

# Connecticut Critical Incident Stress Management Team



## WHEN STRESS BECOMES DISTRESS

The 31 signs of danger are:

- General irritability, hyperexcitation, or depression.
- Pounding of the heart.
- Dryness of the throat and mouth.
- Impulsive behavior, emotional instability.
- The overpowering urge to cry or run and hide.
- Inability to concentrate.
- Feelings of unreality, weakness, and dizziness.
- Predilection to become fatigued.
- Floating anxiety.
- Emotional tension and alertness.
- Trembling and nervous ticks.
- Tendency to be easily startled by small sounds.
- High-pitched nervous laughter.
- Stuttering and other speech difficulties.
- Grinding of the teeth.
- Insomnia.
- An increased tendency to move without reason.
- Sweating.
- Frequent urination.
- Diarrhea and cramping.
- Migraine headaches.
- Premenstrual tension or missed periods.
- Pain in the neck or lower back.
- Decreased or increased appetite.
- Increased smoking.
- Increased use of legal drugs.
- Alcohol and drug addiction.
- Nightmares.
- Neurotic behavior.
- Psychoses.
- Accident proneness.

Source: Hans Selye, M. D., from "The Stress of Life."

[www.ctcism.org](http://www.ctcism.org)