

## **Busting Stress in the Workplace**

IDEPC: Immunization, Tuberculosis & International Health

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Work Well vision: Provide a workplace that helps us care for ourselves as well as we care for all Minnesotans.

To realize that vision, it's important that we address managing stress.

### **Outline:**

1. Understand stress
2. Top 2 ways to bust stress
  - a. Living in your healthiest state of mind
  - b. Being physically active

### **Define stress**

1. We all encounter stress in our daily lives, when we **perceive** that demands go beyond our ability to mobilize resources.
2. Death of a parent, spouse or child creates the most stress (100) Divorce is around a 65, as is puberty. The holiday season makes the list, scoring a 10.
3. Each person perceives stress differently (calls for compassion) and what is stressful one day may not be stressful the next.

## Importance of addressing stress

It's all white water; how to manage

- Work Well (most attended sessions relate to stress)
- Individuals (if unmanaged, impacts health)
- Chronic stress suppressed the immune system.
- Stress and cancer
  - While scientists have not proven a direct relationship between psychological stress and the *development* of cancer, say, they have found evidence that stress may *affect the course cancer takes*, for better or for worse.
  - Stress can increase tumor size or the spread of cancer in the body.
  - There is also new data that associates stress mgmt. with a longer average period of time before breast cancer recurrence, and also a longer average survival time.

## 1. Live in your healthiest state of mind

Remember: defined stress as “perceived”, can change by day or mood.

Good news: we can influence stress

1. Understand your **mindset**.
  - a. Your mindset comes from painful memories, negative emotions and habits
  - b. Wikipedia: cognitive bias, creates our mental world
  - c. Mindset need not be cast in stone
  - d. Think of a personal example of mindset
  
2. Know your **mood**.
  - a. Thinking is the steering wheel of life. Our thinking, our perceptions are a function of mood changes.
  - b. When we are in a low mood, we're insecure, overwhelmed, irritable and fearful. We see the world as full of problems.
  - c. When we are in a high mood, we are optimistic and wise. We have a lightness of being.
  - d. Think of a personal example of mood
  
3. Notice your **feelings**.
  - a. They are your barometer. They tell you when you are off-center.
  - b. Think of a personal example of feelings
  
4. Each mindset, each mood, each feeling has its own set of responses.

5. My example: Saturday mornings without the kids
- i. Feel lonely
  - ii. Mindset: my destiny
  - iii. Low mood: sulky, unproductive, despondent
- Strategies: Make myself tackle something
- iv. Get outside.
  - v. Service to others (call Betty)

**Notice: nothing is being “done” to me, it’s my state of mind at the moment, which I need to notice and influence.**

6. When you live in a healthy state of mind:
- a. Resilient
  - b. Optimistic
  - c. Take care of yourself
  - d. Eat well
  - e. Sleep well
  - f. Creative, inspired, energized.
  - g. Live with integrity because don’t see self as victim
  - h. Laugh more/Cry more?!
7. No bad moods? Stuff it? No, but when my spirits are low, more likely to want to talk. Maybe best not to, or discuss why it’s difficult to see straight when your in a low mood, share possibilities and visions

## 2. Be Physical Activity

### FUNNY KIDS ICE SCRAPER

1. Physical activity guidelines
  - a. 150 minutes per week minimum
  - b. Moderate
  - c. Moderate is relative
  - d. Times 2
  - e. Don't be inactive
  - f. More is better
  
2. Younger Next Year-kick butt or decay

## **Brainstorm**

Opportunities to reduce stress during the workday?

- Eat away from your desk
- Take a walk (walking guide/up and down stairs)
- Be with friends, co-workers
- Quiet room
- Exercise Room
- Fit Pit classes
- Meditate at your desk (or guided imagery, pray, body scan, breathe)
- Stretch
- Service to others (reflect on value of work to bringing in a fruit bowl to share)
- Dodge self-talk
- JourneyWell class
- EAP (back of insurance card)

[WORK WELL WEBSITE](#) from Intranet News

[“WHERE THE HECK IS MATT?”](#)

## **Conclusions**

15+15+30=60

Compression of morbidity graph

## **Thanks to:**

Susan Erstad

Chris VanBergen

Nadya Sabuwala

## **Questions?**

## **Sources:**

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4. Karen Hanauer, State of MN Employee Assistance Program. [Karen.Hanauer@state.mn.us](mailto:Karen.Hanauer@state.mn.us)