

Chaplain's Life Enrichment Program

STRESS MANAGEMENT

stress - what it is and how to manage it

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What is Stress?

Mental

Physical

Emotional

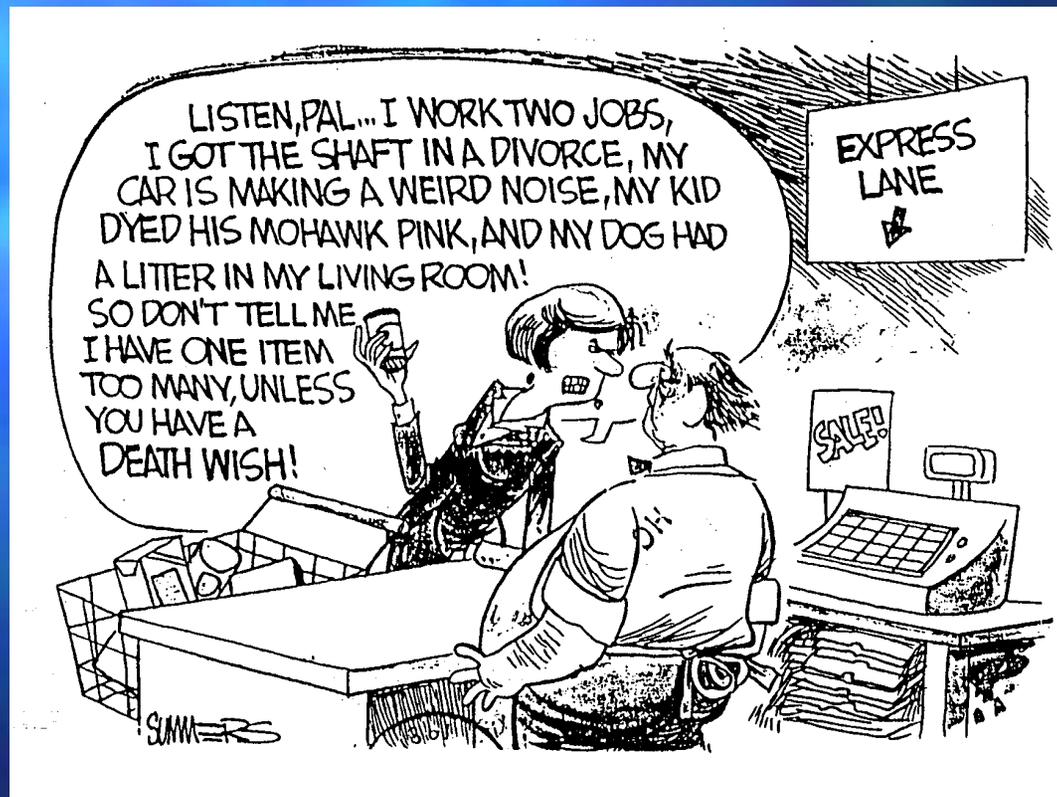
Stress is . . .

“the body’s response to any demand placed on it.
Whether pleasant or unpleasant.”

Dr. Hans Selye
(the Father of Stress Research)

Fight or Flight

What causes you stress?



Stress is . . .

*A **NORMAL** part of life.*

CAPT J. Vieira, CHC, USN, 04/2001

Our problem is not stress but

OVERSTRESS

or

*too much of the **WRONG** kind of stress.*

Bad Stress

when you've reached the limits
of your ability to cope . . .

"I feel under a lot of pressure - it's just too much!"

*"Everything and everyone bothers me.
I don't have any patience anymore."*

"I just seem to get into conflicts with everyone."

"I just can't seem to do anything right!"

Short Term Responses

- jittery or butterflies in stomach
- lump in throat
- tightness in chest
- heart pounding
- pain in neck or back
- feel “all wound up”
- racing thoughts
- “fly off the handle” at something minor

Major Causes of Stress

- personal loss
- illness or injury
- job change - PCS
- financial problems
- family changes
- upcoming retirement
- *CHANGE OF ANY KIND*

Signs of Stress

- anxiety
- bursts of anger
- low frustration tolerance
- tired all the time
- irritability
- forgetfulness
- accident proneness
- not able to relax

Signs of Stress

- change in eating habits
- change in sleeping patterns
- preoccupied
- difficulty concentrating
- self-doubt
- feelings of worthlessness
- feelings of suspiciousness
- awfulizing - *telling yourself how awful you feel*
- controlling behaviors

Physical Symptoms of Stress

- migraine or tension headaches
- muscle aches
- tiredness or fatigue
- back pain
- ulcers
- high blood pressure
- skin problems

How to Handle Stress

1. Admit you are stressed

2. Identify the *CAUSES*

Is there anything you can change?

*Are there ways in which **YOU** are*

*being your **OWN Worst Enemy**?*

3. Take *PROACTIVE* steps to manage it

Twelve Steps to Stress Relief

1. Know your **LIMITATIONS** and set realistic goals
2. The only person you can change is **YOU**
3. Don't fight **IMPOSSIBLE SITUATIONS**

*“God grant me the Serenity
to accept the things I cannot change,
the Courage to change the things I can,
and the Wisdom to know the difference.”*

Twelve Steps to Stress Relief

4. Keep **PERSPECTIVE**

- *“and this too shall pass”*
- *Take one day at a time*
- *Find humor in your situation*

5. Avoid too much **CHANGE** all at once

6. **RESOLVE DIFFERENCES** right away

7. **REST** and **RELAX** - learn to let go

Twelve Steps to Stress Relief

8. Eat **HEALTHY FOOD** - watch your diet
9. Get plenty of **EXERCISE**
10. Share your **FEELINGS**
11. Do something you enjoy
12. Practice the **RELAXATION RESPONSE**

*Say **RELAX** 20 times
Let your body get heavy*

How to Handle Negative Thoughts

(realize the power of your mind)

1. Say to yourself **STOP!**
2. **DIVERT** your attention
3. Keep **PERSPECTIVE**
4. Say the word **RELAX** 20 times
and let your body get heavy

Other Suggestions

- **Use Relaxation Tapes**
- **Meditate**
- **Listen to Books while driving**
- **Listen to soothing music**