Introduction: So I would like to welcome Dr. Walt Schafer here. He is Professor Emeritus here at Chico State from the Department of Sociology. He's written extensively on stress reduction along with being a dedicated community member. He's very well respected is committed to enhancing the lives of older adults, and we are so very appreciative of him being here. I know you have some fans here who may want some autographing. And so, I'm just so honored, he's a mentor to me, as well. Some of the courses that he had taught generously and allowed me to teach throughout the years, so let's welcome Dr. Walt Schafer.

Walt Schafer: Thank you for being here. It's an honor to be here and particularly have the Dean walk in when I'm beginning. I was honored to teach at Chico State for 30 years including my primary course, which was a course called "Human Stress." And I developed that course in the mid '70s. It became a general education upper division option. I don't know if it still is, but in the '90s, we had 800-900 people a semester take that class. We had multiple sections and it was great fun and a great opportunity to bring together ideas from a variety of disciplines including Sociology, but also Psychology, Exercise Physiology, Economics, Medical Science, Behavioral Medicine into a framework that allowed us to better understand the experience of human stress and the circumstances that both enhance the likelihood of stress being a problem and decrease that likelihood. So I retired 11 1/2 years ago, continued teaching three more years through spring of 2004 and I've been away from this material except as it applies in my own life, so this is a nice opportunity to kind of go back and review some of the material that I studied and taught, and wrote about.
And my life has taken me in different directions as I'll share here. But I would like to welcome you.
And so let's consider this kind of a mini workshop and stress is an ever-present part of life and I don't know whether it's really increasing or decreasing, but all kinds of circumstances that are familiar to us.
Overload, feeling overwhelmed.
Dealing with time urgency and time demands.
Conflicts between people and among people.
Sometimes even to this extent, although they seem to be handling it with kind of good humor. And the results, as we will see, can be pretty trying for both men and women.
So the purpose of this session is to improve your ability to handle stressful challenges perhaps with some skills you didn't come with and some additional understanding. So at the beginning I like to kind of set a framework for stress and the management of stress and let me begin with the term, “Wellness.” There are a couple definitions that I use and that I really work on in my own life as my kind of goal.
And here's one, you know I'm not interested in just surviving and avoiding stress. I'm interesting in something more positive, which is to be all I can be in my life and I assume that's true for you or you wouldn't be here, and enjoying the process of doing that. And in the later years of my work I really began to shift toward just an intrapersonal focus to a focus on promoting this in others as well; from the people closest to us, family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, out to the broader community and the broader world. That's really what wellness includes.
Another definition that's very similar, another way to say it is, maximizing ones potentials while enjoying the process and maintaining optimal health along the way and I might add promoting the same in others.
But a wellness lifestyle includes positive habits in each of these areas and I'm not going to take time to go into detail about each of these. But I'd like to mention the spiritual because I believe that a real key part of a wellness lifestyle is having a sense of purpose and meaning. That's what I mean by spiritual. And we know from studies that I did in my earlier years that people who have a strong sense of purpose and meaning are substantially more likely to report better health, a higher level of personal satisfaction, happiness, and lower distress scores. And along the way today I'm going to show you a 14-minute videotape of kind of my own testimonial of purpose and meaning. It has to do with work I've been doing for the last several years through Rotary, in northern Tanzania. And we have recently completed a videotape summarizing the work we've done with collaboration of a number of other Rotary clubs in northern California and two Rotary clubs in northern Tanzania, and lessons that we've learned for other Rotary clubs in doing this kind of work. And so this is one aspect of my own sense of purpose and meaning to continue to contribute.
Now, the healthcare crisis is a real crisis as we know and costs keep rising, and as a share of our total national budget, our national expenditures healthcare continues to go up. And, you know, the analysis of what we do about this largely have to do with reducing medical costs, medical expenses, but it seems to me we also need to focus on reducing the demand for medical expenses. And you know that's, I think, inadequately talked about in policy circles, but it seems to me by focusing on improving the wellness lifestyle of the American population is an important avenue for getting a hold of the healthcare crisis. And this is for each of us to think about in our own lives and as a policy matter; I think it's an important approach.
Let's turn to the stress part. And I'd like to spend just a few minutes clarifying what this all means and then go to some framework for managing stress and some specific techniques that might be useful for you. The term stress is used in many ways. And the definition that I use is arousal of mind and body in response to demands made upon them. Now, there are three key features of this definition I would like to emphasize. First, stress is ever present when it’s defined this way. It's part of living. As we interact with our environment, as we adapt to demands called "stressors," we're constantly experiencing arousal of our emotions, our body, and behavior as we respond. Second, it is multidimensional. Stress is not just the physical response, but it also includes our response in our thinking, our emotions, our behavior. And third, notice that it's really a neutral term. There's nothing intrinsically positive or negative about stress, it depends. And I'm going to elaborate on that a bit.
Stress basically has two sides, positive stress. Position stress is stress that is helpful. Helpful arousal -- it helps us respond quickly, for example, in physical emergencies. If you're driving a car, riding a bicycle as I do a lot, averting accidents, fighting a fire, administering CPR to a heart attack victim, stress is helpful. It helps us be up and aroused. Stress is helpful for performing well under pressure. There was a fellow a week ago in a golf tournament. Gail, maybe you read about this. This rookie on the PGA tour led after the first round and during the second round he shot a 64, eight under par while experiencing a series of panic attacks on the course. He thought he was going to die. And it was so interesting. I mean literally, he had paramedics accompanying him and yet he was able to persevere that day. He was he was taken on a gurney to the hospital immediately after the round, still thought he was going to die, spent the night in the hospital, had one hour of sleep, came out for the third round, shot one under par, came back on Sunday and shot four under par, and won the golf tournament. It was an incredible story of both on the negative side about stress arousal interfering with his well-being, at the same time knowing how to handle it and coming back and being able to manage that. He said on the third or fourth hole of that third round, after coming out of the hospital, he began to experience some of the same tightness in his chest. He said he worked on it, used his mind, got a hold of his body and went on and shot a good round. So that's positive stress as he was able to use his arousal to win $800-some thousand. Positive stress helps with deadlines, helps us finish a term paper when you need it. In getting ready for today, I mean as I mentioned I've kind of been out of contact with this material and I've been working on it the last several days, got up early this morning. There's nothing wrong with that, that's positive stress. Stress helps realize potential over a period of time in athletics, in academics, in our careers. That's positive stress. Positive
stress can even be enjoyable.
Negative stress, on the other hand, is what we call distress and I'll come back to that in a moment. That's where it does harm. In fact, let me go here to distress. Distress is too much or too little arousal resulting in harm to mind or body. And on the too little, too little arousal can result in boredom, stagnation, inadequate arousal. And I don't know if any of you've been there lately as students and faculty, but you know what I mean from different times in your life. But the more serious problem in terms of public health and issues of well-being generally, is too much arousal. That has substantial costs personally and in our society; tremendous amount of cost in the work sector; stress-related illnesses of various kinds, and we won't take time today to go into those in detail. This is what we want to prevent.
One other point I would like to make here at the beginning and that is that we think about stress as an individual phenomenon, characteristic of the person, but in understanding stress and approaching the management of stress, we need to focus on the social context. What are the groups, the community settings, the national settings, our cultural settings that increase or decrease the rates of distress? And when we turn attention to this, we then begin to focus not only on how we respond to stressful circumstances, but what we can do in the lives of children, young students for example to improve the school environment and the way families interact with schools. And what can we do in the workplace to create work environments that maximize positive potential and minimize stress-related illnesses? So I'm not going to focus on that a lot here, but we need to think about stress as a social phenomenon as not just as a characteristic of the person.
The other point I would like to make here is that positive and negative stress are both essential for personal growth. And I'd like to read you a vignette from a paper from a student several years ago and I quote, "Personal Growth" -- this was in response to a unit that I did on this in my class and in my book. "Personal Growth through pushing your limits is something I have been doing physically and mentally during the last six years. This has been the most difficult effort I have ever made, but the most rewarding experience which I wouldn't trade for anything in the world." This is a female. "I am now a completely different person than I was and it took pushing through a "brick wall" of many phobias, severe lack of self-esteem, and self-confidence, type E behavior," which we'll get to here in our second hour, "which was a cover-up for my insecurities and a life-threatening disease. I came from being a doormat, terrified of everything and everybody to a self-confident, healthy, and well-balanced individual." This was a long time ago. "In 1984, I discovered for the first time that I had some choices in my health status, started listening to my body to discover what it was telling me and took one step at a time to make changes. As I pushed to get well, I discovered there were many more steps I could take in my emotional status, as well. I see the last several years as climbing a ladder as I struggle to climb out of my pit and discover on the outside -- and discover life on the outside of my "prison.". Every step I took was terrifying because it was new to me, but my survival depended on climbing out. Gradually, I discovered I survived each step. The steps got slightly easier and I saw it as the beginning of an adventure. Now, the adventure keeps me going and I see the obstacles as "rocks to climb on for a better view instead of boulders to crush me."" I really like that. "There is no stopping now as I see life as an incredible opportunity to discover ever new ideas."
The more I learn the less I know because each open door opens to many more open doors." And I would like to end a quote and I've always been very much appreciated that.

And you know, personal growth, through pushing our limits, we don't stay -- we don't grow and progress professionally, in athletics, in our personal relationships by being always comfortable. We need sometimes to have temporary distress. I mean that was true when I was a runner and marathon training and training on the track. You push your limits into a zone of pain. Your body adapts by essentially saying if you're going to do this to me I'm going to come back prepared to do even more and that's the adaptation of stress-recovery, stress-recovery. And that's how you move to higher, higher levels. My granddaughter is a competitive swimmer. She goes through three-and-a-half hours every afternoon. She's 16. And that's how she gets better. I'm going to brag a little. She just signed a swimming scholarship to UCLA and made the Olympic trials this summer at 16. So she knows what's this is about since age eight. And I'll stop talking about her. And by the way, you know, it's interesting to think about her, you know, about social context. You know, it's easy to think well she's the way she is purely because of her internal drive and discipline, and focus and so on, but there's a social context to this. She has parents who are in athletics themselves and who have been devoted to her and her younger brother, who's a baseball soccer player. I mean you wouldn't believe the number of weekends that they devote to her. It's costly. There's a social context to her success and to entirely focus on her as an individual is to really miss it. It's her as an individual, but a lot of other individuals didn't have that same opportunity and that has important policy implications too if you know what I mean. It's not just individuals, it's improving the context in which individuals can thrive and grow, and push their limits.
Now let's turn to the term stressors, challenging circumstances, events, even internal expectations or expectations of others. And there, really, we can kind of categorize this into two main types; major life events, job changes, loss of income, divorce, death in family, for example. And the second are what we really call daily hassles, the minor daily hassles of life that also contribute. And I think, for example, is a study a few years ago, a gallop poll asked which of the following sometimes or frequently cause you stress. Here was the ranking. Your job was number one, money problems, family, housework, health problems, healthcare. And we asked the same among students and here's what students listed: Exams, term papers, conflicting demands, meeting new people, too little money, noisy neighbors, conflict between job and school, parking problems, career decisions, sexual encounters, parental pressure, college bureaucracy. Some of these are kind of major, but they mainly are small daily hassles of daily life as a college student and again, major life events and daily hassles.
And I might as you, in your notes right now or in your mind, what are two or three of your own major stressors currently, last few months? What are two or three of your most common daily hassles? Anybody like to share? What’s a major life challenges or stressors?

**Audience:** My daughter and her family moved from California after 40 years to Montana. She and my grandson stayed with us since April and they finally left my driveway at the end of October. And I thought, “Oh, good bye,” and I just -- I can hardly hold it together and I’ve never had that reaction before. We communicate via email, phone, and text but for some reason that complete and utter void that just smacked me in my face. It took me a couple of days to kind of come around to the fact that, you know, she's a grown woman. Having been an only child and be that far away for the first time in my life and hers, I was really surprised by the reaction.

**Walt Schafer:** Boy, I appreciate that. I had some of the same reaction when my younger daughter when to college. Not the same extent because it's expected, and her point, just to summarize, daughter moving to Montana as an adult and as an only child and the not only moving, but moving out of your home where she'd been living temporarily. You described that very well, I appreciate that. And that probably continues to some extent. Yeah, yeah, I appreciate that. What’s another major daily hassle or major life event that somebody would like to describe?

**Audience:** My father passed away and now I'm taking care of my mom who has Alzheimer's. I live four houses down, but I've managed for it to be all the time care.

**Walt Schafer:** Yeah, yeah, okay, thank you for sharing that. That's a combination of major life event and a lot of daily hassles that go along with it. Okay now, now stress is sometimes used to refer to the pressures, but I use the term stressors to refer to the expectations, the
circumstances, the demands and stress to refer to the response.
And the response is physical, emotional, behavioral.
But in between is something that is called in the field, hardiness and that is, a given stressor does not automatically result in distress. It depends. It depends on a number of factors and that's what we want to focus on when we talk about managing stress and that's hardiness.
"Hardiness" -- dictionary definitions, the one I like the best is the last one. I looked it up again just last night. The ability to endure difficult conditions, that's hardiness. First one is also pretty good; the property of being strong and healthy in constitution. The term "resilience," or resiliency is another term that is used now a lot. In fact, that is used probably in the literature more than hardiness. Resilience is the ability to survive tough situations and in fact, to bounce back and perhaps even thrive, but I'll use the term hardiness.
Now, I’d like to point out that research that I’ve done suggests that people who are high on measures of hardiness experience less distress and even thrive when facing challenges.
Here, for example, is a list of factors that were significantly correlated in a study of 284 students several years ago here on this campus. And we have a measure of hardiness and then measures of each of these other variables. And you can see that if you score high on hardiness, you're a much better off individual in terms of how you respond to challenge and difficulty. It's a very impressive list of scores, both avoiding lower on the negatives; illness and distress and higher on the positives.
So this really does mean something. I, over time, developed what I call the ten Cs of hardiness. I'd like to focus the rest of our session, most of it, on some of these. We won't have time to do all of them. But conditioning refers to taking care of ourselves physically, caring, social support. The middle, challenge, control, confidence, commitment refers to a set of attitudes, perspectives, coping with the stresses of daily living and with temporary distress and then creating calmness and creativity, and competence. If we're high on each of these 10, it decreases the likelihood of distress emotionally and physically, distress illnesses in the face of adversity. I'm going to be bringing this back up here several times. I'll let those of you who are writing it down go ahead if you'd like. And in fact, my hypothesis is if you have the first two, conditioning and caring, increases the likelihood you're going to have the next four. That in turn increases the likelihood of positive coping and that's going to increase the likelihood of the last three.
All right, now I'd like to focus on these four right now for the next period of time here.
And this is a set of attitudes or perspectives and I'd like to define each of them. Challenge is loving challenge and people who are high in challenge, who are high in the sense of challenge, love challenge, rise to the occasion, turn change and adversity into opportunity rather than hating change, feeling overwhelmed easily. People who are high in a sense of challenge really thrive on it and even welcome it. And you know, I would guess that all of you, this is a university setting; you had to have this in order to get here. And my guess is that most of your would score high in this.
Commitment. People who are high in commitment are highly engaged. The opposite of this is alienation. People who are committed love what they do, are totally into it, and make a maximum effort.
Control is a sense that one is able to influence events and how you react to them. The opposite of this is helplessness. And again, this is a matter of perspective, matter of self-talk, matter of how we think about the circumstances that we encounter.
And confidence is a strong belief in my ability to handle adversity. The opposite is self-doubt. This is a pretty healthy set of attitudes isn’t it? And the hardiness literature focuses especially on the first three of these, and the fourth is there’s a separate body of literature that includes confidence. And so I think that these are really worth striving for and conveying to our children.
I'd like to ask you right now, let's do a little self examination. What score would you give yourself on one to 10 on each of these, one being low, five middle, 10 high. Take a minute and give yourself a score on each of these. Any comments, observations? You might also ask, "What is my greatest strength and my greatest weakness among these four?" Yes? So welcoming challenge can sometimes lead you into foolishness -- so good point. You know, with each of these, I think they can be too much, as well.
Okay, now the four qualities of hardiness result from our habits of self-talk and that's what I'd like to focus on here.
Self-talk in internal dialog. We have conversations going on in our heads constantly. It is also our interpretation of events and assumptions that guide our interpretations. I'll elaborate on these here in a bit. As we move throughout every day of our lives, we are interpreting what is happening around us and interpreting our own responses to them. Driving here this morning, someone pulled into my lane, I had to slow down. My interpretation could have been, "Well that SOB," you know, and it also happened on the way in. I live way up in Upper Bear Creek Canyon and a car was kind of tailgating me. And I could have been, you know, pretty upset about that. Instead, I pulled over in a driveway and let him go by. And I could continue at the pace I wanted to drive. That's a matter of interpretation and it's that way every moment, every hour of every day. We interpret events.
So this is just a summary and I taught a course in stress management at a Hospital for 13 years to the community and to cardiac rehab patients. And you know, I had people in my class who were elderly and the discovery that number one, I make my own misery through my thinking and number two, I can do something about that, were two revolutionary ideas even to senior citizens who had had same patterns of thinking and responding for decades. And their lives became better, maybe not dramatically, but they began to be aware that their responses were not set in stone; they were a result of what they thought. I was younger when I taught that class and I thought all those old people and here I am. And I'd like to make the point that self-talk is self-fulfilling. If you believe that the world is made up of hostile, incompetent, foolish people, that's probably about what you'll get back. And if you think the world is made of people who are reasonably decent and are a mixture of good and bad, that's probably about what you'll get. The same is true of self-expectations and then self-talk can be self-regulated.
Now, I'd like to focus on this a little bit more. One of the things that is helpful is recognizing common patterns of negative self-talk. And here are some of them. Awfulizing, you know, turning just kind of events that are challenging into something awful and terrible, and with a pattern of going around thinking that way a lot about other people and events. Catastrophizing, expecting that the worst is almost certainly going to happen. And there are some who make themselves miserable through that pattern. Polarized thinking -- people are either good or bad, black and white, either or. Do any of you recognize any of these in anybody you know? How about in yourself? You know, all the work I did, I had over 1200 people take my class, a 10-session class at the Hospital over 10 years. The class was called Reducing Perfectionism, Irritability, and Hurry Sickness. And about 60% of these were people who were community members, average age early 40s, about half were physician referred and half were self-referred, referred by friends. And the number one pattern that I saw among women was guilt. Guilt comes from, "Shoulding." I used to encourage people to write on a 3 x 5 card, "I will not should on myself today." And perfectionism can be directed toward others, as well. And it's a form of shoulding toward others. Do any of you experience that? Perfectionism toward others, unrealistically high expectations?

**Audience:** Perfection with my three year old son.

**Walt Schafer:** Perfectionism toward her three-year old son. You know, I appreciate you sharing that and there's nothing wrong with high expectations, but perfectionism is impossibly demanding, you know, beyond what's reasonable. Thanks for sharing that and I'll bet he'll be a high achiever.
Now, here are two very simple techniques for managing self-talk. One of these is pause and question. What is my self-talk right now? And you know, I do this all the time. I do this in my home, my marriage. What am I thinking right now, my wife and I have been married for 29 years, been together for 35 years and, you know, it's a continuing challenge for any two people. And being aware as I respond to my wife, who is an attorney and has some perfectionistic qualities both toward herself and toward me. And you know, it's a challenge to not respond defensively or critically back and I'm constantly aware of what my thinking is as I respond. And if I get into a little snip I use my self-talk to change it. It's possible to do that. Instant replay is just another technique to do the same thing. Catch my negative self-talk, these are the three Cs of instant replay; catch my negative self-talk, challenge it, change it. And these are simple tools that can be very helpful, very powerful if in fact you print them in your mind and use them every day in your relationships.
Is this truly worth getting upset about? That is a self-talk question that is very powerful. In my class at Enloe I had the participants in the first session write this on a 3 by 5 card and take it home the next week, think about it. 90% of the time, 95% of the time things are not really worth getting upset about. Sometimes things are worth getting motivated to do something about, but getting emotionally upset, probably not. But let me skip to this one.
Here, I believe is really how you change negative self-talk. This, I hope goes to your question, Gail. Deliberately use new self-talk and I'll come back to this previous slide. Like asking the question is this truly worth getting upset about or that what you mentioned in traffic rather than this SOB, okay this person is behaving kind of irresponsible, I'll pull over, bless them, let them be on their way. I'm not going to change them anyway. And then use repeatedly and then the new self-talk after a period of days, weeks, becomes natural. This is how you change patterns of self-talk.
It's a very simple process and part of this then is challenging irrational beliefs. You know, there's a form of therapy you probably know about, rational emotive therapy. And that involves challenging irrational beliefs that lead you to negative self-talk that lead to negative behavior. Here are some common, irrational beliefs and you can see which of these might apply to you. And I think part of the process then is if you recognize any of these rephrase it, write it down, and use that new self-talk as something you read on a 3 by 5 card or imprint in your mind and begin to repeat it many, many times. This is an opportunity rather than a threat. For example, "I'm a fallible human being. You know, I make mistakes sometimes. That doesn't mean I'm a bad person." Alternative self-talk -- do any of you recognize any of these that are part of your own thinking? A belief is an assumption that you bring to a given situation and that affect your immediate self-talk and your immediate situation. Any of you recognize any of these? You needn't tell me if you do, but I mean I should be thoroughly competent, even perfect in all I do. I play golf too and one of the things that's interesting is if I'm having a bad day through say 13 holes and then oh kind of screw it, I'm just going to play, from that point on, I get really good.
Here are examples of positive self-talk, just an illustrative list of the kind of reprogramming thoughts that -- that can be helpful. If you see any of these that might be helpful to you, you might write it down and begin to use it in reprogramming your thinking. I mean the -- I like the one down, "Look how far I've progressed and I'm still moving forward," rather than, you know, "I should be better." Which one of these jumps out at you that you think might be especially helpful? Yes?

**Audience:** This is an opportunity rather than a threat and that's kind of been my mantra through my work and I communicate with my supervisor. We half jokingly say it's an opportunity because we're in a very challenging environment and our -- the people we serve can be extremely challenging. Okay, "How can I take this and turn it around so it's of benefit to my clients, as well as, a growth opportunity and how can I look at this differently instead of just going, "Oh my god this happened today and I don't know if I can do this anymore." Okay, what can we do with this? How have we learned to pick up and keep going?

**Walt Schafer:** Great. A switch from being overwhelmed and negative to this is an opportunity rather than a threat in dealing with residential senior citizens. Great. Good example. You know, it brings to mind in my household, we switched from PC to Apple about a year ago and we know have two iPhones, two iPads, and an iMac. And my wife tends to be impatient sometimes with new challenges. What happened when I got her a second iPad is somehow my contacts got merged with hers. It got to be a real mess. And so she spent a lot of time with Apple Care on the telephone and with some level of frustration. And I said, "You know, this is an opportunity to reframe this. This is a real opportunity to tax your brain a bit and to increase your skills in computers."
It kind of did make a difference. And she began to be less frustrated. Apple Care's been very helpful, but, you know, it's taken several hours actually with repeat telephone calls, but that's another example, you know, of reframing the situation. So it's an opportunity to use your brain and to really become more skilled in dealing with computers.
Here are some others that are kind of fun. You've probably heard these but again, they can be helpful and maybe one or more of these can be helpful to you. So this is how we increase our sense of challenge, control, commitment, confidence, at least, you know, some tools for strengthening these aspects of hardiness. Any other questions or comments? And if any of you are interested in more detail, my book now sells for about $120 on Amazon.com because it's out of print. I couldn't believe it when I went and looked at it but maybe you'll find a copy somewhere. The last edition, it's the fourth edition by this title and the last edition was in 2000. And I still have been getting royalties by the way. Until this year, I didn't even get a statement. So I think it's the end. Are you all familiar with Rotary? Rotary is a service club international. It's in 170 countries made up of business professional people who are committed to service both at the community level, the international level. One of the reasons I finished teaching was I was becoming president of our club in 2005. That fall, I would have been teaching four courses. And it was the centennial year of Rotary International, it was a busy year, and we have 220 members in one of our local clubs. I began after my presidency of Rotary, to turn toward the work described here. So that's all I'll say and let me play this and this will give you, when we talk about meaning and purpose, and this is an example of what I'm talking about.

VIDEO in presentation
Number one, our partner in Northern Tanzania, the person I was sitting with grew up in a village near Mount Kilimanjaro where we’re doing most of our work now. He was a top student in the country right out of high school and won a scholarship, a Kennedy era scholarship to come to the United States to go to college right out of high school in 1963 and ended up with a Bachelor's Degree, Master's Degree, and PhD in Economics at State University in New York Binghamton, worked for 28 years for the International Monetary Fund in Washington. His wife, from South Korea, an Economic student he met in graduate school worked for The World Bank for 28 years. They then returned after his retirement. He became economic adviser to the president of the country and then returned to Mwika to devote full-time energy to improving the lives and the community of where he grew up. And he is a very, very competent, committed partner for us, and has become a very good friend. I have traveled five times, each of the last five years. My sixth trip will be coming up end of February. My wife who was in the video has gone four times, she'll be returning. And the second point is that we are just completing our plan for our next phase. It's another $150,000 from Rotary clubs and Rotary Foundation for everything from computer labs to improving the total water system of the village of Mwika. And the third thing, just to relate it back to what we're doing here is that there are two connections. Number one, talk about a sense of meaning and purpose. For me, meaning and purpose, at the top of that list, is promoting the well being of others, getting personal satisfaction through promoting the well being of others.
In my book I call it egoistic altruism, self-fulfillment through promoting the well being of others. And that's about the highest value for me and self-fulfillment through promoting the well being of others; egoistic altruism. Secondly, the second connection is this is an example of devoting energy not just to helping individuals manage stress, but to improving the quality of the environment in which people live. In this case, water, sanitation, educational opportunities, health. We're doing a deworming program third year, you heard that. And so these are examples of focusing on the social environment, as well as the individual. Any questions or comments about this? It's a modest video, but it conveys what we've done and what we're focusing on.
I'd like to go to the calmness point here, and just share some skills. Creating calm for building hardiness. You know, we're in a constant state of arousal and sometimes it becomes excessive.
And I'd like to share three simple techniques with you that I have found useful in my own experience and in my teaching.

- SIX-SECOND QUIETING RESPONSE—QR
- DEEP RELAXATION
- MENTAL REHEARSAL
The first is called the six-second quieting response. And I'd like you to do it right now. Sit with a straight back and now push your stomach out and then take a long, deep breath and hold it for a couple of seconds. Then exhale with a long breath slowly and completely, and let your jaw and shoulders drop. Six-second quieting response, you feel relaxation flow from your neck and shoulders. Close your eyes just for a moment so you can really focus on it. Push your stomach out, long, deep breath, hold, and then exhale long and slowly, and let your jaw and shoulders drop. Feel relaxation flow into your arms. Open your eyes. This is a very simple, but very effective technique for releasing tension that you may be carrying throughout the day. And at the same time, it's an effective way of being aware of what self-talk you're using right, as these things are happening. Any comments, questions about this? Really simple. Well, I'd like to make a suggestion. I'm going to send around a little page of dots. You can pick what color you want. And let me suggest that you take one of these and put it on your watch and as you see it throughout the day, use that as a cue to do the QR --- six-second quieting response. So let me send it around and take one if you'd like and put it on your watch or in your phone, or you probably look at your phone more than you do your watch.
So we'll call these reminder dots.
Now, I'd like to show you another technique. We'll do this for five or six minutes here called deep relaxation. And let me say that beginning in the mid 1970s, I became aware that I was really good on the production side of my life and not so good on the recovery side. And I began to be aware I needed to do a better job at controlling tension. I began to explore different kinds of meditation techniques. There was a book written in the mid '70s called "The Relaxation Response." Maybe some of you remember this. Most of you weren't alive. It was amazing, I'd walk across campus and see these students and I'd think, "Geez, these people were nine or 10 years old when I retired." And I also had a party at our house of what we called "Canyon boys." They're old guys in the Creek, about 15 of them at my house yesterday and I did a whole meal, and one of them was my student years ago. He's now an old guy who is 67 years old. And I thought, "Boy I'm really getting up there." But in any case, back in the '70s, I began to explore deep relaxation, meditation, and I took some meditation training. And I did this almost every day for 35 years, usually mid-morning to mid-afternoon. I had a Lazy Boy chair in my office. It was incredibly useful to close my eyes for a brief time, 15 minutes, to recover energy. I never did it for a religious reason or anything other than physical recovery. Here's a simple technique and I'd like to have you experience it and I'll lead you through it. Quiet place, comfortable position, eyes closed. In an accepting, non-critical attitude, there's no absolute right way to do it, begin with a long, deep breath.
Then there are different kinds of relaxation meditation, but I like to use repeated mental focus. It can be the word, "One," the word, "Home," a prayer word, counting your breath, not trying to focus, but just listening to your breath. You can do that if you like to, although I found the mental focus one -- as your mind wanders, just go back to that focus. If you'd like, let's close your eyes here. And we'll just do five or six minutes, I'd like you to experience it. And now be aware of relaxation in your mind and body. Prepare to bring your attention back. Bring your attention back to the room. Anybody fall asleep? Almost? I mean deep relaxation takes you right to the edge of sleep so you're barely conscious, but your body goes into a state of deep quiet. That was five minutes. Comments, questions about that?

**Audience:** I like the idea of putting a recliner in my office.

**Walt Schafer:** Really? For a long time, I had a pillow in my file cabinet and I laid on the floor. I had a little carpet and boy that was really nice too. Anybody else? Where and when?

**Audience:** I like six-second quieting. Dealing with people when I see them coming first to my office I jump up and help.

**Walt Schafer:** Yeah, good.
And finally, and we'll just briefly refer to this, mental rehearsal. We see this used all the time in athletics, obviously, but it can be used in public speaking, in preparing for a difficult encounter and you can see the steps here. About the fifth one down, fourth one down, form a Q as you mentally rehearse and then as you go into the actual situation use that and it'll bring back what you've visualized. Gail mentioned about golfing. Golfers do it all the time. You see golfers stand behind the ball and exactly where they want it to go. And I had an attorney take my class some years ago who talked about going into court, a really tough thing for him, a civil litigator. He began to use this and it made a real difference in his ability to feel calm and in control as he entered the courtroom to deal with the combat, so repeated mental rehearsal. Okay.
Going back to this then, we're running out of time here. I would just like briefly to speak about a couple others. One is conditioning. I absolutely believe that physical activity is vital to preventing distress and coping effectively during periods of difficulty. You know, I think the human organism was designed to be active in modern life, it's not inherent in our life. We have to make it happen. Various ways of parking farther away if you can't make time for exercise, park farther away. Some of you are on the sixth floor of Butte Hall. Walk up the stairs to Butte Hall instead of taking the elevator. But even better, regular exercise at least three or four times a week, getting your heart rate up, brisk walking, running. I think aerobic exercise of some kind is the most useful; walking, running, swimming, cycling, and making it a normal part of your life. How many of you have exercised at least three times in the last week? Okay, about half of you and for the rest it's still some days to go this week. But I was a runner for 55 years, every day, six days a week. It was just part of my life and I could always tell you a day ahead when I was going to run the next day. Now I've switched to cycling. I do a lot of hiking up in the canyon where we live, but I also cycle usually five days a week anywhere from one to three hours. My wife and I rode with a group on Sunday, 60 mile ride out in the valley. It was great fun, moderate, but steady. So I believe that conditioning, particularly through physical exercise is really vital to preventing distress and managing stress, distress when it comes. I also include in this good sleep habits, good nutrition. These are other aspects of good conditioning.
We don't have time here to go into those. By coping I mean a couple of things; number one how do we cope, meaning how do we interact with the challenging situations we have to deal with? Do we cope constructively or destructively? And time management is part of coping with the demands of time. There is something I call hurry sickness, which is being chronically overloaded with a sense of constant fatigue often that goes along with this. How many of you are more tired that you'd like most of the time? Honestly, how many of you are more tired than you'd like? How many of you feel overloaded more than you'd like? There's probably a connection between those two. So, managing time is one part of coping. The second part of coping is coping with temporary adversity, temporary distress. Do we react constructively or destructively? What are some destructive people do in times of real distress? What are some constructive things that you see people doing?

**Audience:** Eating too much.

**Walt Schafer:** Yeah that is an example of destruction. Another is lashing out, anger, irritability, temper tantrums. On the other hand, constructive. What are some of the more constructive things you do during times of real tension and pressure? What do you do that's constructive to help you get through it?

**Audience:** Prioritize. Reach out to social support.

Yeah, I mean one of my themes over the years is, "Get it done." You know. Get it done. And there is no reason. I mean that's the best way to get through times of pressure, times of overload, get it done. And that may mean focusing, prioritizing, making lists. I go by lists a lot, all the time.
I use lists, long term lists and daily lists, and they help me. And so I appreciate that. So reacting constructively or destructively to temporary distress. All right, that's enough, I think. This is a useful framework, I think, for building hardiness for staying healthy and even thriving in the face of adversity, challenge, and the demands of daily living. Thank you very much for coming. I hope this was useful. Best wishes as you begin to put some of this, a little bit, into practice. Thank you very much.