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How to Handle Stress and Live Happier

Objectives

- ❖ What is stress?
- ❖ What are the signs
- ❖ Ways to manage and cope
- ❖ Ways to stay positive
- ❖ Progressive relaxation
- ❖ Resources



Distress

Stress in daily life that has negative connotations such as:

- Divorce
- Punishment
- Injury
- Negative feelings
- Financial Problems
- Work Difficulties

Stress in daily life that has positive connotations such as:

- as:
- Marriage
- Promotion
- Baby
- Winning Money
- New Friends
- Graduation

Eustress

Chronic Stress

The cost of daily living: bills, kids, jobs... This is the stress we tend to ignore or push down. Left uncontrolled this stress affects your health- your body and your immune system.

What is Stress?

Fight or flight. The body prepares to defend itself. It takes about 90 minutes for the metabolism to return to normal when the response is over.

Acute Stress

Signs of Stress

- Headaches
- Heartburn
- Rapid Breathing
- Increased risk of heart attach
- High blood sugar
- Increased Depression
- Insomnia
- Weakened Immune System
- High blood pressure
- Stomachache
- Tense Muscles
- Reproductive issues

“Out there things can happen
and frequently do
to people as brainy and footsy as you,
And when things start to happen, don't
worry. Don't stew.
Just go right along, You'll start happening
too.”

– Dr. Seuss

Coping Mechanisms

- Lowering your expectations
- Asking others to help or assist you
- Taking responsibility for the situation
- Engaging in problem solving
- Maintaining emotionally supportive relationships
- Maintaining emotional composure or, alternatively, expressing distressing emotions



Coping Mechanisms



- Challenging previously held beliefs that are no longer adaptive
- Directly attempting to change the source of stress
- Distancing yourself from the source of stress
- Viewing the problem through a religious perspective

One Minute Breath Meditation

- Step 1: Begin by noticing your breath. Notice the sensation of the air around your nose and mouth and notice the air moving in and out of your body. Notice the rise and fall of your chest and stomach. Breathe as you normally do, just with awareness.
- Step 2: Start counting your breath- the first breath in and out is 1. The next in and out is 2 and so on. Continue until you reach 10. Ten breaths will take you close to 1 minute.

Stress Management

- Writing/ Journaling
- Exercise
- Yoga and Tai Chi
- Listening to relaxing music
- Eat healthy, well-balanced meals
- Get plenty of sleep
- Take time to do things for yourself
- Have a support system
- Improve time management skills
- Limit caffeine and other chemicals
- Nature
- Pets

Self-Empowering

Mindfulness

- Being aware of your moment-to-moment experience
- Focus on attention on single repetitive action
- Breathing, repetitive phrase, flickering light from a candle, etc.

Visualization

- Form mental images to take a visual
- Journey to a peaceful, calming place or situation
- Use as many senses as possible (smell, sound, sight, touch)

10 Tools to Keep You Hopeful

- Make meaningful relationships
- Keep your head up
- Get moving
- Help/Reach out to others
- Be sure to sleep
- Create your own “Happy”
- Make Healthy food choices
- Take care of your spirit
- Better coping with difficult times
- Reach out for help if needed.

Benefits of staying positive

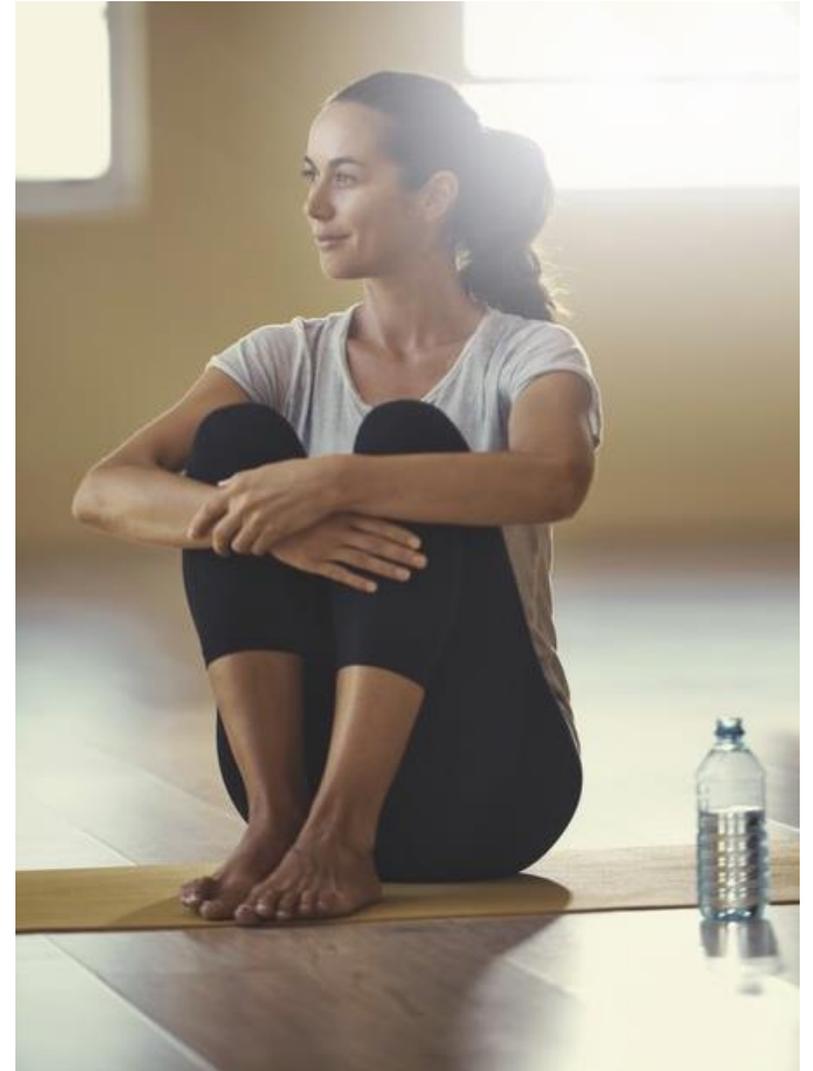
- People who were more negative had a 20% higher chance of dying over a 30 year period in comparison to those that were more positive
- People who keep track of their gratitude once a week were generally more positive

Other ways to focus on positive thinking

- Look for areas to work on/change
- Take pit stops throughout the day
- Its ok to laugh!
- Take care of yourself
- Happy people=happy thoughts
- Words of encouragement

Increase Positive Thinking

- Envision a positive future
- Look for the good in every situation
- Take in the moment
- Keep a journal of positive thoughts/actions
- Share the positive
- Make your own happy



Chill Out! - Benefits of Relaxation

- Reducing muscle tension and chronic pain
- Improving concentration and mood
- Improving sleep quality and decreasing exhaustion
- Reducing anger and frustration
- Boosting confidence to handle problems
- Slowing heart rate and lowering blood pressure
- Increasing blood flow to major muscles



Relaxation Techniques

- Autogenic relaxation
- Progressive muscle relaxation
- Visualization
- Deep breathing
- Yoga
- Listening to music
- Meditation



Resources



Health Coaching

What is it?

- Working with a health coach provides personalized support to help set goals, lower your risks, manage your conditions, and change behaviors
- No pre-existing conditions necessary to participate for wellness coaching
- Each coaching program will be created and personalized to your unique needs and goals

To get started, call 1-866-556-2288 and select Option 2

The Ohio Employee Assistance Program



Mission

To assist employees and their dependents in resolving personal and work-related problems by providing quality services, support and solutions that enhance the emotional, behavioral health and overall productivity of employees in a confidential and professional manner.

Information & Assistance:

1-800-221-6327 (6EAP)

or 614-644-8545 (Franklin County only)

ohio.gov/eap

OEAP@das.ohio.gov

Optum Behavioral Solutions:

1-800-852-1091

Optum Behavioral Health Family Support Program

- The Family Support Program is available to all State employees who carry State of Ohio insurance
- Aims to help families who have children that are using and abusing drugs, up to age 25
- Phone access to licensed clinicians who will assess, educate, support and manage cases of children or adult dependents with substance use disorders (alcohol or drugs).

877-229-3440

liveandworkwell.com | Access Code: 00832

Additional Resources

- Ohio Employee Assistance Program
 - www.ohio.gov/eap
 - Monthly newsletters
 - 1-800-221-6327
- Optum Behavioral Health
 - 877-229-3440
 - www.liveandworkwell.com
- Johns Hopkins School of Medicine
 - <http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/awareness/stress.html>
- Harvard Health Publications
 - <http://www.helpguide.org/articles/stress/stress-management.htm>
- Mental Health America (Formerly the National Mental Health Association)
 - <http://www.nmha.org>
- American Psychological Association (APA)
 - <http://www.apa.org>
 - <http://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2007/10/stress-tips.aspx>





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Thank you!
ohio.gov/tclw