3 STAGES OF STRESS: GENERAL ADAPTION SYNDROME

STAGE 1 – ALARM STAGE
- alarm reaction has two substages
  - shock phase – decrease in body temperature, blood pressure, and muscle tone and loss of fluid from body tissues
  - countershock phase – increase in hormones triggering a defensive reaction such as fight/flight reaction

STAGE 2 – RESISTANCE STAGE
- also called “adaptation stage”
  - stabilization of the increased physiological levels
  - in other words: the body is on hyper-alert as if it’s about to do battle
  - for example: high blood pressure can develop into hypertension, risking heart problems
  - as the body is in this heightened state, it is using up important resources (chemicals, balance), which can cause permanent changes in the body’s organs

STAGE 3 – EXHAUSTION STAGE
- think “break down”
  - the body’s adaptations it has made to withstand this prolonged state of stress begins to fall apart
  - characterized by sleep disturbances, irritability, severe loss of concentration, restlessness, fatigue, trembling that disturbs coordination, jumpiness, low startle threshold/scare easily, anxiety attacks, depression, crying spells