

Time management: This includes prioritizing, planning, setting goals and monitoring of the time.

Effective communicating skills: This involves learning to be assertive, using 'I' statements especially when one is expecting a change in the other person. Using KISS principle - Keep It Short and Simple while communicating.

Resolving conflicts: It could be acknowledging when there is a conflict and expressing interest to resolve.

Changing thoughts: It involves identifying stress producing thoughts and replacing them with stress reducing thoughts. For example a stress producing thought would be *'My friends don't like me. They think I am boring. I will end up having no friends'* can be replaced with a stress reducing thought *'My friends have told me several times that they like me and that I am fun to be with'*



For a stress-free life,

- Have some quiet time for yourself during the day.
- Involve yourself in a meaningful activity.
- Express your feelings to someone who will listen.
- Eat a balanced diet.
- Limit substance use.



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STRESS & COPING



What is Stress?

Stress is a part of everyday life. Stress is often the result of an imbalance between the demands made on the individual and the person's ability to cope with these demands. However stress is not always the same for everyone and what is stressful to one person may not be to another. Stress is therefore a matter of perception. In small quantities, stress is good; it can motivate you and help you become more productive. However, too much stress can be harmful and may impact your health.

What are Stressors?

Stressors are situations that provoke stress response.

How do we respond to stress?

There are many effects which have been linked to the experience of stress.

Psychological Symptoms:

- Difficulty in remembering, concentrating
- Difficulty in taking decisions
- Negative thinking
- Constant worrying
- Irritability
- Inability to relax
- Feeling lonely
- Sad mood



Physical Symptoms:

- Aches and pains
- Digestive symptoms like diarrhoea or constipation or nausea
- Increased heart rate
- Decreased libido
- Shallow breathing and sweating

Behavioural Symptoms:

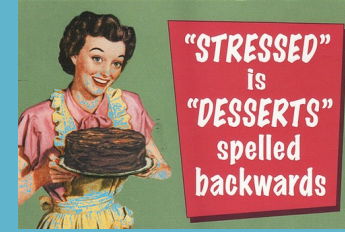
- Changes in appetite
- Changes in sleep pattern
- Staying aloof
- Increased use of alcohol or other substances

Coping Strategies

Coping is actually a set of efforts that people make to reduce the impact of stressful events. At times these strategies are effective. However, at other times they may help only temporarily and alternative coping strategies or more than one strategy would be more appropriate.

Coping strategies can be used in two different ways:

1. **Coping strategies to deal with the stress reaction**
2. **Coping strategies to deal with the stressors**



Coping strategies that deal with stress reaction are

Relaxation: Techniques like deep breathing, progressive muscle reaction, mindfulness, guided imagery and, meditation, etc are helpful in reducing the negative impact of stress, and help in building coping skills.

Physical exercise: Taking some time to go out for a brisk walk or a run, playing a sport, going to the gym or involving in any other physical activities that one enjoys can help in dealing with stress.

Hobby: Involving in a creative or a skill building hobby like crafts, singing, gardening, cooking etc. that provide contentment and satisfaction can reduce stress

Coping strategies that deal with stressors are,

Problem solving: Directly focusing on the problem can solve the stressful situation or problem at hand. This includes various strategies such as systematically trying to solve the problem by finding alternatives and taking action.