

## **COPING WITH STRESS**



Too much stress can really take a toll on you. Feelings of worry and hopelessness can trigger the central nervous system to emit “stress hormones” that make your heart beat faster and send your body into a “fight or flight” mode.

However, at appropriate times and in appropriate levels, stress is normal. It sharpens your awareness and gives you that needed energy boost.

### **SIGNS OF TOO MUCH STRESS**

- Irritability
- Low productivity
- Strained relationships
- Health problems (headaches, ulcers, stomachaches, etc.)
- Task avoidance
- Low energy level
- Sleep problems

### **WHAT CAUSES STRESS?**

- Unrealistic expectations
- Feelings of lack of control
- Lack of resources (financial, emotional, academic)

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#### **Positive self-talk**

- What we say to ourselves shapes our thoughts and affects our mental outlook.
- When your perspective starts to become negative, turn it around and look at things in a positive light. For example, say to yourself, “I feel overwhelmed right now, but I’ll make a plan and get through this step by step”.

### **Practice Acceptance**

- In life there are some things you have no control over.
- Accept the things you cannot change.

### **Be Good To Yourself**

- Proper rest, nutrition and exercise are essential in the battle with stress.
- Learn to relax. Meditation, yoga, biofeedback, and breathing techniques are all useful in stress management.
- Do not be afraid to take a break.

### **Get Help If You Need It**

- Find/develop a support system. This could be family, friends, organizations, etc.
- See a professional trained to assist you in your area(s) of concern.

### **Take Charge of your Life**

- Set limits. Do not let yourself become overwhelmed by the demands of others.
- Take responsibility for your life. Be a problem-solver, not a worrier.

### **Laugh**

Laughing lowers your blood pressure and produces beta- endorphins, which in turn produce feelings of well-being.

- See a funny movie; listen to your favorite comedian's compact disc, read a book of jokes.