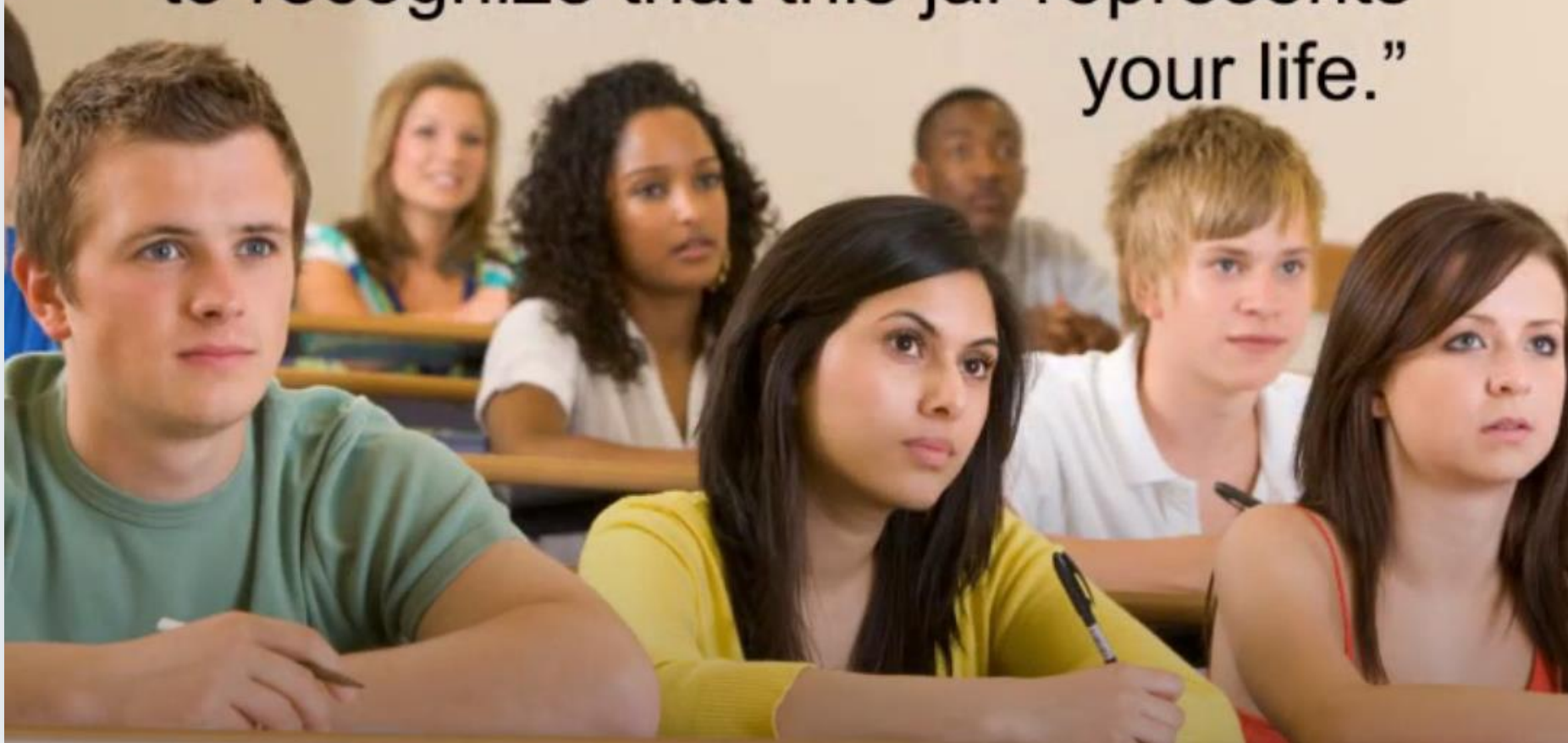




The students laughed.

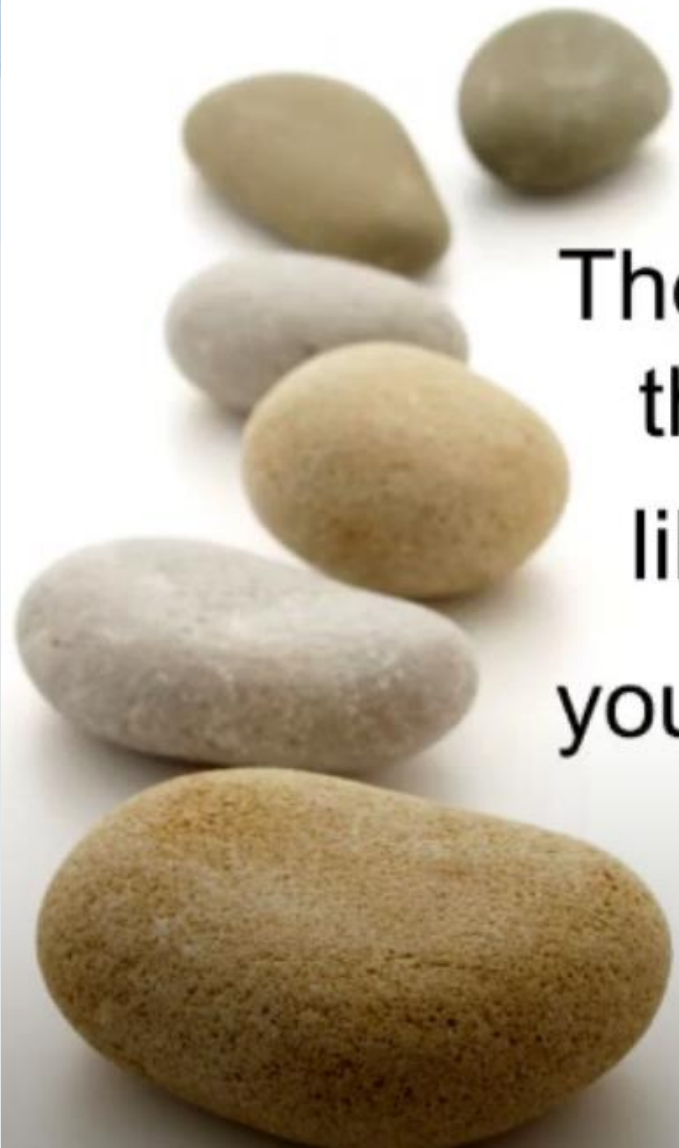


“Now,” said the professor, “I want you to recognize that this jar represents your life.”



The golf balls are the  
important things ...  
your **FAMILY**  
and **CHILDREN**,  
your **HEALTH**  
and **FRIENDS**.



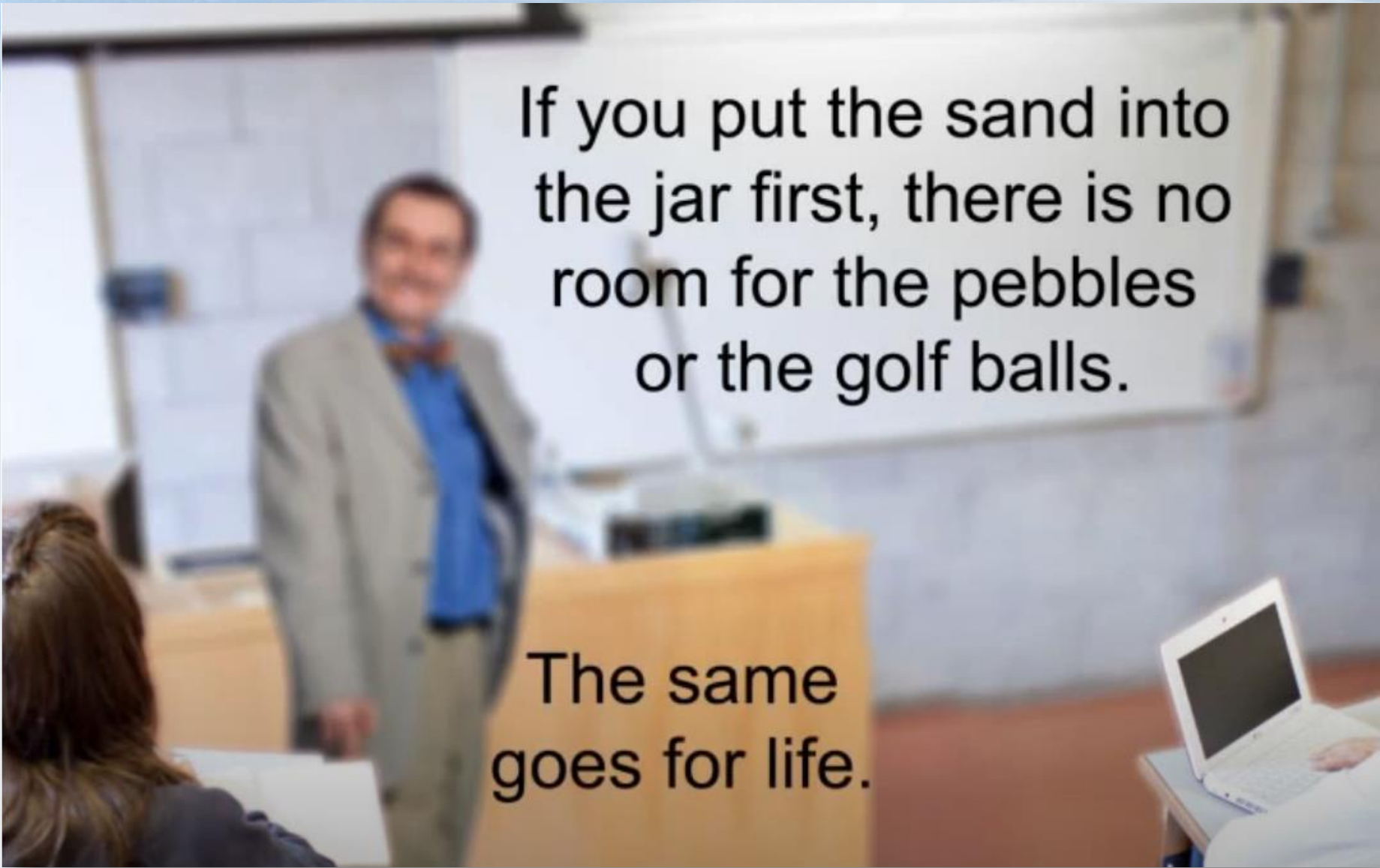


The pebbles are the other  
things that matter ...  
like your **JOB**,  
your **HOME**,  
your **CAR**.



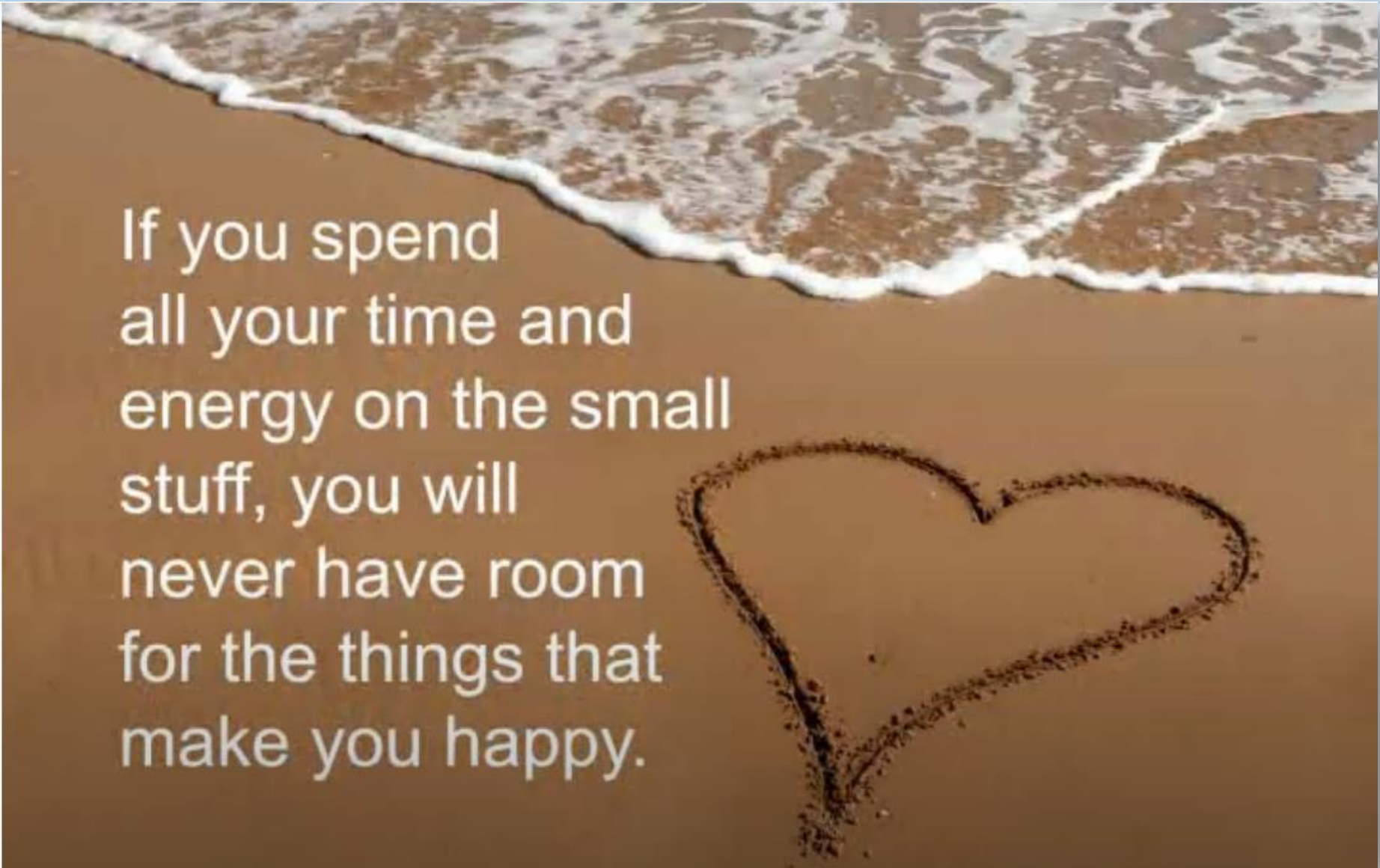
The sand is everything  
else, the small stuff.



A man in a grey suit, blue shirt, and brown bow tie stands behind a wooden podium in a classroom. He is smiling and looking towards the camera. In the background, a whiteboard is visible with some faint writing. To the left, the back of a person's head with long brown hair is visible. To the right, a white laptop is open on a desk.

If you put the sand into  
the jar first, there is no  
room for the pebbles  
or the golf balls.

The same  
goes for life.

A photograph of a beach scene. In the foreground, a large heart is drawn in the wet sand. Above the heart, the ocean waves are breaking onto the shore, creating white foam. The background shows a clear blue sky. The entire image is framed by a decorative border with blue and green wavy patterns at the top and bottom.

If you spend  
all your time and  
energy on the small  
stuff, you will  
never have room  
for the things that  
make you happy.





Play with your  
children, get  
regular checkups,  
enjoy dinner with  
friends and family.

There will  
always be time to  
clean the house.



Take care of the golf  
balls first, the things  
that really matter.

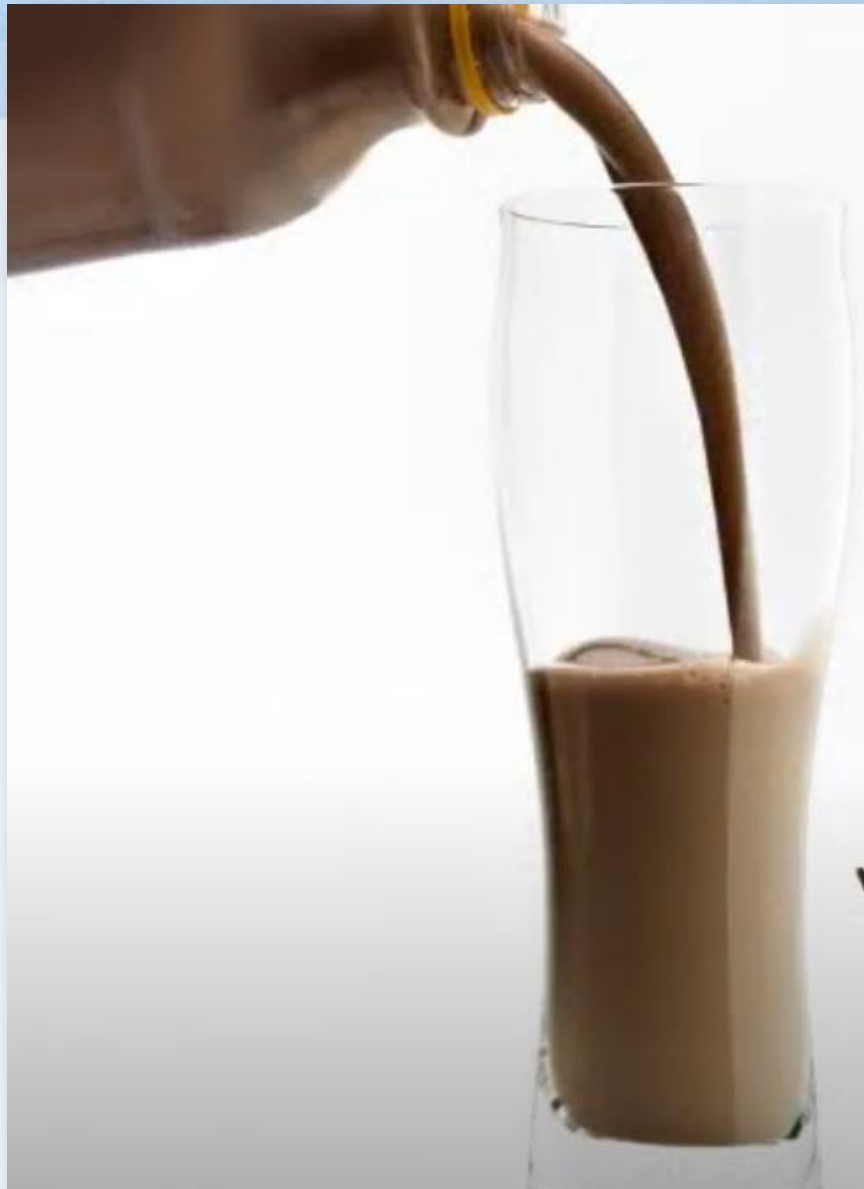


Set your priorities ...



**THE REST  
IS JUST  
SAND.**





One student asked,  
“what about the  
chocolate milk?”



The professor responded, "No matter how full your life may seem, there's always room for chocolate."



Remember  
every day is a gift ...  
and the quality of your  
life is your gift to yourself.





# Thank you! Any questions?



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