

Stress management and beyond

Everyone has ups and downs. Life would be dull without them. A hopeful attitude goes a long way towards helping us over the rough spots. People who approach life with an attitude of commitment, challenge, and control are more likely to be successful stress managers.

Stress, tension, and anxiety can't be eliminated, but we can learn to manage them better. Those who stay healthy under stress are deeply involved in their work and families, and this commitment gives them a sense of direction and strength.

A balanced lifestyle provides adventure and the ability to approach new challenges with vigor and enthusiasm. People who handle stress effectively stay healthy through the worst of times. They consider stressful situations to be opportunities for growth and achievement. Those people who seldom become troubled have found ways in life that permit them to be themselves. They have found ways that provide meaning, hope, interest, and purpose as they continue their journey through our stress laden world.

For more information on developing positive self-esteem, contact your Employee Assistance Program at 701.530.7195 or 800.327.7195

Remember, your Employee Assistance Program is:

- **Confidential:** All information is strictly between you and the counselor.
- **Informal:** A simple phone call starts the process, and there is no red tape.
- **Free:** Your employer has paid the fees. There's no charge for initial counseling services.



Employee Assistance Program

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Employee Assistance Program

Stress Management





Stress is all around us!

Almost everyone, young and old encounters some form of stress each day.

Whether it is good or bad is determined by our experiences, the choices available to us, our ability to solve problems and our self-image.

If crisis and pressures become so intense that we are constantly calling upon inner resources to respond, the stress becomes debilitating. Too much stress on our mind and body can create tension and anxiety that seem overwhelming. Unchecked, it can lead to long-term illness.

Our stress laden world

Conflicts with supervisors, coworkers, potentially dangerous people, marriage partners, critical family members, and clients or customers are all part of our stress laden world. The need to meet extreme deadlines, the risk of injury, accountability, financial risk, disapproval, and loss of self-esteem all take their toll.

Stress is also a natural and important part of life. It gives us the stimulation to live dynamic and productive lives. A certain amount is necessary for motivation, productivity and creativity. It is what prepares us to handle things that are difficult, and to respond more effectively to the experiences that challenge us.

Managing stress the right way

- Exercise - Promotes endurance, strength and stamina
- Narrow The Field - Don't try to handle everything at once
- Spend Time Alone - Think, meditate and sort yourself out
- A Special Person - Have someone to trust and talk with
- Other People - To work with, learn and socialize
- A Creative Outlet - Do things that bring a sense of pride
- Love - Provide love to receive love in return
- Play - Be free to be childlike at times
- A Higher Power - Believe in someone beyond yourself
- Get Away From Home - Twice a year with "mini" breaks in between

Don't Use, or Don't Use Too Much

- Tobacco - Most lethal substance we choose to consume
- Alcohol or Drugs - Cause dependence if used for wrong reasons
- Unhealthy Diet - Diminishes energy levels and effectiveness

Symptoms of stress overload

When stressful circumstances are experienced, decision making becomes difficult and hesitant. Otherwise capable people are tentative, second guess themselves and question their postures and perceptions. They become preoccupied, worrisome and unwilling to admit mistakes. With too much stress, individuals blame others and become suspicious and pessimistic. Mistrust of friends, co-workers, spouses and family evolves. Outbursts of temper trigger arguments and hurt feelings. Rigidity, demandingness and irritability create resentment among associates.

How much stress is too much

There's no way to know with certainty how much stress is too much. Although stress can be destructive, we need a certain amount to remain effective in life. Without stress, chances for personal accomplishments and fulfillment are missed. The right amount of pressure can push us to perform at our very best.

The key to effective stress management is to achieve balance between the positive and negative experiences in life. By following some very simple principles for effective living, we can work out ways to adjust to the stressful situations we encounter.

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