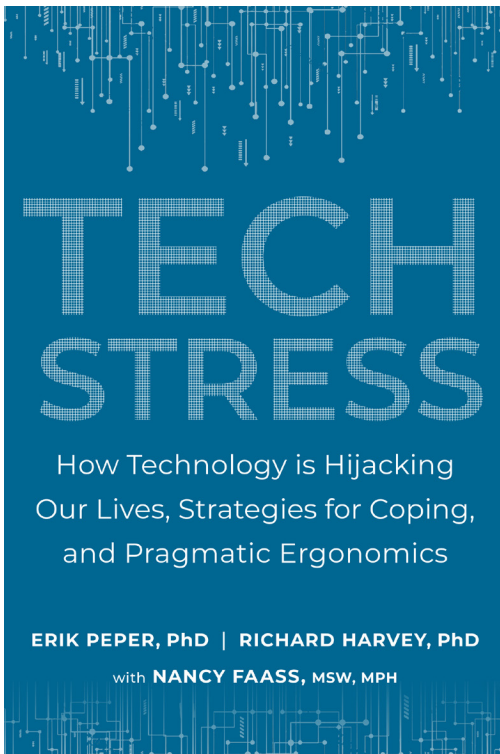


TECH STRESS

How Technology is Hijacking Our Lives, Strategies for Coping, & Pragmatic Ergonomics



An evolutionary approach to reclaiming health and happiness in a plugged-in world

Have you ever walked away from your computer at the end of the day, sore and exhausted, wondering if there could be more to life? Maybe you're developing headaches or neck pain, or maybe you're simply ready for something new. Whatever the case, this book has you covered.

As a species, we've evolved to be drawn to the instant gratification, constant connectivity and shiny lights and sounds of our ever-present smartphones, laptops and other devices. And while these evolutionary patterns may have set us up for success in the past, today they confuse our instincts and leave us vulnerable and stressed.

Erik Peper, Richard Harvey and Nancy Faass offer real, practical tools to avoid the evolutionary traps that trip us up, helping us to reduce physical strain, prevent sore muscles, combat brain drain and correct poor posture. Along with discussing the problems associated with technology overuse, they offer strategies for mitigating technological stress, like how to:

- Increase patience and calm while working at a computer
- Improve communication with spouses, children and co-workers during digital device usage
- Arrange your work environment to best match your individual needs
- Limit the bracing and freezing responses under stress that lead to “blinking out” or not remembering details

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Advance praise

“*Tech Stress* is a book that is years, if not decades, overdue. It reminds its readers that their bodies and reflexes are the products of human evolution and were designed for activity and physical exertion—not for sitting and slouching. Erik Peper, Richard Harvey, and Nancy Faass have grounded their keen observations and practical suggestions in solid research as well as evolutionary theory.”

— **Stanley Krippner, PhD**, co-author of *PTSD: Biography of a Disease*, co-editor *Integrative Care for the Traumatized*.

“*Tech Stress* is a timely call for active intervention in our digitally saturated environment. Distilled from two decades of collaborative research and successful treatments, the book provides us sobering lessons and a handy guidebook to improve our well-being through integrative self-care...In our digitally dependent world, *Tech Stress* teaches us how to be human again, as we continue to evolve with technology.”

— **Weihong Bao, PhD**, author of *Fiery Cinema, the Emergence of an Affective Medium in China, 1915-1945*

“Refreshingly clear and direct, *Tech Stress* offers much-needed explanations followed by scientifically backed advice on how to balance adapting our technology to our bodies and our bodies to our tech.”

— **Mari K. Swingle, PhD**, author of *i-Minds: How Cell Phones, Gaming, and Social Media are Changing Our Brains, Our Behavior & the Evolution of Our Species*



Excerpt

Chapter Twelve: Getting Off the Grid

Unplugging is all about quality of life, however you define it. Is that an afternoon of delicious unbroken sleep or an hour of yoga, windsurfing, or basketball? This chapter explores time off the grid as an opportunity to more fully engage in our lives on the one hand and to achieve deeper relaxation on the other. You are encouraged to schedule downtime right on your calendar, so you can periodically unplug and refresh. What do you want from your day off?

- the chance to slow down and relax
- unstructured time to catch up with yourself
- a space where relationships can flourish
- replenishing energy for peak performance and productivity
- embarking on an adventure
- studying something new, like learning a language
- being creative, doing something you love

The risks of always being “on.” The new 24/7 connectivity to coworkers and to our personal social networks means that there is little time out to reflect, to digress, to concentrate, or to integrate our thoughts. Information is continuously being flooded through our visual and auditory world. Life becomes similar to the news cycle. Each news item replaces the previous one. Temporary memory is continuously updated and replaced by new information. Much of that information is temporary and is never stored in long-term memory. The more information we sequentially experience, the less integrated it becomes. Instead of depth, the rapid surface flow of information and experience replaces the deeper analytical and emotional meanings.



About the authors



ERIK PEPER, PhD, is a professor of holistic health studies at San Francisco State University and president of the Biofeedback Foundation of Europe. He received the 2004 California Governor's Safety Award for work on Healthy Computing. He's authored numerous scientific articles and books and was featured on *ABCNews.com*, *GQ*, *Glamour*, *Men's Health*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Shape* and *Women's Health*.



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