



“Stress Management”

Life can be stressful. Some people think that being stress free is a good goal in life. Yet stress can be good for you. Picture the bone in your forearm...if casted, it has too much support (limited stress) and it can result in weakness, too much stress can result in a break, but just the right amount of stress can strengthen the muscles. Stress management is just like that. We are not working to eliminate stress, but to manage it, to grow and be strengthened through it. The following tips can assist you in this process.

1. CONTROL WHAT YOU CAN CONTROL

Don't waste time and energy on factors which you have no or limited influence. Be the first to make a move. You can control your own attitude and actions, so start there. Sometimes it can feel like the world is falling apart. Take control of what you can and watch your influence grow. We do not control most external situations/events, so there is no point worrying/stressing about those things. You want things to be happy and upbeat, stop looking for people or things to blame and get to work. Decide what's important, prioritize, and take things one step at a time.

2. STAY COMMITTED

You may not have chosen the task, it may have been forced on you, either way it's yours. Give it 100% effort, stay focused and get the job done. If your problem is beyond your control and cannot be changed at the moment, don't fight the situation. Learn to accept what is – for now– until such time when you can change it.

3. TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF (EAT, EXERCISE, HYDRATE, SLEEP)

The body and the mind work together. Your body is made up of 2/3's water. Without proper hydration you will feel lethargic. Your kidneys won't be able to carry away waste, so toxins will build up in your system. Serotonin is a brain chemical that helps induce relaxation and can be obtained through your diet. Having an afternoon snack can help increase serotonin. Calcium can reduce nervousness and irritability. Food items that can trigger stress and anxiety include: caffeine, salt, sugar and fats. Exercise can trigger the body's production of endorphins – the feel good, natural painkiller. Exercise can provide stimulation and calm, to counter depression and dissipate stress. Sleep plays a critical role in thinking and learning. Lack of sleep leads to depleted energy, impaired attention, alertness, concentration, reasoning, and problem solving

4. REMAIN CONNECTED

You are not alone on an island, so don't live like it. Use the resources (people and supplies) available to you to overcome stress. Laughing with friends can help put things in perspective and reduce the stress you feel. It can help to talk to someone about your concerns and worries. A trusted friend, family member, peer, supervisor or professional can help you see your problem in a different light. Seeking help early may avoid more serious problems later.

5. R & R (RECOVERY AND RELAXATION)

The best strategy for managing stress is to learn how to relax. Unfortunately, many people try to relax at the same pace that they lead the rest of their lives. For a while, tune out your worries about time, productivity, or other issues. You will find satisfaction in just being, without striving. Find healthy/safe/legal activities that give you pleasure and that are good for your mental and physical well-being. Forget about always winning. Focus on relaxation, enjoyment, and health. Read a book, do a puzzle, watch a movie, get a message, meditate, going for a walk, observing nature.



Return Strong



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