

Stress Management

Stress is an essential part of life and obtaining success. As a leader, it is important to make sure that your stress is at an optimal level. Too little stress can lead to feeling bored or depressed and too much stress can be detrimental to your health. Every person has a different optimal level of stress and it is important to recognize and manage accordingly.

6 Ways to Better Manage Stress

1. Be actively aware of what causes you stress and notice the emotional and physical signs
 - Don't ignore your stress reactions.
 - Figure out what events cause you to stress. Why do these events cause stress and what are you telling yourself that is causing the reaction?
 - How does your body respond to stress?
2. Determine what you can change
 - Is it possible to get rid of what is causing you stress?
 - If not, can you manage your stressors in a different way? (i.e. over an extended period of time, breaking the stressor/event into smaller and more manageable parts, goal setting, time management)
 - Is it possible to take a break from your stressor?
 - Would it be helpful to you to seek counseling?
3. Adjust your emotional reactions to stress
 - Allow yourself to embrace moderate views on a stressful situation. Are you exaggerating or overreacting about the circumstances?
 - Put the stressor into perspective.
 - Don't expect to please everyone
4. Mitigate physical reactions
 - Practice slow and deep breathing
 - Practice relaxation techniques. Take a break, read a book, take a nap
5. Ensure physical health
 - Exercise three to four times a week
 - Eat nutritious meals
 - Maintain a healthy weight
 - Avoid stimulants such as caffeine
 - Get enough sleep
6. Build Emotional Reserve
 - Create healthy relationships that allow you to talk through a stressful situation
 - Pursue goals that matter to you
 - Anticipate that there will be failures and frustrations in life
 - Take care of yourself. Be your own best friend
 - Have Fun!

Adapted from University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Counseling Center