LIFE IN BALANCE: RELAXATION & STRESS RELIEF

Presented by Military & Family Life Counselors
OBJECTIVES

• What is work/life balance?
• Identify your stressors
• Signs and symptoms of stress
• Stress management strategies
• Stress reduction
• Relaxation skills
IS THIS YOU?
WHAT IS WORK/LIFE BALANCE?

• Necessary for everyone
• On-going process
• Responding to multiple demands
  • Balancing children’s activities
  • Balancing career and family
THINGS THAT GET IN THE WAY

External Stressors
- Work
- School
- Community

Internal Stressors
- Attitudes
- Beliefs
- Expectations
- Behaviors
IDENTIFY PRIORITIES

- Clarify your values
- Create personal mission
- Establish goals
ENERGY WHEEL

Work

Personal Relationships

Life Maintenance

Self Nurturing
Under stress your body may have:

- Increased pupil dilation
- Perspiration
- Increased heart rate and blood pressure
- Rapid breathing
- Muscle tension
- Increased mental alertness/focus
- Decreased/stopped digestion
SYMPTOMS OF STRESS

• Physical
  • Emotional
    • Mental
      • Behavioral
UNHEALTHY STRESS MANAGEMENT

• Alcohol and/or other drugs
• Food
• Displaced anger/frustration
• Distorted thinking
• Overspending
HEALTHY STRESS MANAGEMENT

• Change your behavior
• Change your lifestyle
• Change your thinking
• Create social support
CHANGE YOUR BEHAVIOR

• Be assertive
• Get organized
• Vent emotionally
• Use humor
• Use diversion and distraction
CHANGE YOUR LIFESTYLE

• Healthy diet
• Stop smoking
• Reduce alcohol consumption
• Exercise
• Sleep
• Pursue leisure activities
• Engage in active relaxation
• Other stress reduction techniques
CHANGE YOUR THINKING

- Cognitive reframing

- Examine your beliefs
COGNITIVE REFRAMING

- Re-frame “failures” as new opportunities
- Challenge the “shoulds”
- Avoid “all or nothing” thinking
- Be compassionate with yourself
- Focus on the present
- Embrace optimism
EXAMINE YOUR BELIEFS...
INFLUENCING REACTIONS TO STRESS

Perfectionism

Social Mirror

Irrational Beliefs

How do these beliefs affect you?

How do these beliefs affect others?

Family Rules, Messages

Expectations
CREATING SOCIAL BELIEFS

- Identify your social support needs
- Identify helpful/non-helpful behavior
- Communicate your needs
STRESS HARDINESS

- Having a strong commitment
- Seeking change as a challenge
- Having a sense of control
- Participating in creative activities
- Having a strong support network
THE ABC’S OF STRESS REDUCTION

A stress reduction action plan includes:

A = Awareness
B = Balance
C = Control
ACHIEVING BALANCE

• Think Positively

• Work Efficiently
RELAXATION

• Relax your “stress triangle”
• Meditate
• Take a deep breath
• Progressive muscle relaxation
• Exercise
• Visualization
• Laughter
EMPHASIZE THE FUNDAMENTALS
LIFE BALANCE IS...

...an *on-going* process,

...not a permanent state
WHEN TO SEEK HELP

If stress symptoms are interfering with your life and stress reduction methods aren’t working, you may want to seek help from:

• Military Community Services
• A Chaplain
• Behavioral Health Services
SUMMARY

• Recognizing stressors and stress symptoms is a first step in working toward life balance

• It’s important to examine priorities and decide which are most important

• Practicing relaxation and other stress reduction methods can help to change your perspective and achieve a more balanced life

• Seek help if stress symptoms persist
QUESTIONS?
RESOURCES

• Military Community Services
• Chaplain and Local Clergy
• Military OneSource  (800) 342-9647
• TRICARE   www.Tricare.mil
• Behavioral Health Services