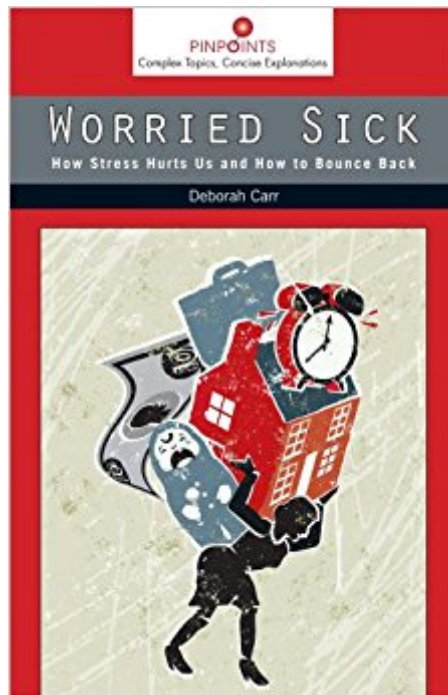




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# Worried Sick: How Stress Hurts Us And How To Bounce Back (Pinpoints)



## Synopsis

Comments like “I’m worried sick” convey the conventional wisdom that being “stressed out” will harm our health. Thousands of academic studies reveal that stressful life events (like a job loss), ongoing strains (like burdensome caregiving duties), and even daily hassles (like traffic jams on the commute to work) affect every aspect of our physical and emotional well-being. Cutting through a sea of scientific research and theories, *Worried Sick* answers many questions about how stress gets under our skin, makes us sick, and how and why people cope with stress differently. Included are several standard stress and coping checklists, allowing readers to gauge their own stress levels. We have all experienced stressful times—maybe a major work deadline or relocating cross-country for a new job—when we came out unscathed, feeling not only emotionally and physically healthy, but better than we did prior to the crisis. Why do some people withstand adversity without a scratch, while others fall ill or become emotionally despondent when faced with even a seemingly minor hassle? Without oversimplifying the discussion, Deborah Carr succinctly provides readers with key themes and contemporary research on the concept of stress. Understanding individuals’ own sources of strength and vulnerability is an important step toward developing personal strategies to minimize stress and its unhealthy consequences. Yet Carr also challenges the notion that merely reducing stress in our lives will help us to stay healthy. Many of the stressors that we face in everyday life are not our problems alone; rather, they are symptoms of much larger, sweeping problems in contemporary U.S. society. To readers interested in the broad range of chronic, acute, and daily life stressors facing Americans in the twenty-first century, as well as those with interest in the many ways that our physical and emotional health is shaped by our experiences, this brief book will be an immediate and quick look at these significant issues. View a three minute video of Deborah Carr speaking about *Worried Sick*.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"In *Worried Sick*, Deborah Carr provides a fascinating, detailed look at five broad factors that help determine why some people crumble and others bounce back." (The Globe and Mail)"In *Worried Sick*, [Carr] looks at stress from its definition, including its physical and mental effects, to why some people roll with the punches and others cannot. The final chapter is a tip-sheet for beating, or at least taming, stress." (Rutgers Magazine)

DEBORAH CARR is a professor of sociology at Rutgers University and a faculty member at the Institute for Health, Health Care Policy, and Aging Research. Her work focuses on dying and end-of-life issues and the effects of family-related stressors on health and well-being. She is the author and editor of numerous works, such as *Encyclopedia of the Life Course and Human Development* (2009) and *Spousal Bereavement in Later Life* (2006).

Fascinating review of current and relevant information on how stress affects our bodies. Cutting-edge material that will help readers better understand and navigate the various challenges they face.

*Worried Sick* is a short book, quick to read, but with no shortage of sociological substance. This makes it an excellent antidote to pop psychology and self-help books. For readers seeking a follow-up or reinforcement of Sapolsky's *Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers*, Third Edition, this is your book. One hopes that the publisher, Rutgers University Press, will expand this public-oriented Pinpoints series to include further entries by social scientists. The author incorporates quite a wide number of theoretical perspectives, from the Stress Process Model to social role-theory to neurobiological understandings of stress. The book is written for nonspecialists, but the level of interdisciplinary synthesis should be of interest to scholars of the field. Every concept introduced in the text usually comes with a clear definition (including, for example, definitions of stress, mental

health, stress proliferation, coping, personality, role-conflict, among others). So then, what does the book have to say about stress? 1. There are several different kinds of stress (life events, chronic strains, hassles, etc.). 2. People respond to stress very differently based on a combination of social and psychological factors. 3. Some stress can be good, however, stress also can contribute to the formation of a variety of mental health disorders, especially depression and anxiety, as well as general physical decline. 4. Levels of exposure to stress are patterned, depending quite drastically upon social location, including one's social class, level of education, etc. 5. Stress and its effects are prone to diffuse both through the individual lifecourse and across the individual's social network. 6. Reducing the negative effects of stress is likely best achieved through both public policy and the development of better individual coping skills (her last chapter details a few of the latter). I'm leaving quite a bit out, especially regarding the 'how' of these relations, the 'how stress hurts us' part. I learned a good deal about various 'strategies of coping' too. This would make a good undergraduate textbook. I am also left with the strong desire to give the book to other non-sociological members of my family. Full review at <http://www.madandcivilized.com/2015/06/review-deborah-carrs-worried-sick.html>

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