# TechnoStress: Coping With Technology @Work @Home @Play

**By Michelle M. Weil Ph.D. and Larry D. Rosen Ph.D.**
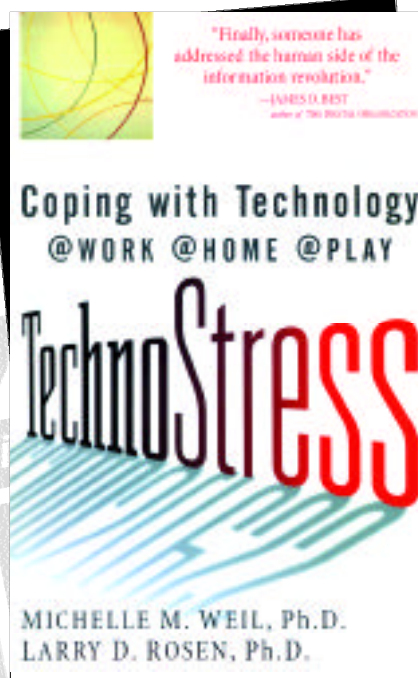**John Wiley & Sons Inc.**
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*Reviewed by Tom Bryant*

How can technology cause stress in our lives? We are in the business of technology! Why review a book on technology stress? Technology stress is everywhere and effects those of us who are practitioners of technology. TechnoStress is defined by the authors as the stress one feels when technology takes center stage in our work lives, home environments and at play.

You may have a good case of technostress and not even know it! If you've been in this business 15 to 20 years, you're no doubt familiar with the label "dinosaurs" or the more user-friendly term "legacy systems." We have been classified as "mainframe" and thereby are thought of as incapable of learning/digesting the new technologies of today. We must learn these technologies faster (along with everything else), causing TechnoStress in our work place. This is only one area of TechnoStress the authors discuss. The line dividing what you want to know from what others/the industry feel you should know is fading away due to people trying to do things as fast as "technology" dictates. Humans do not work as fast as computers, although many are striving to do just that. The authors attribute this to your learning style and various elements such as the following:

◆ internal vs. external structure
◆ social elements
◆ physical elements

The authors successfully mix Psychology 101 with reality to show how we can slow down while at the same time keep our work output constant. The subject of technology and family is a large part of this book. Unchecked, technology can cause a smooth-interacting family to become a loose group of people wearing "techno-cocoons" during their waking hours. How much time do your kids play with video games and the Internet? Do your kids know more about new technology than you? The authors discuss 10 Family Technology Rules that might not cause your household to return to "Brady Bunch" days but will allow household members to get back to that "family" feeling that technology (left unchecked) will destroy.

Several chapters are dedicated to explaining our throwaway society where buying a new computer is cheaper than fixing an old one. This mindset of bigger, better and faster is taking hold everywhere. When pagers first came out they were meant only for "true" emergencies for very important personnel. Now that pager technology has dropped in cost, everyone can have a pager and everyone can page others to their heart's content.

All of this "interruption" can have dire consequences for our peace of mind. Working/playing faster and harder is not smarter. The authors go through a step-by-step process to help you put paging (or receiving pages) in its place.

The book concludes with observations on global TechnoStress, covering privacy and security issues on the computer. If you are working more and enjoying it less and less, then I would recommend you read this book and follow these rules. It will make you and all who deal with you a great deal happier. **ts**

NaSPA member Tom Bryant is an MVS/ESA senior systems programmer at IBM Global Services. He has more than 20 years of experience in data processing with 18 years as a MVS/XA/ESA systems programmer. His specialties include MVS problem diagnosis and resolution, and SMP/E packaging. Tom is a frequent contributor to Technical Support. Additionally he is an active NaSPA member: He has been a speaker at past NaSTEC conferences on the topics of IPCS and MVS/XA/ESA diagnostics, past president and founder of the Windy City NaSPA Chapter, past NaSPA Board of Directors member, and 1989 Member of the Year.