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STRESS MANAGEMENT

Managing Stress

Keep in mind that stress isn't a bad thing. Stress motivates us to work toward solving our problems. Re-framing thoughts to view stress as an acceptable emotion, or as a tool, has been found to reduce many of the negative symptoms associated with it. The goal is to manage stress, not to eliminate it. It's important to talk about your problems, even if they won't be solved. Doing this releases hormones in your body that reduce the negative feelings associated with stress. Time spent talking with friends and loved ones is valuable, even when you have a lot on your plate.

6 Tips on Managing Stress

- 1. MAKE "TO DO" LISTS** - To do lists can be a great options to reduce stress in the present, as well as in the future. Try working on these three lists: 1) **Master to-do list**. This list will include everything that you want to accomplish. 2) **Will-do-today list**. This list includes what you want to spend your time on today. 3) **Will-do-later list**. This list enables you to schedule tasks at a later date.
- 2. ORGANIZE YOUR TIME** - Do you ever feel like their just isn't enough time in the day? A few organizational skills can help maximize the time you do have. 1) Plan your next day the night before. Wake up with a purpose. 2) Schedule for interruptions. Set up time allowances in your plan. Give yourself time in between scheduled work for unexpected interruptions.
- 3. UNPLUG** - Modern technology certainly has its advantages, productivity being one of them. It can also allow work stressors to intervene with family time, social activities and vacation. Set boundaries to help you spend your time and energy away from work. Try turning off cell phones at dinner and decide on a certain time to check email.
- 4. SLEEP** - The stresses of life and work will leave anyone tossing and turning. Try one of these tips tonight for sweet dreams. 1) Quit caffeine by noon. Caffeine can remain in your body for 8-14 hours. 2) Practice relaxation 1-2 hours before bedtime. Decrease stimulation and do something you find relaxing, such as reading or taking a bath.
- 5. EAT A WELL BALANCED DIET** - During stressful times, we often turn to traditional "comfort" foods. Ironically, these foods make us feel lethargic and reduce our ability to deal with stress. Try avoiding these foods and instead eating foods with low-fat, high-fiber, carbohydrate-rich meals with plenty of fruits and vegetables. Following these guidelines will help reduce stress.
- 6. LEAVE WORK AT WORK** - You've had a long day at work, the last thing you need to do is take your work stress home with you. Try out one of these techniques to help your mind focus on the present, not on work. 1) Treating your commute home as a positive time to wind down and start the process of relaxation. 2) Once you get home, take a relaxing walk.

“We need to do a better job of putting *ourselves* higher on our to ‘to-do’ list.”

- Michelle Obama



Think positive thoughts and reflect on what has been achieved each day.



Relax, unwind, and go out after work.



Avoid excessive drinking, smoking, and drug use.



Enjoy exercise such as walking, running, or playing sports.

Working With Success Managing Life While Working

TAKING CARE OF YOUR THOUGHTS, FEELINGS, AND PHYSICAL WELL-BEING

We spend most of our waking hours at work, which makes our workplace an important environment for healthy living. Maintaining a healthy life style is essential. Eating well, exercise, and plenty of sleep provide the energy needed for busy days, while reducing stress.

WAYS TO STAY BALANCED

It is essential to stay connected with friends and family. You may schedule a specific time to phone home. Think ahead about the things you want to accomplish when speaking with family members. Become active within a new community. It helps alleviate stress and provides a source of connection while you are away from home.

EFFECTS OF WORKPLACE STRESS

Workplace stress includes the feeling of not being appreciated by others for a job well-done, feeling dissatisfied with one's own performance, and feeling tense at work. Employees who work away from home may experience feelings of isolation, loneliness, and depression. Physical effects on the body include disturbances to usual sleep patterns, difficult relaxing after hours, and the inability to concentrate.

TIME & STRESS MANAGEMENT

It's important to focus on completing quick tasks first. Having too many "to-dos" can be stressful, even if none of them are very big. Quickly knocking out the small tasks will clear up your mind to focus on larger responsibilities.

Stress can start a harmful cycle where basic needs are neglected, which leads to more stress. Make a point to focus on your basic needs, such as eating well, keeping a healthy sleep schedule and exercising. Keep in mind that people who are over involved in one aspect of their life often struggle to deal with stress when that area is threatened. Balance your time and energy between several areas, such as your career, family, friendships, and personal hobbies.

Make sure that you are setting aside personal time for yourself. Personal time usually gets moved to the bottom of the list when things get hectic. However, when personal time is neglected, everything else tends to suffer. Set aside time to relax and have fun every day, without interruptions.



Finally, it is important to keep things in perspective. In the heat of the moment, little problems can feel bigger than they are. Take a step back, and think about how important your stressors are in a broader context. Will they matter in a week? In a year? Writing about your stressors will help you develop a healthier perspective.

TIME MANAGEMENT TIPS

Break Tasks Up

It's easy to feel overwhelmed when you have a really big task before you. Breaking big tasks into small pieces will help you get started, which often is the hardest part.

Limit Distractions

Spend a few days recording how much time you spend on distractions such as social media or TV. Then, cut out the distractions you don't actually enjoy, and schedule time for the ones you do enjoy.

Give Yourself Time Between Tasks

Plan on arriving 15 minutes early, and bring something to do in case you find yourself waiting. Scheduling some buffer time will help reduce your stress when things inevitably run long.

Let Yourself Be Less Than Perfect

If you try to complete every task to perfection, some of your other responsibilities won't get done at all. Focus on completing everything to an acceptable level, and then go back to improve upon your work if you have time.

Work-Life Balance

Tips for Creating Harmony

Achieving balance with work and family is an ongoing process of juggling responsibilities at work and the needs of family members. These needs change over time. The key to success is to periodically assess the situation and make improvements when appropriate.

1. The Benefits of Balance

Harmonizing work and home life benefits family members, coworkers, and you.

2. A Conscious Decision

Work and family don't balance automatically. Achieving balance is an ongoing process. Understanding this can reduce frustration and help you gain control.

3. Manage Distractions

Working long hours causes stress that sometimes finds relief naturally through workplace distractions and procrastinations.

4. Stick to Your Values

Sometimes it can be tough to make a choice between family and a work activity. Knowing your values can make tough choices easier.

5. Resist Your Schedule

When your work schedule changes, new opportunities may become available to participate in family activities. Assess your responsibilities and act accordingly.

How to Create Harmony

- ▶ **Write Down Family Goals**
Family needs change over time. Opportunities to build a tree house for the kids or participate in new family pastime doesn't last forever. Decide what is important and write it down.
- ▶ **Imbalance is Sometimes Inevitable**
It is important to recognize that jobs and responsibilities are important and that they sometimes take priority.
- ▶ **Discuss Responsibilities**
When one family member is taking on too many responsibilities at home, resentments can build. Periodically discussing the perceptions of others can provide the awareness you need to consider opportunities and choices for work and family compatibility.
- ▶ **Organize Your Work Tasks**
Improving your time management skills can buy you time needed for family life. Learning how to delegate, say "no", and let go of workplace worries are skills that are learned through practice.

Positive Steps to **WELLBEING**

Be Kind To Yourself

Our culture, genes, religion, upbringing, education, gender, sexuality, beliefs, and life experiences make us who we are. We all have bad days. Be kind to yourself. Encourage rather than criticize yourself. Treat yourself the way you would treat a friend in the same situation.

Take up a Hobby/Learn a New Skill

Increase your confidence and interest, meet others, or prepare for finding work.

Have Fun/Be Creative

Having fun or being creative helps us feel better and increases our confidence. Enjoy yourself!

Exercise Regularly

Being active helps lift our mood, reduces stress and anxiety, improves physical health, and gives us more energy. Get outside, preferably in a green space or near water. Find an activity you enjoy doing, and just do it.

Help Others

Get involved with a community project, charity work, or simply help out someone you know. As well as benefiting others, you'll be doing something worthwhile which will help you feel better about yourself.

Balance Sleep

Get into a healthy sleep routine - including going to bed and getting up at the same time each day.

Eat Healthy

Eat regularly by eating breakfast as well as fruits and vegetables. Don't forget to drink plenty of water.

Accepting "It is as it is"

We tend to fight against distressing thoughts and feelings, but we can learn to just notice them and give up that struggle. Some situations we just can't change. Allow those thoughts and sensations just to be - they will pass.

See The Bigger Picture

We all give different meanings to situations and see things from our point of view. Broaden out your perspective and consider the bigger picture. What meaning am I giving this? Is it fact or opinion? How would others see it? What can I do right now that will help most?

Connect With Others

Stay in touch with family and friends - make regular and frequent contact with them.

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