

Managing Stress Resources

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Employee Wellness Coordinator**



Objectives

- Discuss the common symptoms of stress
- Provide strategies for identifying and managing stress
- Learn practical tips and techniques to manage current stressors with resources through USG
- Band workout

Disclaimer

- The information provided is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Never disregard professional medical advice, or delay in seeking it, because of information presented in this workshop. Never rely on information in the workshop in place of seeking professional medical advice.
- Guest speakers (KSU) are not responsible or liable for any advice, course of treatment, diagnosis or any other information, that you obtain through the Hoot for Health Program. You are encouraged to consult with your doctor with regard to this information presented during the program. Hoot for Health Program speakers ARE NOT MEDICAL DOCTORS. The information we provide is based on thorough years of studies in our respective health-related disciplines & our experience as professionals. Any recommendations we make about weight training, nutrition, mental health or lifestyle should be discussed between you & your doctor because any changes in your regimen may be detrimental.



How “Well” Are You?

- What does wellness look like?
 - Social wellness
 - Emotional wellness
 - Spiritual wellness
 - Environmental wellness
 - Occupational wellness
 - Intellectual wellness
 - Physical wellness
 - Creative wellness
 - Financial wellness



A Balanced “Wheel of Wellness”



Gaps in Wellness

- What does it mean if your wheel isn't balanced?
 - Something is missing
 - There are hurdles
 - This can produce stress

Why Do We "Stress Out"?

- For two major reasons:
 - We *perceive* a situation as dangerous, difficult, or painful.
 - We don't believe we have the *resources* to cope.



What is Stressful to You?

Work	Roommate	Legal matters
Classes	Childcare	Mental health
Studying	Finances	Law violation
Relationship with partner	Appearance	Spiritual/Religious issues
Relationship with family	Physical Health	Major/Career decisions
Relationship with friends	Not "fitting in"	Attitudes/thoughts
Trauma	Getting married	Buying a house
Change in residence	Change to a new school	Change in amount of recreation
Change in amount of social activities	Change in eating habits	Death of friend/family member



Why Stress Is Important

- The role of stress in cardiac health
 - Long-term stress has been related to 1.5x excess risk of developing coronary heart disease.
 - Acute and chronic stressors increase cardiovascular disease risk and progression by affecting the immune system, endocrine system, and metabolism

Why Stress Is Important

- The impact of stress on all of us (cont'd)
 - 40% of stressed people overeat
 - 31% of adults report skipping a meal due to stress (APA stats)
 - 44% of stressed people lose sleep every night
 - Stress can cause us to lose patience with other, be short, or yell at others



Why Stress Is Important

- Extreme stress (divorce, job loss) can actually shrink the gray matter in the brain in areas tied to emotional and physiological functioning
- Stress related ailments cost the United States \$300 billion per year in medical bills & lost productivity



What IS Stress?

- A psychological and physical response of the body that occurs whenever we must adapt to changing conditions, whether those conditions be real or perceived, positive or **negative**. (AlleyDog Psychology Glossary Stress. (n.d.). Retrieved April 7, 2017 from the AlleyDog Wiki <https://www.alleydog.com/glossary/definition.php?term=Stress>)

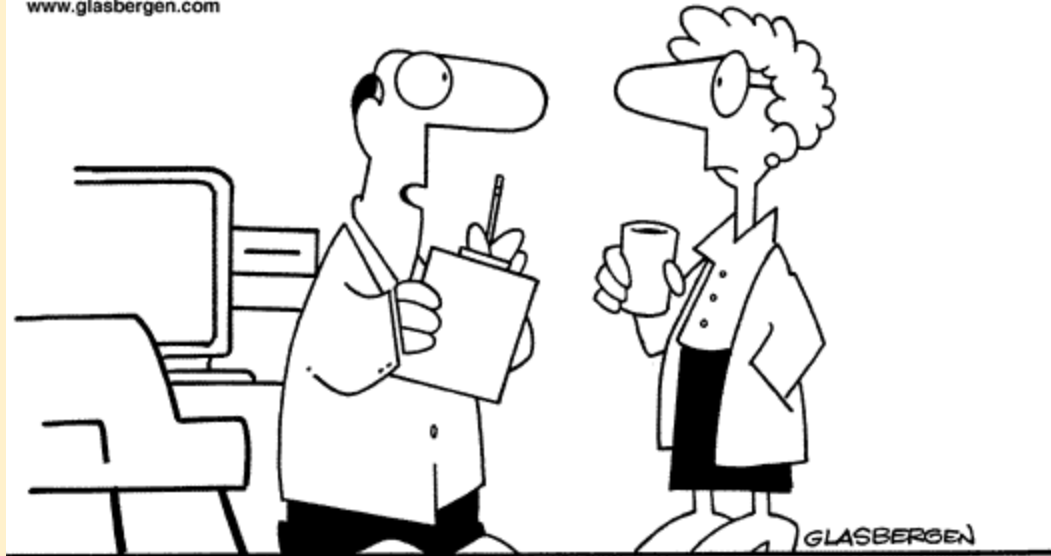
Why Stress Is Important

- The impact of stress on all of us
 - 44% of Americans feel more stressed than they did 5 years ago
 - 1 in 5 Americans experiences extreme stress (heart palpitations, shaking, depression)
 - 3 out of 4 doctors' visits are for stress-related ailments
 - Stress is the basic cause of 60% of all human illness and disease



Where Does Stress Come From?

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“According to the latest research, the average human body is 20% water and 80% stress.”



Examples of Stress

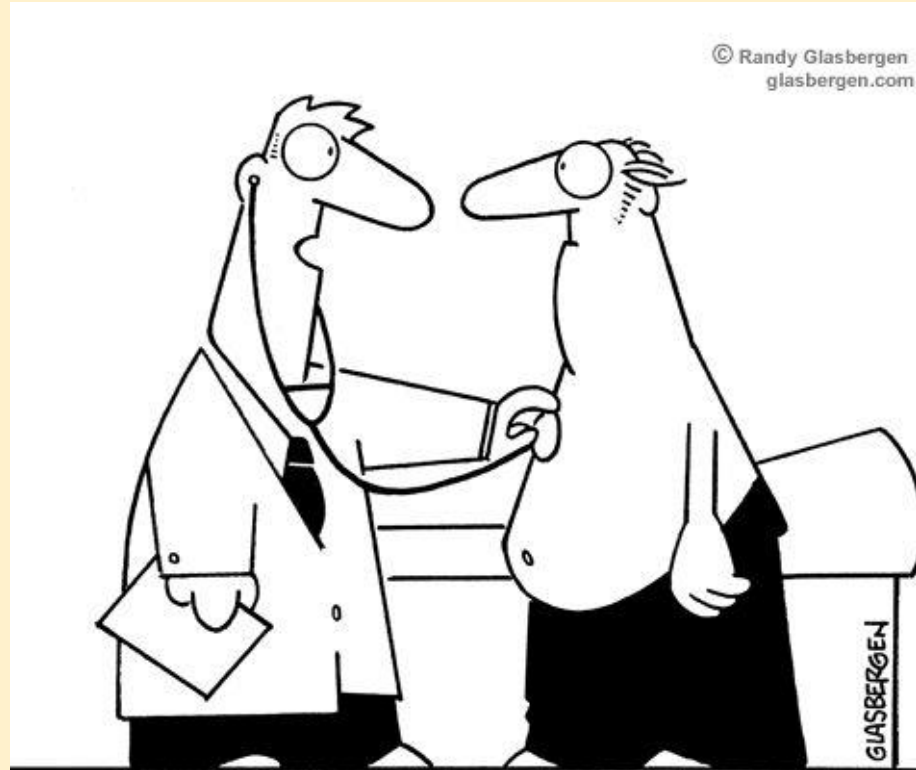
- Stress can be thought of as big, one-time, negative events
 - Losing a job
 - Getting divorced
 - Death in the family
 - Major health crisis
- Stress can also be thought of as daily hassles
 - Traffic
 - Getting the errands done
 - Misplacing something
 - Filling out forms



Is Stress Good or Bad?

- Well... Both
- Stress can help us
 - Motivates us
 - Protects us
 - Provides an adrenaline rush
- But good or bad, it was intended as a short term experience....

What Can Stress Do To Us?



**“Are you under a lot of stress lately,
or have you always had six
separate heartbeats?”**

Physical Symptoms

- Perspiration
- Racing heart
- Shaking
- Nervous tics
- Butterflies
- Nausea/Diarrhea
- Sleep problems
- Headaches



Emotional Symptoms

- Moodiness
- Anxiety
- Short Temper
- Irritability



Cognitive Symptoms

- Low self-esteem
- Fear of failure
- Difficulty concentrating
- Worrying about things
- Forgetfulness
- Preoccupation/rumination



Behavioral Symptoms

- Stuttering
- Crying for no reason
- Impulsivity
- Nervous laughter
- Increase in smoking or drinking
- Grinding teeth
- Overeating



Why Does Stress Work This Way?

- Fight or Flight reflex
 - Based in the sympathetic nervous system
 - Produces symptoms like a racing heart, pupil dilation, rapid breath, tense muscles
- Also produces cortisol
 - Called “the stress hormone”

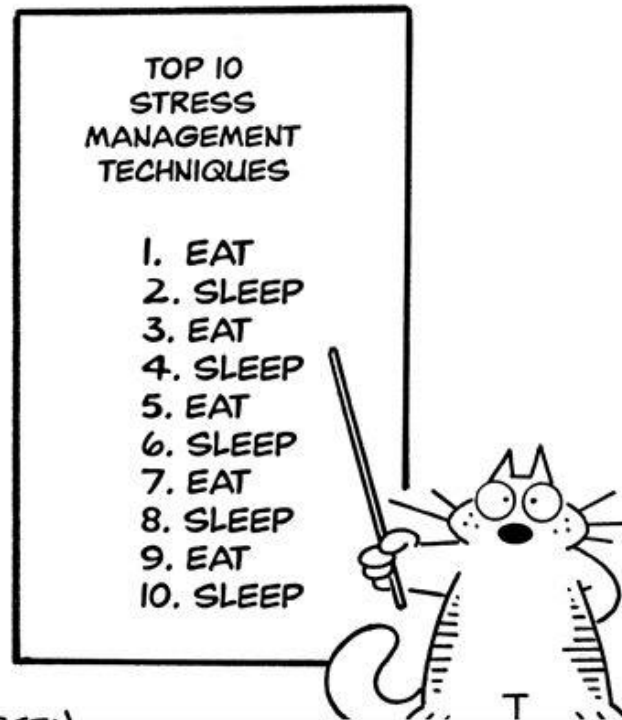
Impact of Cortisol

- Without a release, causing a shut-off of cortisol production, cortisol will build-up in the blood
- This happens with chronic stress
- Results
 - Interferes with immune system
 - Decreases our ability to think
 - Can increase weight gain
 - Can negatively impact blood pressure, cholesterol, and heart disease
 - Increases risk of depression & anxiety



Okay, Stress Is Bad. But What Can We Do About it?

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Step One: Try to Decrease Amount of Stress in Your Life

- Think of the Four A's
 - Alter
 - Avoid
 - Adapt
 - Accept

Four A's

- Alter your life to Avoid stress
 - Cut back
 - Delegate
 - Organize
 - Streamline
- Alter your thoughts to Adapt
 - Changing thoughts to change feelings
- Accept
 - Don't fight what can't be changed
 - Build the ability to be in the moment

Complete Four A's Activity



Counter Your Stress

- Meditation/Relaxation
 - Learn how to breathe
- Build positive experiences in your life
- Research support for many kinds of anti-stress activities
 - Connecting with others
 - Emotional sharing
 - Pets
 - Laughter
 - Music



Suggestions for Reducing Stress

- **1. Find a support system.** Find someone to talk to about your feelings and experiences.

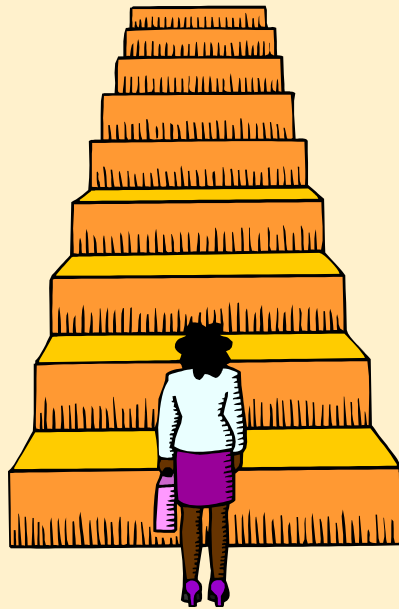


Suggestions for Reducing Stress

- **2. Change your attitude.** Find other ways to think about stressful situations.
 - "Life is 10% what happens to us, and 90% how we react to it."



Suggestions for Reducing Stress



- **3. Be realistic.** Set practical goals for dealing with situations and solving problems.
 - Develop realistic expectations of yourself and others.

Suggestions for Reducing Stress

- **4. Get organized and take charge.** Being unorganized or engaging in poor planning often leads to frustration or crisis situations, which most always leads to feeling stressed.
 - Plan your time, make a schedule, establish your priorities.



Suggestions for Reducing Stress

- **5. Take breaks, give yourself "me time."** Learn that taking time to yourself for rejuvenation and relaxation is just as important as giving time to other activities.
 - At minimum, take short breaks during your busy day.



Suggestions for Reducing Stress

- **6. Take good care of yourself.**
- Eat properly, get regular rest, keep a routine.
- Allow yourself to do something you enjoy each day.
 - Ironically, the time we need to take care of ourselves the most, when we are stressed, is the time we do it the least.



Suggestions for Reducing Stress

- **7. Learn to say "no."** Learn to pick and choose which things you will say "yes" to and which things you will not.
 - Protect yourself by not allowing yourself to take on every request or opportunity that comes your way.



Suggestions for Reducing Stress



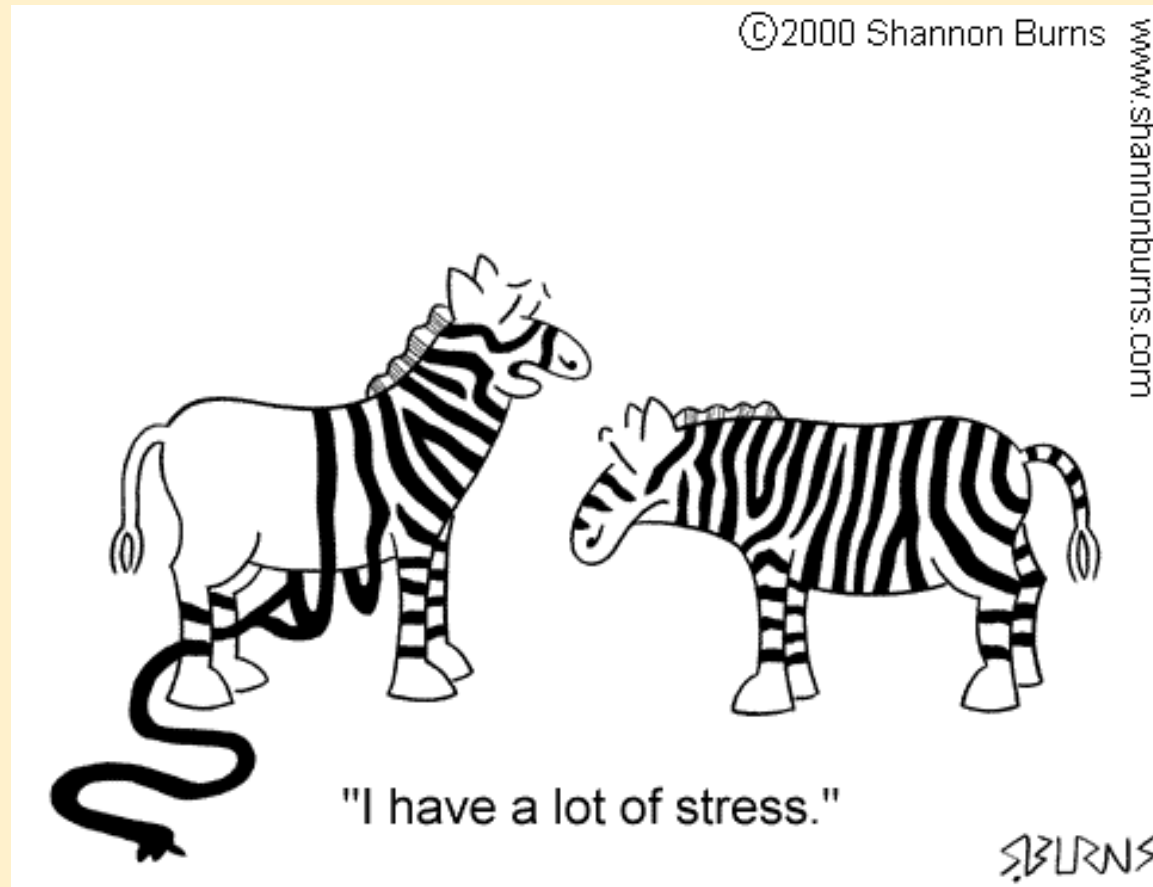
- **8. Get regular exercise.** Exercising regularly can help relieve some symptoms of depression and stress, and help us to maintain our health.

Alter the Sensations in Your Body

- Slow your breathing down with diaphragm breathing
 - Increases oxygen you take in
 - Slows down your heartrate too
 - Stimulates vagus nerve, which can shut off cortisol
- Relax your muscles with progressive muscle relaxation
 - <https://caps.byu.edu/relaxation-recordings>
 - <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~healthed/relax/downloads.html>
 - <http://www.innerhealthstudio.com/progressive-muscle-relaxation-exercise.html>



Here's What's Most Important



Here's What's Most Important

- DON'T try to do all of these things
 - That would be overwhelming
 - That would make you feel more stressed
 - And that's not our goal!

Here's What's Most Important

- Make **one small change**
 - Pick what is best or easiest for you and try it
 - Note any improvements in how you feel afterwards
 - Feel good about your ability to make some progress
 - Decide if you want/need to make another change
 - Repeat

Get Started

- Employees covered on a USG healthcare plan or eligible
- Visit oneusgconnect.usg.edu
 - Log on under Manage My Benefits
 - Click on Well-being
 - How to update your contact information:
 - Self-service payroll system or contact your HR office
- Covered spouses: ourwellbeing.usg.edu
 - Activate your account to get started
 - First name, Last name, Date of birth
 - Receive verification code



ESPYR-Employee Assistance Program

- ESPYR.com Password: USGcares
- Assessments: The Resilience Scale, wellbeing assessment, perceived stress scale
- A few of the many webinars: The Power of Positive Self-Talk, Minimizing Worry to Maximize Your Life and Finding Your Balance

Any Questions?

- Thank you all for attending!
- Be sure to sign in if you already have not done so, resources will be sent to you electronically.