

Stress Management Outline

Goal of the workshop:

A lot of northern American adults suffer from chronic stress. So what is the best way to help people? We know to we are supposed to eat healthy. Exercise is a great stress reliever and all the other tips that have been thrown out at you. But yet most of adults still struggle with large amounts of stress.

After some research and watching many ted talks, I found that Stress is different for everybody and there is not a simple formula that will work for everyone. Different things stress people out, and everyone has their own way of dealing with stress. My goal for today is help you recognize and identify your personal stress triggers and reflect on what can currently be stressing you out. And provide strategies to cope and manage your stress.

“Do not stress because you are waiting not to be stressed. There is no stress free life”

What is stress?

Stress is defined as a person’s total response to environmental demands and pressures. **Stress** is those moments when the outcome is not crucial to your survival. Examples of stressful moments include having to many meetings or giving feedback to a co-worker. The outcome matters but not to the same extent as a pressure moment.

Pressure are those moments when the importance of the outcome matters. Examples of pressure moments might be when you’re presenting a big proposal to a group of investors or studying for a credential that will help you get a promotion. The outcome matters to your career and your future.

Eustress is often labeled as “good stress”. Eustress is stress that benefits our health, like physical exercise or getting a promotion

I want you to recognize that stress is not always bad. A lot of studies are about “acute,” “short-term” or “moderate” stress — the kind that is short-lived and related to something specific is ok. “Chronic stress,” on the other hand, isn’t quite so great.

Talk about the Bell Curve

Workplace tension cannot be eliminated, it can only be managed. It is impossible to eliminate pressure and stress but, by being able to identify pressure moments, they can be managed and we can develop more perseverance to be successful.

1. Reflect & Identify (how does stress affect your life?)

So now we know the difference between stress and pressure.... Let's go over the different kinds of stressors.

The different kinds of stressors

1. **Self-correctness**

2. **Powerless**- feeling no option ``that won't work`` Having power over someone else will not make you Powerful. This power does not stay; you can never have complete power over someone just like no one can have complete power over you.

3. **Perfectionism**- did you do the best you could?

4. **Worry**-Did you do everything you could. Do what you can do. Cannot- what if life

5. **Insecurity**- looking to people for security to feel good about ourselves

6. **Hurrying**- there are times where you can listen to other people are saying. Do not rush through a phase, there are problems there too

7. **Pessimism**- we get what we expect.

8. **Competition**- no one has to lose in order for you to win

Where are the major areas of stress for you? Be specific.

Now you have identified the areas that you are stressed, what does stress look like in your life? How does it affect you? Think about the physical, emotional, mental affects.

Some common symptoms of stress:

Clouds thinking, Fatigue, Sleep disturbances, Shoulder or back pains, Forgetting things, Finding it hard to concentrate, Worrying, Harder time processing information, Negative self-statements

2. Accept and Alter -Tips on how to change your outlook on your Stress. OUTLOOK is everything. Accept that the situation is stressful; then reframe yourself so that you can deal with it

“No one can ruin your day without your permission”

- **Recognize what you can change and accept what you cannot.**
 - Look for the things you have no control over. Then look to release the things you cannot change. Release the pressure when it shows up. Allow yourself to relax and have some self-compassion.
- **Re-frame your mistakes and challenges in terms of growth.** When we do this brain responds to these challenges differently. They no longer send us into a panicked downward spiral
 - Use stress to your advantage. This can be hard for some people. But you can let it tear you down, or use it as fuel. Use it as motivation. Keep focused on what you have control over and focus on that.
- **Find the Good! Have a positive outlook on the situation you are in.**
 - Studies confirm that viewing a stressful situation as an opportunity to improve your skills, knowledge or strengths makes it more likely that you will experience stress inoculation or stress-related growth. Once you appreciate that going through stress makes you better at it, it gets easier to face each new challenge. And the expectation of growth sends a signal to your brain and body: get ready to learn something, because you can handle this.
 - People who are good at stress allow themselves to be changed by the experience of stress. Embracing our natural capacity for growth can help us change in positive ways, even in circumstances we would never choose
- **Prioritize**
 - Divided paper into 4 quadrants:
 - Upper left: Important & Urgent
 - Upper right: Urgent, not important
 - Bottom left: Important, not Urgent.
 - Bottom right: Not important, not urgent
- **Do the Next Right Thing**
 - When we approach each day for what it is, we can slowly conquer any mountain that comes our way. When you feel like your to-do list is never ending, remember you only have to do the next right thing. We can choose daily to approach what lies just in front of us, not worrying about tomorrow, because that day we will be there when we get to it.

3. Support and Sustain

How can we and support and sustain this new outlook on stress?

“We are surrounded by big and little stressors, and they are not going away. We don’t have to embark on major life transformations to change our lives. It is the most simple practices that lead to the most significant and sustainable changes.”

Visualization

- All Olympic athletes use visualization
- One hour of visualization equals 7 hours of physical activity. Visualization and positive self-talk increase basketball players free throws by 24%

Talk to your brain instead of listening

Positive outlook/self-talk, grateful thinking and appreciation- be specific. Thinking I appreciate.... Then it creates a deeper sense of gratitude in us the just general listing does.

- For every one negative thought, you need at least five to counteract it.

Structure

- Healthy daily routine -Planning meals, organizing Chores, using a to-do list
- Bring things to completion

Humour

- Laughing is the best medicine

Mediation/Mindfulness

- “Only By stepping back and being still can we really see the canvas that is our lives”
- Stop the spinning wheel. When we get anxious, stressed our minds get foggy and you jump on the hamster wheel and our minds go from one thought to the next. Stop take a moment, prioritize and focus on what you can do.
- My mind is constantly thinking about things I need to do, even when I’m in no position to do them! It’s exhausting.
- When you notice your thoughts wandering to planning or judgment or worrying, or any other category, simply bring your attention back to the present moment by focusing on your breath or noticing the colors around you

Instead of being carried away by your thoughts, see if you can *witness* them.

- Try to focus on the rise and fall of your chest or belly as you inhale and exhale. When you notice your mind wandering, simply label the thought; “Oh, there I was planning again.” “Oh, judgment.” “Oh, worrying.”

Observe and label each thought, without any judgment.

- You’ll notice that your thoughts fall into specific categories, and you probably have some types of thoughts you rethink many, many, many times a day.

- When I observe and label my thoughts, I notice how often I'm in "planning" mode. I'll be planning my list of things to do, thinking about how I need to do something for work

Fun Fact: We have about 12,000 to 60,000 thoughts per day. But according to some research, as many as 98 percent of them are exactly the same as we had the day before!

Hand out list of generic strategies & check in sheet

Before you leave, I want you to write down three things you are going to work into your daily lives to decrease stress. Which ways are you going to practice de stressing?

Hand out sticky notes to leave on your desk as a positive reminder

Avoiding burnout takes practice just like any other skill. Thankfully, life provides ample training whatever your stress looks like today, you can use these tips to overcome it one step at a time!