

Speaker Notes

Stress Management

Page 1 – Title Slide

None

Page 2 – Agenda

None

Page 3 – What is the Stress Response?

- The stress response occurs with both positive and negative stressors.
- Examples of positive stressors:
 - Winning the lottery
 - Falling in love
 - Getting a promotion
- An individual response: What is stressful for one person may not be stressful for another.
- A physiological response: Many physiological changes in the body occur.
 - Examples: heart rate increases, stress chemicals are released, breath rate increases, blood rushes away from extremities to major organs (this is why we may experience cold hands and feet in a stressful situation)
- A necessary response: It is a primitive response programmed in us thousands of years ago when many stressors were life threatening—such as a saber-toothed tiger about to attack. It allows our bodies to gear up to fight or flee. In non-life-threatening situations, it can give us the edge we need to perform well—such as in athletics, or performing on stage.

Page 4 – What are the Effects of Stress?

- If we face a life-threatening situation where we have to fight or flee, our bodies have an opportunity to burn off the stress chemicals that cause our response.
- When our chronic stressors are not life-threatening and we don't fight or flee, our bodies accumulate the effects of the stress response.
- Effects of stress: We will examine the signs and symptoms of each of these in the following slides.

Page 5 – Physical Signs and Symptoms

- It's important to recognize these signs and symptoms and the ones in the upcoming slides. If you have a significant number of them, you might want to take a look at using some of the stress management techniques we'll be discussing today.

Page 6 – Mental Signs and Symptoms

None

Page 7 – Emotional Signs and Symptoms

None

Page 8 – Behavioral Signs and Symptoms

None

Page 9 – Sources of Stress

None

Page 10 – Levels of Stress

- Let's take a closer look at these different levels on the next slide.

Page 11 – Stages of Stress

- Basic: Occurs in the initial alarm reaction stage and is resolved quickly. It can motivate us to accept a new challenge or enable us to take action in an adverse situation.
- Distress results from prolonged exposure to situations perceived to be stressful. Our immune system works overtime for us during this period, trying to keep up with the demands placed upon it. Unless resolution to the situation occurs, our resistance to illness decreases. This is when stress related illness or disorders such as hypertension can develop or worsen.
- Burnout occurs when our bodies are no longer able to sustain resistance to stress reactions and our immune system becomes significantly impaired. More serious stress related disorders can occur at this point.
- Stress symptoms become more pronounced in the distress stage. Identifying the stress symptoms and beginning to use stress management methods, can prevent moving to the burnout stage.

Page 12 – Four Types of Stress

None

Page 13 – Exposure to Traumatic Death

- Research conducted after Operation Desert Storm looked at how mortuary workers were affected by exposure to traumatic death. They looked at differences/similarities among groups of participants and their particular stressors—mission, social support, interpersonal relationships, and self-presentation. They also looked at categories of stress responses around anxiety, depression, anger, interpersonal sensitivity, and physical symptoms.
- Anticipatory stress: Anticipatory stress is stress that concerns anticipated future events. It has been shown that the body responds to the anticipation of an event in the same way it does to the event itself. The intensity of this response is mediated by experience and control.
- Past experiences consistently lessen stress. Inexperienced persons report higher levels of fear or anxiety than experienced persons. It should be noted, however, that past experience was frequently reported as helpful, but it did not make one invulnerable. This difference in choice, or control, results in a difference in the intensity of the stress. We will talk more about stress management strategies for non-volunteers in the area of control a little later.
- Identification and emotional involvement have a stronger correlation to stress among those who handle the personal effects of those killed by traumatic incidents than those who actually handle the human remains. The very nature of the task exposes workers to the emotional and social details of the deceased and results in a personal identification between the worker and the victim.

Page 14 – What We Have Learned So Far...

None

Page 15 – Emotional Strategies

- We've learned that the stress response is an individual response; what is stressful for one person may not be stressful for another. For example, some people enjoy riding roller coasters, while others find it frightening.)
- Our thoughts directly affect our response: It's how we look at situations and what we tell ourselves about the situation that determines the extent and duration of our reactions.
- Learning to change our destructive thought patterns: We can do this by changing our "self talk."
 - NOTE: Give examples of destructive vs. healthy self-talk. Example: Instead of "How awful; that's the worst thing that could happen" (highly emotionally charged), try "I don't like what's happened, but I will get through this and move on" (much less emotionally charged).
- NOTE: Ask if they can think of examples when they may have engaged in destructive self-talk, and offer healthier examples.

Page 16 – Changing Our Perceptions

None

Page 17 – Behavioral Strategies

None

Page 18 – Social Strategies

- Feeling connected with others has been shown to be one of the most effective stress reducers. People feel supported and not alone. They also have the opportunity to support others, and this can be a great way to focus on someone else rather than on yourself. It's also rewarding to feel you have made a difference for another.

Page 19 – Strengthen Your Internal Resources

None

Page 20 – Personal Stress Inventory

- There is an online stress assessment at the end of the presentation that you may want to check out. Sometimes taking inventory can give us some perspective and insight into what kind of action we need to take.

Page 21 – Seeking Support

None

Page 22 – Summary

None

Page 23 – Questions

None

Page 24 – Resources
None

Page 25 – Internet Resources
None

Page 26 – References
None

Page 27 – Thank You
None

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