

# **Coping with Cancer-related Stress**

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# What is Stress?

An uncomfortable feeling of doom and anxiety which can impair a person's ability to cope and enjoy life.

# Coping with Cancer-related Stress

## Questions you need to answer

Why are you here?

What is your personality type?

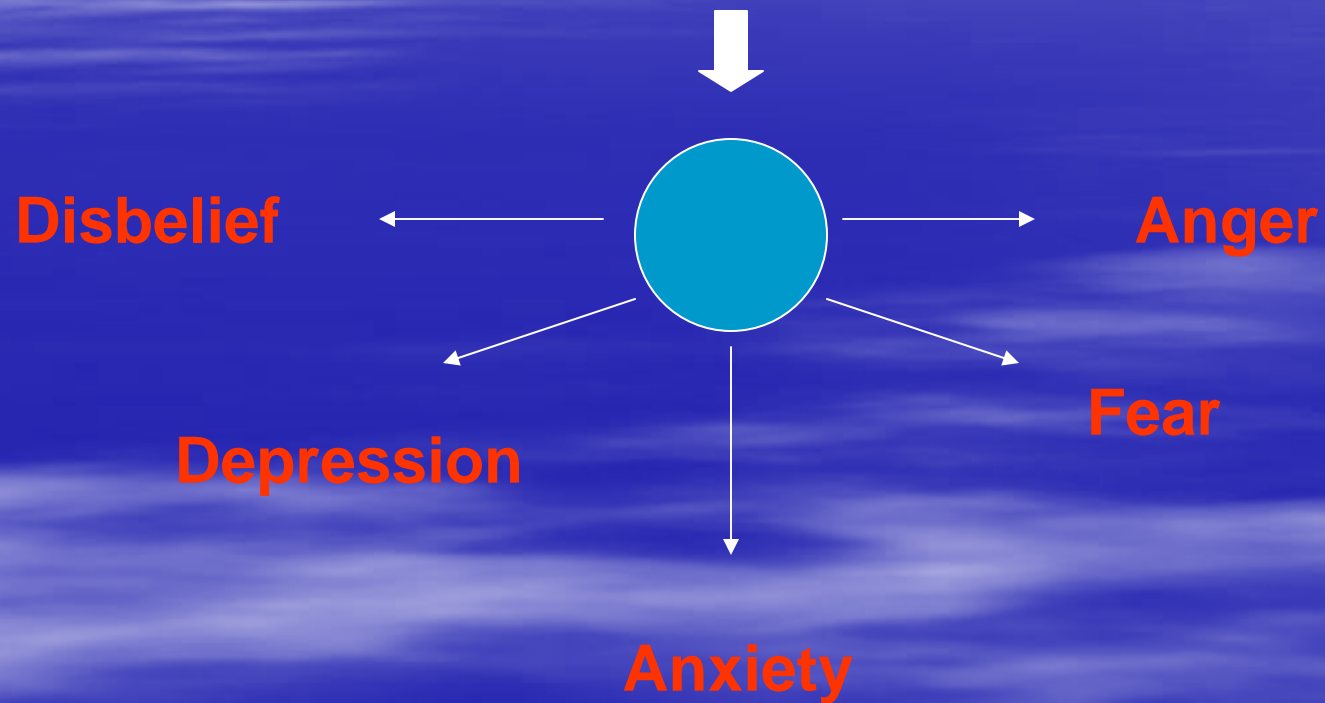
How have you coped with other stresses in your life?

How do you explain your situation?

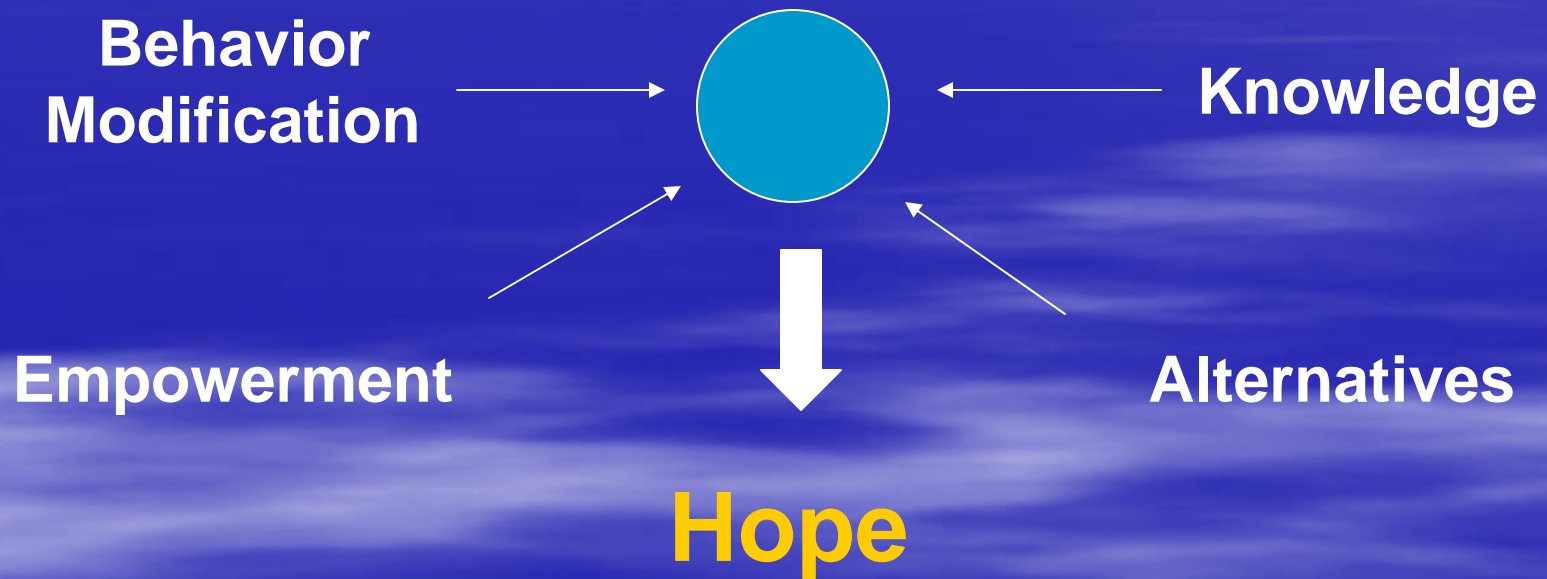
Who around you can help?

Are you ready for the challenge?

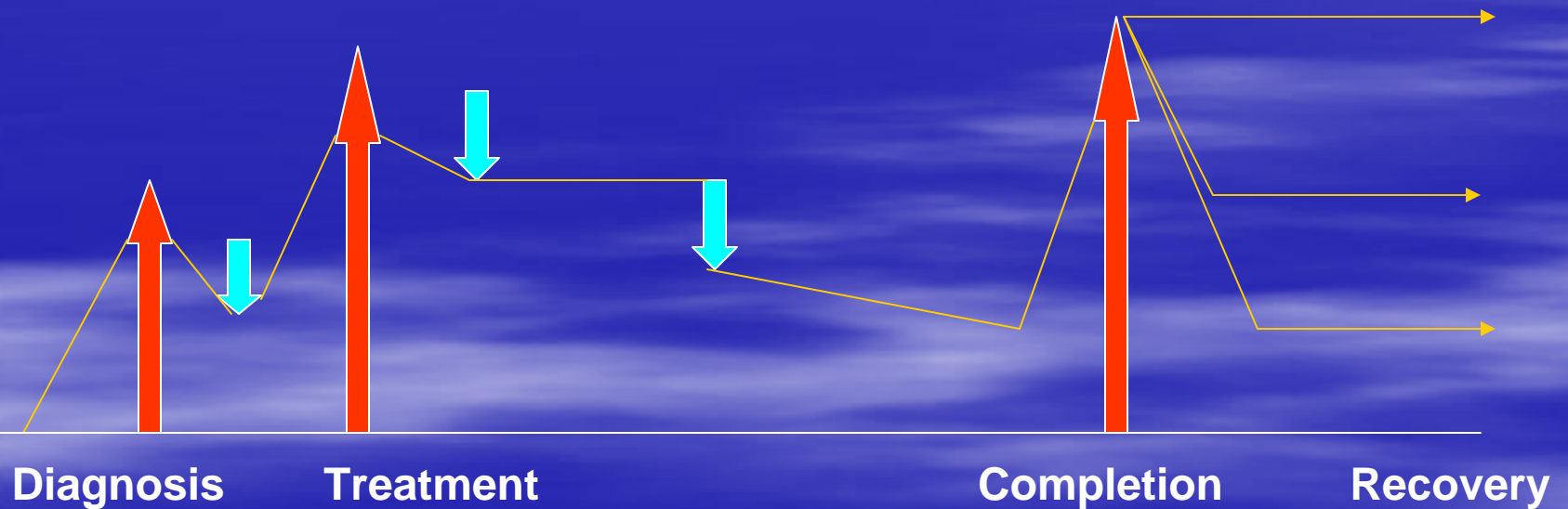
# Cancer Diagnosis



# Cancer Diagnosis



# Periods of High Stress



# How to Give Bad News

- Genuine empathy and concern
- Be confident and clear about the information
- Gauge the amount of information to give
- Choose the right words
- Do not be hurried
- Pause
- Address fear, anxiety and offer hope

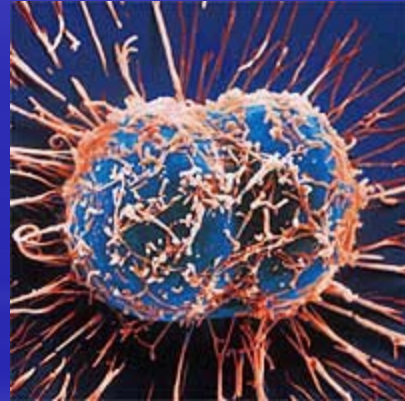
# Triggers of Stress

## Meeting the Office Staff

- **Office environment**
- **Greeting by receptionist**
- **Compassion of the nurse**
- **Gentleness of technician**
- **Demeanor of physician**
- **Billing staff**

# Stressors

## Misconceptions



Cancer cells are not powerful and intelligent  
they are weak and defective

# Stressors

Misconception



Cancer is not a death sentence

# Stressors

Misconceptions



Cancer recurrence is inevitable

# Stressors

Misconceptions



You are not less of a person!

# “Novel” Techniques to De-Stress

**Reiki**



**Massage**



**Acupuncture**



# “Novel” Technique to De-Stress

Yoga



Meditation



Hypnosis



# Adjunctive Healing

## Reiki



- Practitioner acts as a channel of energy which promotes the body's natural healing
- It can never do harm

# Adjunctive Healing

## Massage

- **It does not facilitate the spread of cancer**
- **Helps reduce pain, anxiety and some studies show an improved immune function**

# Adjunctive Healing

## Acupuncture

- Restores the flow of energy which maintains homeostasis
- Used to treat N/V, pain, hot flashes
- Studies have shown ↑ in T-cell and NK cell activity and ↑ IL-2
- Covered by many insurance companies

# Adjunctive Healing

## Yoga

- **Originated in India 5000 years ago**
- **The word means union**
- **It creates a balance through strength and flexibility**
- **Used to treat stress, insomnia, high BP, smoking addiction**

# Adjunctive Healing

## Meditation

- **A practice of quieting the self and through thought, contemplation and reflection achieve harmony**
- **Useful for depression, anxiety and addictions**

# Adjunctive Healing

## Hypnosis

- **A relaxed state of concentration**
- **Suggestibility is increased and can correct maladaptive behaviors**
- **Myths: You will divulge secrets**
  - You can get 'stuck' in a trance**
  - You can be made to do things**

# Road Map to Stress Relief

- Identify your enemy
- Educate yourself about your condition
- Fight Hopelessness
- Use others for support and do not isolate
- Accept change

# Road Map to Stress Relief

- Explore new ways to cope
- Become an active participant in your recovery
- Maintain intimacy and affection
- Find others with the same concerns

# Conclusions

- **No one is ever free of stress**
- **Stress can be a positive motivator and not your enemy**
- **Accept what you can not change but do not give up**
- **How you cope may help everyone around you**
- **You can be happy and enjoy life**