

STRESS MANAGEMENT: Learn to Ease the Squeeze

Lecture Notes for PowerPoint Presentation

Slide #1 – Title Slide

Slide #2

You can open up the conversation by stating the fact that according to the American Psychological Association, in 2014, teens were more stressed out than adults.

So, what is stress? Stress is the way your body reacts to a difficult or intimidating experience.

Slide #3

There are two different types of stress. The most common form of stress is acute stress. Acute stress in small doses, can feel thrilling. Like the first time you go skiing. But a lot of acute stress can be very harmful.

Here are some symptoms:

- Feeling anxious or angry suddenly
- Tension headache, back pain, jaw pain and other muscular tensions
- Stomach problems
- Sudden jump in blood pressure, rapid heartbeat, sweaty palms, dizziness, cold hands or feet, shortness of breath and chest pain

Slide #4

Chronic Stress: This is a form of stress that can affect people every day for years and years. This form of stress can take a lot of work to help remedy. Chronic stress can have a major impact on a person's mental and physical health. For some people, chronic stress becomes so familiar that they get used to it, even though it is creating havoc in their lives.

Slide #5:

Stress comes from a variety of places. Here are some possible stressors:

1. Academic Stress
2. Physical Stress
3. Poor Self-Esteem
4. Social Stress
5. Stress Due to Family Problems
6. Financial Stress
7. Traumatic Events
8. Drastic Changes in Life
9. Peer Pressure

Ask teens what kind of stressors they have encountered.



Slide #6:

How to Avoid Stress

- Identify the source of stress – knowing and accepting what is causing your stress can help you take control and work through it.

Slide #7:

How to Avoid Stress

- Feeling stressed? Write it down in a stress journal. Here are some things to take note of:
 - 1) What is causing you stress (make a guess if you're unsure)
 - 2) How you felt, both physically and emotionally
 - 3) How you acted in response
 - 4) What you did to make yourself feel better

Slide #8:

- Replace unhealthy strategies with healthy ones...

Slide #9:

Unhealthy Stress Coping Strategies

- Smoking
- Using pills, drinking alcohol or drugs to relax

Slide #10:

Unhealthy Stress Coping Strategies

- Bingeing on junk food
- Sleeping too much

Slide 11:

Unhealthy Stress Coping Strategies

- Withdrawing from friends, family and activities

Slide 12:

Unhealthy Stress Coping Strategies

- Taking out your stress on others

Slide 13:

Unhealthy Stress Coping Strategies

- Procrastination

Slide 14:

Healthy Stress Coping Strategies

Get Moving! – Exercise helps your brain release endorphins that make you feel good. Plus, working out can also distract you from what is causing the stress! Remember, you don't necessarily have to spend hours at a gym to rake in the benefits of exercise.

Here are some fun and simple ways to get moving:

- Put on some music and dance around
- Take your dog for a walk
- Walk or cycle to school if you can
- Play video games that are more active than just sitting down
- Use the stairs instead of the elevator
- Play sports like tennis, basketball, baseball, etc.
- Go for a swim, jog, take a tai-chi or aerobics class

Slide 15:

Healthy Stress Coping Strategies

Maintain balance with a healthy lifestyle

Besides exercise, here are some other healthy options that can also help you avoid stress:

- Eat a healthy diet
- Reduce caffeine and sugar
- Avoid alcohol, cigarettes and drugs
- Get enough sleep

Slide 16:

Healthy Stress Coping Strategies

Make time for fun and relaxation:

Don't forget about the most important person in your life: YOU

- Set aside leisure time – It's ok to take breaks from all the things going on in your life. You should always have time to recharge your batteries.
- Do something you enjoy every day - Set some time to do something fun, either reading a book, watching a movie or going to play with your friends.
- Take up a relaxation practice - Things like yoga, meditation or just different breathing techniques can help you get in a restful state which helps reduce and manage stress. The more relaxed you are the easier it is to deal with difficult situations.

Slide 17:

Healthy Stress Coping Strategies

Manage your time better:

You might work better under pressure sometimes, but most of the time, it can cause you to feel overwhelmed. Here are some tips to help you manage your time:

- Don't take on more than you can do. You must space things out. Give yourself enough time between assignments.
- Do the important things first. Write a list of the things you must do and then do the most stressful and important first. That way, the rest will be easy and smooth.
- Don't do everything at once. Lay out a step-by-step plan for big projects so they don't become overwhelming.

Slide 18:

Healthy Stress Coping Strategies

Connect to others

(Some teens might feel embarrassed about discussing their problems. Let them know they shouldn't feel ashamed to discuss what they're going through. Everyone has stress and things that worry them. Their friends and family will be glad to hear you and try to help you out. But that doesn't mean that person can or should "fix" the stressor. That is up to the teen.)

Slide 19:

Practice the 4 A's of Stress Management

- **Avoid Stress:** You can't dodge responsibilities that cause you stress, but there are some that you can avoid. Keep in mind, its ok to say "No". Sometimes you just can't do that extra credit work or join that second sports team. Learn what your limits are and try not to take on more than you can handle. Also, try to avoid stressful people. Don't hang out with that one friend who can't stop making you tense.
- **Alter Stressful Situations:** If you can't stop the stress, try to change it up. If you have a stressful friend or family member you can't avoid, talk to them about how you feel and let them know that you need some time right now. And don't forget to make time for some fun.
- **Adapt to Stressful Situations:** Look at how you are handling a stressor and try using another tactic. Instead of screaming or crying about a big exam or paper due, take a few minutes and regroup. Think about the good things going on instead of just focusing on the bad. And don't put so much pressure on yourself. Perfection is not the answer.
- **Acceptance:** Unfortunately, there are some stressful situations you can't avoid. Things happen sometimes that are out of your control. Although it is hard, accepting some difficulties might be the best way to handle them. You can even try to look at the bright side of the situation.

Slide 20:

Execute Activity #1 which is the breathing exercises.

Slide 21:

Any Questions?

Slide 22:

End of Slides