

# The Conservation of Personal Stress

*A SPECULATION ON THE  
FIRST LAW OF PSYCHODYNAMICS\**

**STRESS DOESN'T GO AWAY.  
IT JUST GOES ELSEWHERE.**

Deciding to adopt a policy generates stress because of possible negative and sometimes unintended consequences. It may turn out to be a policy for which a decision maker will be blamed.

You might think that making case-by-case decisions would eliminate this stress because you can then, life being what it is, accommodate the anomalous situations which inevitably occur. You'd be wrong though. The stress is just distributed among all the case-by-case decisions. It's gone elsewhere.

If you want to eliminate the stress of case-by-case decision making, just enforce the policy without exception. But now you're back to the problem of the original stress.

**IT SEEMS THAT YOUR STRESS IS CONSERVED.**

*What do you think?*

\* an allusion to the FIRST LAW OF THERMODYNAMICS: mass/energy is always conserved