

WELLNESS

HOW TO DEAL WITH STRESS AND PURSUE A BALANCED LIFESTYLE

- Mrs. M. SATHIYA & Mrs. T. SUDHA

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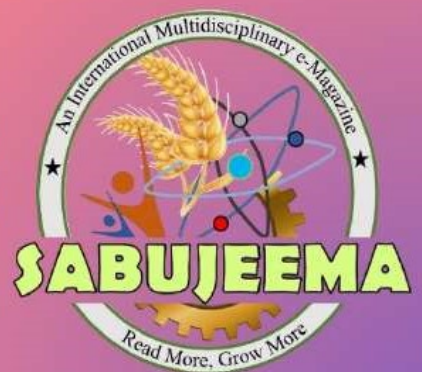
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HOW TO DEAL WITH STRESS AND PURSUE A BALANCED LIFESTYLE

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To deal effectively with stress, you need to think about your physical health, the way you interact with others, and your goals and priorities in life—that is, what you consider to be truly important. This article will review some practical principles that can help you to deal better with stress and perhaps even reduce it.

TRY TO LIVE ONE DAY AT A TIME

Daily anxieties are a part of life. But do not increase today’s anxieties by adding tomorrow’s to them. Try to live one day at a time. Stress can cause anxiety. So try this: First, recognize that some stress is inevitable. Fretting over things you cannot prevent

increases your stress. Second, understand that quite often things do not turn out the way we may fear they will.

SET REASONABLE STANDARDS

Do not be a perfectionist. Avoid setting unrealistically high standards for yourself or others. Be modest, set reasonable standards, and know both your limitations and those of others. When you do this, you will reduce stress all around and even encourage greater success. Also, keep a sense of humor. When you laugh—even when something goes wrong—you relieve tension and brighten your mood.

KNOW WHAT STRESSES YOU

Negative emotions can cloud clear thinking, so try to stay calm. Identify what stresses you, and note your response. For example, when you feel stressed, note your thoughts, feelings, and behavior, perhaps even making a record of them. By becoming more aware of your response to stress, you may be able to deal with it more effectively. Also, think of ways to eliminate stressful things from your life. If that is unrealistic, look for ways to reduce their impact, perhaps by managing your tasks or time more efficiently. Try to see things in a different light. What stresses you may not stress someone else. The difference may be in viewpoint. Consider these three suggestions:

1. Do not be quick to assume bad motives. A person may cut ahead of you in a line. If you attribute his act to rudeness, you may become upset. Instead, why not assume that his motive was good?
2. See the positive side of a situation. A long wait at a doctor’s office or an airport is easier to bear if you use the time to do



some reading or to catch up on work or e-mail.

3. Keep the big picture in mind. Ask yourself, ‘Will this problem be a big issue tomorrow or next week?’ Distinguish between minor or short-term issues and more serious ones.

TRY TO BE ORDERLY

Try to maintain order in your life. We like a reasonable amount of order in life. One thing that can contribute to disorder—and stress—is procrastination, and this may lead to a growing list of unfinished tasks. Why not try these two suggestions?

1. Make a practical schedule, and stick to it.
2. Identify and correct any attitudes that cause you to procrastinate.

PURSUE A BALANCED LIFESTYLE

Workaholics can deprive themselves of the benefits of their “two handfuls of hard work.” They may have no time or energy left to enjoy what they worked for. Have a realistic view of work and money. More money does not mean more happiness or less stress. In fact, the opposite can be true. Make time to relax. You relieve stress when you do things you enjoy. However, passive recreation, such as watching TV, may not help. Keep technology in its place. Avoid constantly checking e-mail, texts, or social media sites. Unless circumstances require it, do not check work-related e-mail outside of working hours.

TAKE CARE OF YOUR HEALTH

Regular exercise promotes better health. Develop healthful habits. Physical activity can lift your mood and improve your body’s response to stress. Eat nutritious food, and try to avoid skipping meals. Be sure to

get enough rest. Avoid harmful “solutions” to stress, such as smoking or drug and alcohol abuse. In the long run, these heighten stress, perhaps by robbing you of your health and hard-earned money. See your doctor if your stress becomes overwhelming. Getting professional help is not an admission of failure.

SET PRIORITIES

Carefully consider your priorities. List your tasks in order of importance. This will help you focus on the more important jobs, and it will reveal which ones you can put off, delegate, or even eliminate. For a week, keep track of how you use your time. Then look for ways to make better use of it. The more you are in control, the less pressured you will feel. Schedule some downtime. Even short breaks can reinvigorate you and reduce your stress.

GET SUPPORT

Kind, compassionate words from others can lift your spirits. Talk things over with an understanding person. A confidant may help you to see things differently or even to see a solution you overlooked. And just unburdening yourself can make you feel better. Ask for help. If a work associate stresses you, look for ways to improve the situation. For example, could you kindly and tactfully tell the person how he or she makes you feel?

CARE FOR YOUR SPIRITUAL NEED

As humans, we need more than food, clothing, and shelter, we have a spiritual need. To be happy, we must be conscious of that need and attend to it. Prayer and wholesome meditation can result in deep inner peace. Read spiritually uplifting things.