



HELPING HANDS



7 Stress Management Techniques

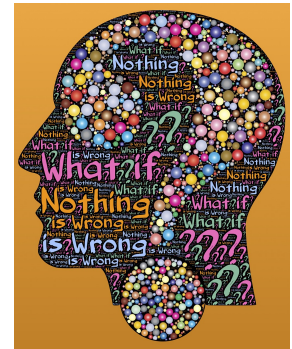
(Excerpts from VeryWell Health)

Stress management takes consistent effort, but you can build the skills to manage your stress. Some skills to build that help with stress management include using positive self-talk, time management, prioritization, and relaxation techniques. Below are additional strategies for practicing stress management.

Positive Self-Talk

Becoming aware of the stress response, including thoughts and beliefs, is essential. Negative thoughts can lead to stress. They can also be acknowledged and replaced with more neutral or positive thoughts. Relaxation techniques can help, which may include breathing exercises and visualizations.

Here are some tips from the American Heart Association: 3 tips to manage stress.



Time Management and Prioritization

Sometimes, it can feel overwhelming when there are a lot of responsibilities and tasks to complete. Time management and prioritization are great ways to determine the most critical and time-sensitive things to do and to minimize stress. In addition to reducing stress, making a schedule, and planning tasks can help increase productivity and free up more time.

Connection With Others

Social support, such as interacting with friends and family, is vital in managing stress. Having a solid support network, you spend time with regularly can help to reduce stress. This may be having a friend at work, attending social gatherings, connecting with family or roommates, or having phone conversations with loved ones who live far away.



Limiting Stressful Stimuli

Stress management techniques are about stress reduction and stress prevention. Limiting exposure to stressors can prevent stress levels from increasing. This may include staying away from media outlets or apps that lead to doom scrolling, checking the news only at certain times, limiting the types of news stories you consume, and taking breaks to disconnect from screens, especially before bed.

Spending Time in Nature

Spending time in nature has been found to reduce stress levels. It can lower cortisol, a hormone linked to stress. Getting into nature can include hiking, relaxing by the water, or taking a quick break to step outside during a busy workday. Even opening or looking out a window can help.

Relaxation Techniques

You can use relaxation techniques to counteract the stress response.

Some examples include:

- Breathing exercises
- Meditation
- Mindfulness (Being aware of body sensations, visualizations)
- Muscle relaxation
- Yoga
- Visualization



The "best" relaxation techniques are the ones that you enjoy and can do consistently.

Practice Diaphragmatic Breathing

The diaphragm is a muscle located between the chest and abdomen. It helps to pull air into the lungs. Diaphragmatic breathing looks like expanding the stomach instead of the chest and can help to lower stress levels. This practice may also be called "belly breathing" or "deep breathing." To do this, inhale slowly, imagining pulling air into the stomach. It may help to place a hand on your belly to feel the rise and fall of your stomach or count while breathing in and out.



The heart and soul of the District 141 Employee Assistance Program is the local lodge EAP peer coordinator. These dedicated men and women volunteer their personal time to assist other union members and their families who are experiencing personal difficulties. EAP peer volunteers do not make clinical

diagnoses or clinical evaluations; however, they are trained to make a basic assessment of your situation and refer you to an appropriate resource for a more detailed evaluation. EAP peer volunteers will follow up to ensure you have been able to access services that address the difficulty you were experiencing.

IAM EAP Director, District 142

Paul Shultz

704-907-3563 E-mail: pmschultz@att.net

What is Stress?

Stress can be defined as a state of worry or mental tension caused by a difficult situation.

Stress is a natural human response that prompts us to address challenges and threats in our lives.

Everyone experiences stress to some degree. The way we respond to stress, however, makes a big difference to our overall well-being.