

Stress & Well-Being

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Stress comes up when you feel the demands of a situation or event are too much to manage. It can come up with everyday situations

- Changes in a relationship
- Changes in housing arrangements
- The death of a family member or friend
- Losing a job or other source of income

3 Basic Dimensions of Mental Health and Well-being

Thoughts

The way you think about something has a big impact on your mental health. Changes in your thoughts often go along with changes in your mental health. When you feel well, it's easier to see positive aspects. When

you aren't well, it's easy to get stuck on negative things and ignore positive things.

- Tense muscles
- Insomnia
- Fatigue

Behaviour

behaviours are the helpful or harmful things you do. Other people can usually see your behaviours. Changes in behaviour often go along with changes in mental health.

Changes in your Behaviors

- Withdrawing from others
- Fidgeting, feeling restless
- Smoking, drinking or using drugs more than usual
- Avoiding stressful situations

Emotions

That are the way you feel. They can be pleasant or unpleasant. Changes in emotions often go along with changes in mental health.

Changes in your Feelings

- Feeling worried or confused
- Feeling angry or irritable
- Feeling overwhelmed or helpless
- Feeling like you can't cope

Are you experiencing signs of stress

Changes in your Body

- Headache
- Rapid breathing and heart rate

Changes in your thoughts

- Struggling to concentrate, remember or make decisions
- Lack of self-confidence
- Having a negative attitude towards yourself and your life

Managing stress***Focus on what you can do***

- Resist the urge to give up or run away from problems – these coping choices often make stress worse in the long run

Manage your emotions

- Try not to bottle your emotions up. Try expressing your feelings by talking or writing them down
- Try not to lash out at other people. Yelling or swearing usually pushes people away when you need them the most

Seek out support

- Ask friend or family member for their opinion or advice on how to handle the situation
- Get more information to make decisions
- Accept help with daily tasks and responsibilities, such as chores or child care
- Get emotional support from someone who understands you and cares about you

Focus on the positives

- Focus on strengths rather than weaknesses – remind yourself that no one is perfect
- Look for the challenges in a situation by asking, “What can I learn from this?” Or, “how can I grow as a person?”
- Try to keep things in perspective
- Try to keep a sense of humor
- Remind yourself you are doing the best you can give the circumstances

Make a plan of action

- Identify and define the problem
- Determine your goal
- Brainstorm possible solutions
- Consider the pros and cons of each possible solution
- Choose the best solution for you – the perfect solution rarely exists

- Put your plan into action
- Evaluate your efforts and choose another strategy, if needed

Self-care

- Eat healthy foods and drink plenty of water throughout the day to maintain your energy
- Do exercise regularly or do something active on a regular basis
- Avoid using alcohol or drugs as a way to cope
- Explore relaxation techniques like meditation or yoga etc.
- Try to balance work and play – too much work can eventually lead to burnout
- Spend time on things you enjoy, such as hobbies or other activities
- Get a good night’s sleep

Take care of your relationships

- Be assertive about your needs rather than aggressive or passive. Being assertive means expressing your needs without hurting others
- Try not to confront others in a mean-spirited or antagonizing manner
- Accept responsibility, apologize or try to put things right when appropriate
- Talk to others who are involved and keep them informed about your decisions

Spirituality

- Consider spiritual practices that fit with your beliefs, such as prayers
- Spend time at your place of worship or get together with others who share your beliefs
- Talk with a respected member or leader of your spiritual community

Acceptance

- Denying that the problem exists may prolong your suffering and interfere with your ability to take action
- Acceptance is a process that takes time. You may need to remind yourself to be patient
- Death, illness, major losses or major life changes can be particularly difficult to accept
- Try not to get caught up in wishful thinking or dwell on what could have been

Distractions

- Going for a drive or walk
- Leisure activities, exercise, hobbies
- Housework, yard work or gardening
- Watching TV or movies
- Playing video games
- Spending time with friends or family
- Spending time with pets
- Surfing the internet or sending e-mail
- Sleeping or taking a short nap when used for short periods of time. These forms of distraction create opportunities to solve the problem

Problem -Solving***Step 1- I think I have a problem. How do I fix it?'******Pay attention to your feelings***

Negative feelings often point to problems. When you pay attention to these feelings, you often recognize the problems sooner. For example, feeling angry whenever you talk to your boss may be a sign that there is a problem at work.

Make a list

Write out a list of the problems you need to fix before they turn into bigger problems. Some problems seem to stick around. Other problems seem to go away, but they pop up later on.

Look for opportunities

Don't focus on the negative parts of the situation. Look for any opportunities or challenges instead. If a problem seems less scary, you're more likely to try to solve it.

Step 2 -'What's the problem?'

You can't solve a problem until you know what the problem is. In order to do that, ask yourself these questions:

1. What is the situation right now? • What's making me feel upset?
2. What would I like the situation to be? • How would things be if I weren't upset?
3. What are the obstacles? • What's standing between me and my ideal situation?

Be as specific as possible. If your definition of the problem is vague, it's hard to know where your solution should start

Step 3-How will I know when I get there?'

Choose a goal for your problem.

The **SMART** principle may help you set goals: Goals should be

Specific

Measurable

Attainable

Realistic and

Time-limited

Step 4-'What are some possible solutions?'

It's easy to come up with the same ideas over and over again. When it comes to difficult problems, the first ideas aren't always the best

Step 5-'what's the best solution?'

Always pick the best solution for you – the perfect solution rarely exists. The key is to pick the solution that has the most benefits and the least costs. There will probably be some negatives to any solution. Use the following questions as a guide to picking the best solution.

Step 6-put your solution into action

After you've picked a solution, you need to make a plan of action! Write down the steps it will take to carry out your solution. You're more likely to take action if you know exactly what you need to do.

Step 7-check up on your progress

It's a good idea to track how well your solution is actually working. If your problem is resolving itself, be sure to reward yourself for a job well done. If your solution isn't working, you can check to see what might be wrong. Remember, even the best plans don't always work as expected.

Anger Management***1. Emotions******Relaxation***

You can't be relaxed and angry at the same time. Think of anger as your boiling point. If you turn down the temperature, you keep yourself from boiling over. Learning to relax can help lower your daily arousal level.

Then, when you're provoked, you have a much greater distance to travel before you get .

Humor

It is also difficult to be angry when you're laughing. It is easy to take life's annoyances too seriously. Making an effort to see the humor in your frustrations and aggravations can help to combat an automatic angry reaction.

2. Thinking Pattern

Manage Your Thoughts

A good way to lower anger is to manage angry thoughts about the situation.

Take the following steps:

- Examine the evidence – what evidence supports your view of the situation?
- Look for alternatives – what are some alternative ways of viewing the situation or conflict

Empathy

You may feel angry when you think that the other person's behavior was intended to hurt you in some way. Often, other people's behavior has nothing to do with you personally.

3. Behaviours

Problem-Solving

Anger management is a strategic and calculated confrontation aimed at solving a problem. The trick to managing anger well is to have a problem-solving goal.

This means making sure that your response to your angry feelings is directed at solving the problem. Don't take your feelings out on everyone around you; use them in a directed way to solve the problem.

Being Assertive Without Being Aggressive

How you communicate depends on your goals. Your goals (even when angry) may include improving a valued relationship, maintaining your self-respect, solving problems

Social Support

1. Don't be afraid to take social risks

It's easy to assume that other people know what you need, but this usually isn't true. You may need to tell others what you need. Be as specific as possible in your requests. However, be careful not to overwhelm your support providers.

2. Get more from the support you have

Ask the people you know to help you broaden

your networks. If you have recently become single, ask your friends to introduce you to other single people your age. If you have recently come out, ask your friends to introduce you to others in the community.

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4. Create new opportunities

You may create new opportunities to meet others when you step outside of your usual activities. For example, you may meet new people when you join a club or group or get involved in an organization

5. Let go of unhealthy ties

Walking away from any relationship is painful – even when the relationship is causing harm – but it may be necessary. For example, if you're trying to quit drinking and your friends only ever want to spend time in bars and clubs, you may decide to let them go. Use your judgment, though. It may be possible to spend less time with certain people without fully abandoning the friendship.

6. Make a plan

Sometimes, the best way to find the support you need is through a support group. If you need support for a highly specific problem, like managing a health problem, a formal support group may be the best option.

7. Be a joiner

Making new friends can take time. You may need to meet many new people to make just one new friend. Building intimacy also takes time. It can take several months to feel close to someone and feel like you can count on their support.

8. Be patient

Negative relationships are hard on your emotional health. Some negative aspects may be obvious, such as abuse. Other times, they may be more subtle, such as excessive dependence or control issues.

9. Avoid negative relationships

You're more likely to build strong friendships if you are a good friend, too. Keep in touch with your support network, offer support to others when they need it and let them know that you appreciate them.

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