

Stress Management

What is stress?

- # Books have over 100 different definitions of stress!!!
- # How can we manage stress if we cannot understand what it is?
- # So what exactly is stress then???

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Definition

#One useful definition is:

- An internal tension or pressure within me, generated by me, due to my interpretation of an event external to me

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So its all my own fault!

- # Well...no! This idea can be a hard concept to grasp, as it suggests that you are doing something “wrong”
- # But the fact is that all of our feelings are generated by our selves - we are not the cause, but we are the means!

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The effects and dangers...

- # **Symptoms to watch for:** Anxiety, Frustration, Moods swings, Bad temper, Irritability, Depression, Worrying, Loss of Concentration, Anger, Appetite Changes
- # **Negative Effects:** Headaches, Tiredness, Taking work home, Bad sleep, Aches & Pains, Colds, Racing Heart, Forgetfulness, Reduced efficiency or productivity, Negative Self-talk, Alcohol or Drug increase, Relationship issues

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Serious effects...

- # **The Serious Effects are: Strokes, Aneurisms, Heart Attacks & Premature Death**
- # Stress CAN be managed...

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Stress Vulnerability Test

DO YOU FREQUENTLY ...	YES	NO
Neglect your food		
Try to do everything yourself		
Blow up easily		
Set unrealistic goals		
Failure to see the humour in situations others find funny		
Act rudely to others		
Make a "big deal" of things		
Look to others to make things "happen"		
"Go on" to others about how disorganised you are		
Avoid people whose ideas are different from your own		
Keep things bottled up inside		
Neglect exercise		
Have few supportive relationships		
Use sleeping pills without a doctors approval		
Get too little rest		
Get angry when you are kept waiting		
Ignore stress symptoms		
Put things off until later		
Think that there is only one way to do everything		
Fail to build relaxation time into your day		
Gossip and / or give out about others / the job / life		
Race through the day		
Spend lots of time complaining about the past		
Fail to get away from noise and crowds		
Total up the number of ticks under Yes & No		

The ABC Model

- # A = Activating event i.e. A letter from the bank
- # C = the Consequences i.e. Stress or Anxiety
- # Most people go from A to C, making A the cause
- # But it is B that is the cause
- # B are your beliefs, self-talk, past experiences, fears etc.
- # The letter is **not** the cause
- # So we need to deal with the issues at point B

Possible reaction at B – totally different stress outcome

Possible Reactions +

- ▣ Ok, lets deal with it
- ▣ There is always a way
- ▣ It might take time, but its ok
- ▣ Its only a letter
- ▣ Its only a meeting
- ▣ There is someone who can help
- ▣ Nobody wants to take my home

Possible Reactions -

- ▣ Its the end
- ▣ Its all over
- ▣ I will lose my home
- ▣ There is no one to help
- ▣ I am a failure
- ▣ I am no good
- ▣ What will people think

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FEAR

- # False Evidence Appearing Real
 - # Forget Everything And Run
 - # Feeling Excited And Ready
-
- Which FEAR do I want to live with?

Future , Present, Past

- # Past: people look back at past bad events and feel the **depression** NOW
- # Future: people look to the future at what might happen and feel the **anxiety** NOW
- # Present: people stay centred in the NOW and deal with what is = Mindfulness

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Because I'm worth it....the average person

- # There are 1440 minutes in the day
- # You give sleep roughly 480 of them
- # You give work roughly 480 of them
- # You give commuting roughly 90 of them
- # That leaves 390
- # How many of these are you worth, just for you, to manage stress?

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Stress Buster #1: Stretch.....

- # To be done daily a few times per day
- # Breath out as you stretch
- # Only bend to the point of tension in the muscle – do not over stretch
- # Hold the stretch for the count of 5 seconds
- # Do all movements slowly
- # Get onto the internet and find some stretches to suit you

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Stress Buster #2: Be there, just be there...Mindfulness

- # Sit down & look slightly up at a fixed point
- # Without moving your head look out of your peripheral vision
- # Use your ears and focus on what you can hear
- # Try to see if you can smell anything

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Stress Buster #2: Be there, just be there...Mindfulness

- # What can you taste on your lips or in your mouth
- # Be aware of any sensations in your body where it is in contact with itself or anything else like the floor or chair
- # Just allow yourself to be in the “Now” for about 2 minutes
- # Repeat a few times daily

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Stress Buster #3: Just relax...

- # The number 1 way to manage stress is to do some form of Meditation as it changes you automatically from the inside out
- # Sit or lie quietly, take a deep breath, exhale and allow eyes to close
- # Behind your eyelids look up at the inside of your forehead
- # Imagine you see the number 3 there, take a deep breath and as you exhale say the word RELAX to yourself
- # Imagine the number 2 there, take a deep breath and as you exhale say the word RELAX to yourself
- # Imagine the number 1 there, take a deep breath and as you exhale say the word RELAX to yourself
- # Imagine the number 0 there, take a deep breath and as you exhale say the word RELAX to yourself

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Stress Buster #7: Just relax...

- # Now just slowly and silently repeat the word RELAX
- # If you notice that you have drifted to other thoughts just accept it, and gently bring back the word RELAX
- # When you are ready to finish, just slowly count up, one breath at a time from 0 to 3 and open your eyes
- # Aim for 15 minutes twice a day

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So what could I do right now? Take action!!!

What will I do	When