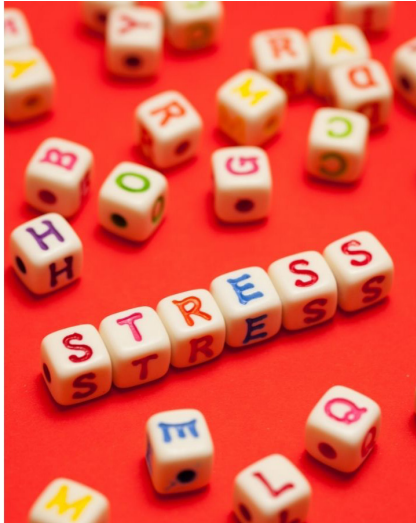# So, What is Stress?

Caraday
Healthcare

The Caraday *Way*

Once you understand stress, it's to get ahead of these feelings and find ways to reduce stress that work for you. At Caraday, we encourage team members and residents to find healthy ways to manage stress – it's the Caraday Way!

> *"Making sure that I live my life with no regrets, not stressing over the little things and planning ahead."*

Laura Pipes
Regency House

There are good and bad kinds of stress, and unfortunately, most of us are probably more familiar with negative stress. So, what is stress, and what physically causes it?

Stress is caused when there is a perceived threat in the environment. We commonly refer to it as the "fight or flight" response because our autonomic nervous system is activated, and a hormone called epinephrine is released into our bloodstream. Our body internally prepares itself to flee from the threat or shift all of our energy towards confronting the threat.

Stressors, also known as the stimuli that cause stress, can be various things in our lives – significant life changes such as a move or job change, the loss of a friend or family member, or an illness. It can even be simple things, such as work deadlines, relationships, and family responsibilities.

Stress manifests itself in our bodies and comes out in different ways that may include:

- High blood pressure
- Muscle tenseness
- A slowed digestive system
- Decreased immune system
- Dizziness
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Lack of energy
- Nervousness

If stress is not dealt with, it can present itself in more long-term and potentially dangerous ways to the body. It can create depression, anxiety, diabetes, gastrointestinal issues, heart disease, or obesity. For these reasons, it is best to deal with the root cause of your stress head-on.

How can stress possibly be good? Well, have you ever felt that jolt of energy or fast racing heart as you try to complete a task on time, ride a rollercoaster, or compete for a promotion? Stress can be considered beneficial when it helps your body allocate energy toward accomplishing a task and completing it more effectively. Good stress isn't a response to a threat or fear, but rather when we feel excited—it keeps us feeling alive and excited about life.

Sit down, reflect, and identify your stressors today. Identifying key stressors in your life is the first step toward finding your new inner peace and living a healthier lifestyle.