

STRESS MANAGEMENT

Stress is that which pushes us. It is our reaction to positive and negative experiences in our lives.

Stress Management is not about trying to eliminate stress, but rather learning to deal with it better. Stress lets us know we are alive: the only true "Stress Free " environment is six feet under. Here are some helpful hints to manage your stress.

RAISE SELF ESTEEM

Self esteem is not based on truth. It is a subjective valuation of yourself based on what you choose to focus on at that moment. Stay empowered in whatever situation arises and you will increase your self esteem.

Below are some things you can do to stay empowered.

- Cope with differences- recognize that differences must exist. Don't curse that your husband thinks like a man - he is a man and with that comes differences. A simple acceptance of this fact can lead to a better understanding and increased self esteem.
- Increase choices. We always have choices, often it is just that we don't like them. By denying that it is our choice we choose powerlessness which increases stress. Just changing your vocabulary to "I choose" rather than "I have to" reduces stress dramatically.
- Own your problems - you are not stressed because of your boss - it has more to do with the energy you give them.
- Get away from problems that are keeping you stressed - even if it is for 30 seconds.
- Stay neutral or indifferent with difficult people. Keep your power to yourself
- Focus on the positive

COPE WITH LOW SELF ESTEEM

We all have times of low self esteem the trick is to stay functional during this time. Remember it takes a smaller push to topple you over while off balanced due to low self esteem.

- Gain support - either from special people that we know, or a substitute security blanket, e.g pets, hot bath, massage
- create time for hobbies
- Look at the big picture - value system beyond religion - faith that things happen for a reason
- Don't attempt to do those things that require large amounts of energy or high self esteem. When you flail around like that it only decreases your self esteem. Only do what is absolutely necessary. Remember Low Self Esteem = Low Energy
Manage your time better. even write out a plan of action to support you.

INCREASE ENERGY

We only have a certain amount of energy per day, but this amount will increase according to what you do. The more energy we have, the better we deal with stress.

- Look after your whole wellbeing *exercise - a little each week will increase the energy you have to spend. *use natural healing methods such as Chiropractic. *eat well - you don't FEEL good health, it just works. Unlike nicotine, caffeine, sugar or alcohol you are not going to say "woooaa, my broccoli just kicked in I feel great," but it will increase your overall energy, making a big difference to how well you cope with stress.
- You cannot enlighten the unconscious - so spend your energy on those that support you, don't waste your time & energy trying to get those that don't to listen - they won't. You don't have control over the attitudes that surround you, so don't try to gain it.
- Make time for yourself - if it is good quality time where you do whatever you choose it doesn't have to be a lot and it will greatly increase your energy.

INCREASE CONSCIOUSNESS

We have mechanisms to tell us when something is going wrong. Recognizing these will overtake further, more damaging stress.

- Recognize your mechanisms. A headache is a mechanism, feeling badly on Sunday about going to work on Monday is a mechanism, these warn us of potential stress factors that are getting out of hand. It's like taking a bite of a hot pizza and burning your mouth, don't stick it back in your mouth for another go, chewing rapidly in the hope that it will cool down. Wait for it to cool. Take note that you have a strong dislike for your current work and do something about it. Find out why you have a headache, it's trying to tell you something.
- Make space to learn new things. If your 'cup is full' you can't very well put more in it.

IDENTIFY YOUR VALUE SYSTEM & SUPPORT IT BEHAVIOURALLY

We have three main values - work, home and health. Identify which of these you value the most, and support it by the amount of energy you spend on it. People often say I value my kids, but then never make the time to spend with them.

- Whatever we want to value (even smaller issues like friendship,) support it behaviourally. Actually make a time to spend time with your friends don't just say "we should get together," because you rarely do.
- Rotate these values. Recognize that at different times you will need to shift your energy onto a different primary value - you won't have enough energy to value all of them all the time. Sometimes work may need some extra energy, other times health etc.
- If you violate your value system by placing more energy with a secondary value, your stress will increase.

PROBLEM SOLVE

Problem solve when your self esteem is high - this is difficult enough. They are almost impossible to solve when your self esteem is low SO DON'T TRY.

- Recognize which problems are yours and which are not - you can't solve a problem if it is beyond your control, nor can you solve it if you don't recognize that its your problem.
- Make more decisions when your self esteem is high.
- Take things one step at a time. Slice your problem into pieces and deal with it one piece at a time.
- Determine the difference between true issues and surface conflicts. You can do this by not acting upon what's bugging you 'in the moment.' Wait until later when you've calmed down to attack the problem. We spend too much time and energy on conflict if we always act 'in the moment.'

SUMMARY

- * **FOCUS ON THE POSITIVE** - your self esteem depends on what you focus on.
- * **GAIN SUPPORT** - People, pets, hobbies.
- * **SUPPORT YOUR WELLBEING** - Eat healthy , exercise, heal naturally - Chiropractic.
- * **BECOME CONSCIOUS** - Don't ignore warning signs.
- * **SUPPORT VALUES BEHAVIOURLY** - Do it as well as say it.
- * **PROBLEM SOLVE ONE STEP AT A TIME.** - When self esteem is high.

Don't try to do away with your imperfections. We are all things, we have both high and low self esteem, it's just that we just focus on different things at different times. The cycle is always changing: stress management is about learning to turn with the cycle.