



# STRESS

SOURCES AND SOLUTIONS



**GAIUS DAVIES**

**CHRISTIAN FOCUS**





To Nest and for Catrin  
in sure and certain hope

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The question asked by the apostle Paul: 'What do you have that you did not receive?' (1 Cor. 4:7) is doubtless a rhetorical one. But in producing this book my answer is that I have received most of it from the good offices of others. Some may prefer not to be mentioned.



It was Miss Myra Chave-Jones who first persuaded me to speak for *Care and Counsel* on the Christian and emotional stress. She kindly suggested to a publisher that a book might be made out of it. The Rev Dr John Stott was kind enough to comment favourably on the tape-recording of the lecture, and encouraged me to proceed.



Dr Douglas Johnson asked me to review Dr William Sargent's view on conversion for the Christian Medical Fellowship's journal *In the Service of Medicine*. I am grateful to the editor for permission to use material published there, as well as material on demon possession which first appeared in that journal.

The London Medical Group asked for a lecture on faith healing, which appeared in the *Journal of Medical Ethics* as 'The Hands of the Healer: has faith a place?' I thank the editor for permission to use that material here.

My views on old age owe much to two years spent with Dr Felix Post, and in research on dementia and depression.

I am grateful for permission to quote from Dr D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones' lecture on 'The Doctor as Counsellor'. Dr Lloyd-Jones influenced me, as he did so many young doctors in



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training, and my debt to him is too great to assess: his influence, to the discerning eye, may be seen on many of the pages of this book.

I am grateful too for permission to quote from C. G. Jung's book *Psychological Types*.

Many friends have helped greatly at various stages. The Rev Emyr Roberts, my old editor in my salad days of journalistic forays in the Welsh *Cylchgrawn Efengylaidd*, has been an ever-ready source of advice and criticism. My colleague on the editorial board of that magazine, Dr Geraint Gruffydd, has read numerous draft chapters while they were being rewritten.

My eldest brother, Alun G. Davies, has helped frequently, not only by reading critically but by making suggestions for improvements. I am most grateful to him.

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Early drafts were typed by Mrs G. Hamblyn, and this thankless task was shared by colleagues at King's College Hospital.

I am particularly grateful to my wife, Nest, and my four children who have been prevailed upon to read numerous chapters and make critical suggestions.

Unsuspecting students and others who have had parts of chapters tried out on them deserve thanks for showing what was more interesting and for stimulating further thought and preparation on my part.

Those colleagues who advised me not to proceed will doubtless be glad to be proved right in their judgement that the task I tried was an impossible one. If, however, any Christian who reads it is helped to make use of all the resources available for coping with stress in a better way, then it will have served its purpose.

Dame Cicely Saunders and St Christopher's Hospice know that I and my family, like many others, owe a great debt for



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## FOREWORD



For more than a century following the momentous 1730s the dominant influence in British Christianity was that of the Evangelical Revival in its various forms. The teaching given – that of Whitefield, the Wesleys, Rowlands, Newton, Wilberforce, Simeon, Chalmers, McCheyne, Booth, Spurgeon, and even Pusey – had at its heart the ‘three R’s’ of the gospel: ruin, redemption and regeneration. This teaching focused on grace rather than nature, and in its concentration on the need for personal conversion and a Christ-centred, self-denying, world-conquering piety it touched only lightly on the glories intrinsic to created things and on the Christian’s task of redeeming this fallen world. This left culture in something of a vacuum, and by the end of the last century a British version of German liberalism, affirming man’s natural goodness, passionate for social progress, and uninterested in individual conversion, had emerged to fill it. Evangelicals then drew battle lines, denouncing as devilish anything that reinforced the ‘social gospel’ and that played down the necessity of a new birth. As so often in Christian history, values were divided to the impoverishment of both sides. Evangelicals largely jettisoned community concern, and concentrated on the inner life with decreasing sensitivity to factors affecting that life from outside.

Against this background of tension, pressure, beleaguerment, and defiant self-sufficiency, it should not



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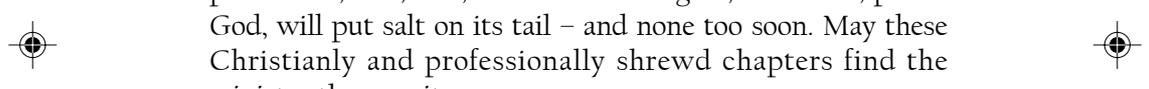
surprise us when the Freudian tidal wave swamped the West, Evangelicals, seeing Freud as an apparently sex-sodden Jewish atheist and Jung as an apostate Calvinist with seemingly Hindu leanings, did a Canute and forbade the whole movement of therapeutic psychology to come near them. They denounced it as a devilish ploy for distracting people who could not cope with life from facing their real need, namely to get right with God through being born again, and many in making this case painted themselves into the corner of claiming that no born-again believer should ever touch psychiatry with a barge-pole, since there is never any need to do so. Though we properly look to physicians to care for our bodies, have we not got Doctor Jesus to bring peace and poise to our souls? What more do we need? To turn to mind-doctors would show shameful lack of faith in Jesus' power, and we must not do it. Forty years ago, when I was a new believer cutting my Christian teeth, this was the common view: Christian psychiatrists, and Christians who consulted them, were felt to be an embarrassment, letting the side down by calling in question the adequacy of Christ, and American Christians were thought to be mildly mad, or at least deeply shallow, for not sharing British inhibitions at this point.

Today, things are different. The bearing of physical and relational factors on the state of the mind is better appreciated, Freudian psychotherapy and Jungian analytical psychology have been largely upstaged by 'medical-model' clinical psychiatry, depression has established itself as the commonest cause of visits to the doctors both sides of the Atlantic, and Christians who feel that their faith forbids them to see a psychiatrist are happily almost as rare as Christians who do not feel free to consult a physician. Yet an acrid haze of suspicion and uncertainty still hangs over psychiatry in many quarters, and efforts to dispel it are still needed. The way to dispel it is to show what, under God, psychiatry can actually do, and that is where books like this one come in.



FOREWORD

Here Gaius Davies joins the ranks of John White, Richard Winter, Montague Barker, the late Martyn Lloyd-Jones, and other wise Christians with physician's training and pastor's instincts, who have taken time out to show where psychiatry and psychiatric counselling fit in. Dr Davies is coolly realistic about the temperamental and traumatic ills to which Christians, like others, fall victim, for he knows that Christians, like others, are psychological invalids at the best of times, the only difference being that by God's grace we are at the deepest level in the process of recovering, whereas strangers to grace are not. His treatment of stress and what the care of those under stress involves has about it a down-to-earth circumspection that may seem low-key but will be found very salutary. Overheated super-spirituality, fouling up the conscience by treating all psycho-physical strain as a symptom of sin, unbelief or demon-possession, still, alas, runs loose among us; this book, please God, will put salt on its tail – and none too soon. May these Christianly and professionally shrewd chapters find the ministry they merit.



J. I. PACKER