



Coping with the Stress of Everyday Problems

Everyone has stress. It is a normal part of life. You can feel stress in your body when you have too much to do or when you haven't slept well. You can also feel stress when you worry about things like your job, money, relationships, or a friend or family member who is ill or in crisis. In response to these strains your body automatically increases blood pressure, heart rate, respiration, metabolism, and blood flow to your muscles. This response is intended to help your body react quickly and effectively to a high-pressure situation. However, when you are constantly reacting to stressful situations without making adjustments to counter the effects, you will feel stress which can threaten your health and well-being.

Tips for Reducing or Controlling Stress:

If you are feeling stressed, there are steps you can take to feel better. As you read the following suggestions, remember that conquering stress will not come from a half-hearted effort, nor will it come overnight. It will take determination, persistence and time.

Be realistic. If you feel overwhelmed by some activities (yours and/or your family's), learn to say NO! Eliminate an activity that is not absolutely necessary. If you meet resistance, give reasons why you're making the changes.

Shed the "superman/superwoman" urge. No one is perfect, so don't expect perfection from yourself or others. Ask yourself, "What really needs to be done?" How much can I do? Is the deadline realistic? What adjustments can I make?" Don't hesitate to ask for help if you need it.

Meditate. Just ten to twenty minutes of quiet reflection may bring relief from chronic stress as well as increase your tolerance to it. Use the time to listen to music, relax and try to think of pleasant things or nothing.

Visualize. Use your imagination and picture how you can manage a stressful situation more successfully. Many people feel visual rehearsals boost self-confidence and enable them to take a more positive approach to a difficult task.

Take one thing at a time. For people under tension or stress, their day-to-day workload can sometimes seem unbearable. The best way to cope with this feeling of being overwhelmed is to take one task at a time. Make a list of things you need to get done and start with one task. Once you accomplish that task, choose the next one.

Exercise. Regular exercise is a popular way to relieve stress. Twenty to thirty minutes of physical activity benefits both the body and the mind.

Hobbies. Take a break from your worries by doing something you enjoy.

Share your feelings. A conversation with a friend lets you know that you are not the only one having a bad day, caring for a sick child or working in a busy office. Stay in touch with friends and family. Ask them how they have dealt with a similar situation that may be "stressing you out." Let them provide love, support and guidance.

Be flexible! If you find you're meeting constant opposition in either your personal or professional life, rethink your position or strategy. Arguing only intensifies stressful feelings. Make allowances for other's opinions and be prepared to compromise. If you are willing to be accommodating, others may meet you halfway.

Go easy with criticism. Try not to feel frustrated, disappointed or even "trapped" when another person does not measure up. Avoid criticisms about character, such as "You're so stubborn," and try providing constructive suggestions for how someone might do something differently.

Exercise

OF THE MONTH Downward-Facing Dog



Come onto the floor on your hands and knees. Your knees should be directly under your hips and your hands should be slightly in front of your shoulders. Lift your knees away from the floor pushing your hips up toward the ceiling. Keep your arms straight so that your arms and back form a straight line. Press your heels into the ground and relax your head and neck. Hold your body in this inverted "V" position for at least 15-30 seconds.

Benefits: Energizes that body; Stretches the shoulder, hamstrings, calves, arches and hands; strengthens the arms and legs.

Think Before you Drink



When counting calories, we often forget that drinks have calories too. Or we realize that they do but instead choose to ignore them. But the amount of calories in a drink are often the most detrimental thing to a diet. And alcoholic drinks are the biggest culprit.

Here are some examples of those calorie counts and what you would have to do to burn that many calories.

<u>The Drink</u>	<u>The Calories</u>	<u>How to Burn that many Calories</u>
1 glass of Merlot	122 Calories	29 minutes of brisk walking
1 bottle of light beer	103 Calories	37 minutes of crunches
1 prepackaged Pina Colada	526 Calories	79 minutes on a stationary bike
1 frozen Margarita	520 Calories	106 minutes on the elliptical
1 Blue Moon draft	190 Calories	32 minutes of swimming
1 Rum and Coke	361 Calories	31 minutes of jumping rope
1 glass of Champagne	106 Calories	29 minutes of pushups
1 Mai Tai	306 Calories	37 minutes of running
1 Screwdriver	208 Calories	71 minutes of Pilates

Newsletter Quiz

1. List three stress reducing techniques that would be reasonable for you to implement?
2. What benefits could you gain from performing the Downward-Facing Dog?

To earn your Wellness Incentive Points, e-mail your response to Katie@wellworksinc.com by May 31, 2014.