

Got Change?

Practical Approaches for Dealing with Stress in the Ever-Changing Workplace

Presented by:

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National occupational trends indicate workers are as stressed out as ever. Changes in competition and the economy create environments that can be, if not recognized, detrimental to an employee's mental well-being (health care expenditures are nearly 50% greater for workers who report high levels of stress [Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine]).

However, it's not just the work-place that causes stress. We need to understand that workplace stress is interpreted differently by each individual, and that **“self”** and **“life situations”** play into how stress impacts our lives.

“Normal” signs and symptoms of excessive occupational stress include:

| | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Anxiety | Irritability | Loss of interest in work |
| Sleep problems | Fatigue | Difficult concentrating |
| Muscle tension | Headaches | Stomach problems |
| Social withdrawal | Loss of sex drive | Use of alcohol/drugs as way to cope |

Reducing stress everyday:

- Education & Training (in both stress management and job skills)
- Exercise
- Eat a proper diet
- Get enough sleep

Reducing stress during stressful times:

- Talk (communication skills)
- Exercise
- Eat a proper diet
- Avoid the use of alcohol/drugs as way to cope
- Change your attitude
- Professional mental health?

Successful organizations embrace a culture that supports stress reduction training and education.

Changing the way we look at things....Where do outside influences come from?

- Media
- Family/friends/co-workers
- Self talk

Who do YOU want to work with?

- Present your BEST SELF at all times
- Leave negativity at home
- Look for ways to turn negativities into positives

Tim's Additional "Rules for Survival" (from 27 years in the fire service)

- Understand that "Things Change"
- Learn the "Gift of Grief"
- Take time to do things you enjoy
- Focus on "YES"
- Develop close friendships
- Laugh
- Talk (coughing up the apple!)
- Respect others
- Have faith
- Live like you were dying

Life Stress Questionnaire

Have you had any of the following things happen to you during the past year? If so, simply circle one of the numbers following each of those items. Score only the items which apply to you.

| Life Event | Point Value |
|--|-------------|
| Change in social activities | 15 |
| Change in sleeping habits | 15 |
| Change in residence | 20 |
| Change in work hours | 20 |
| Change in church activities | 20 |
| Tension at work | 25 |
| Small children in the home | 25 |
| Change in living conditions | 25 |
| Outstanding personal achievement | 30 |
| Problem teenager(s) in the home | 30 |
| Trouble with in-laws | 30 |
| Difficulties with peer group | 30 |
| Son or daughter leaving home | 30 |
| Change in responsibilities at work | 30 |
| Taking over major financial responsibility | 30 |
| Foreclosure of mortgage or loan | 30 |
| Change in relationship with spouse | 35 |
| Change to different line of work | 35 |
| Loss of a close friend | 35 |
| Gain of a new family member | 40 |
| Sexual difficulties | 40 |
| Pregnancy | 40 |
| Change in health of family member | 45 |
| Retirement | 45 |
| Loss of job | 50 |
| Change in quality of religious faith | 50 |
| Marriage | 50 |
| Personal injury or illness | 50 |
| Loss of self-confidence | 60 |
| Death of a close family member | 60 |
| Injury to reputation | 60 |
| Trouble with the law | 65 |
| Marital separation | 65 |
| Divorce | 75 |
| Death of a spouse | 100 |

Grand Total_____

Your total score measures the amount of stress to which you have been subjected.

- A score of 150 or less is normal.
- With a score of 150-250, one-third of all persons will experience illness or accident.
- If you scored 250-300, you have a 50:50 chance of accident or illness.
- Above a score of 350, you may be 75 percent sure of trouble in the months ahead.

Strategies to reduce stress physically and mentally.

- | | | |
|--|--|------------------------------|
| •Aerobic exercise | •Affirmation | •Avoid self-medication |
| •Basketball | •Bicycling | •Bioenergetics |
| •Biofeedback | •Cry | •Dance |
| •Develop and maintain a positive attitude | | •Floatation |
| •Do something nice for someone else | | •Gardening |
| •Eat a nutritionally and calorically adequate diet | | •Get plenty of rest |
| •Early Riser Technique (maintain "work" routine) | | •Golf |
| •Handball | •Hobbies | •Hot bath or shower |
| •Hug | •Hypnosis | •Jog |
| •Jump rope | •Laughter | •Massage |
| •Meditation | •Muscle relaxation | •Music |
| •Nap | •Physical activity | •Play games |
| •Poetry | •Positive self-talk | •Practice temporary insanity |
| •Prayer | •Progressive relaxation | •Racquetball |
| •Read interesting literature | •Realize your own limitations | |
| •Roller-skate | •Schedule worry time | |
| •Share your stress (friends, family, teachers, counselors, help lines, psychiatrist, social worker, church official) | •Sign a contract with yourself! Commit! Read the contract regularly!... and DO IT! | |
| •Stay organized. Set priorities. Make "to do" lists. Eliminate timewasters. | | |
| •Swim | •Table tennis | •Take a class |
| •Take care of yourself | •Take deep breaths | •Tennis |
| •Time alone | •Transcendental meditation | |
| •Visualization | •Volunteer work | •Walking |
| •Watch a favorite movie | •Watch a funny movie | •Write things out |
| •Yoga | •Zen | |

Life Stress Questionnaire taken from:
http://www.oshkoshwdc.com/data/Life_Stress_Questionnaire.pdf