

# How to Better Manage Stress

# What to Expect

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Welcome

Definitions

Myths We Live By

Facts of Life

Sources of Stress

Survey Says ...

Diversion and Distraction

Changing Thoughts and Attitudes

Changing Lifestyle

Changing the Situation

Closing

# Learning Points

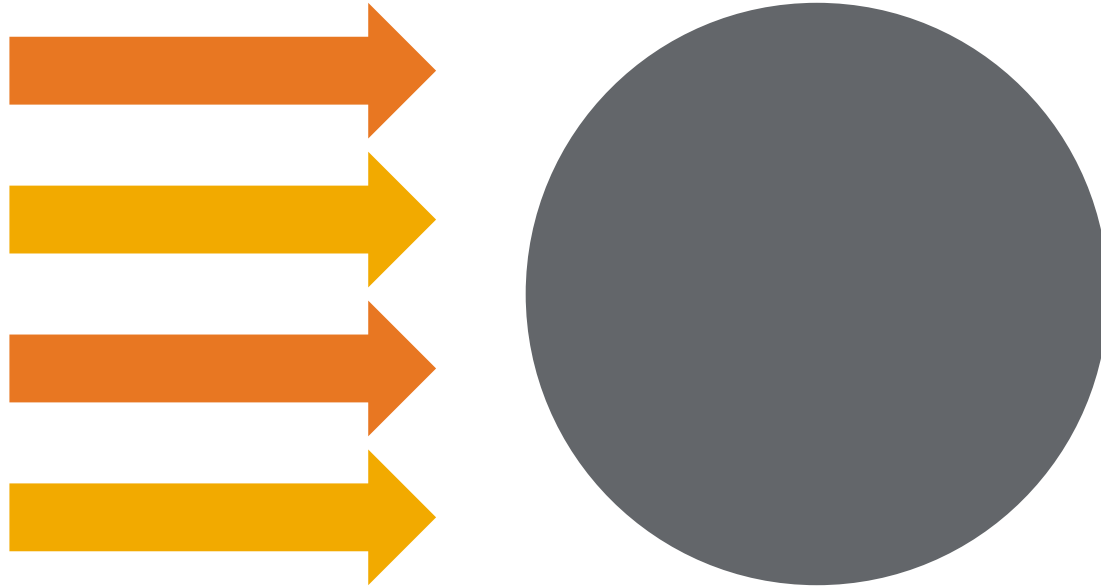
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- Assess their current state of balance and stress
- Explore ways to better balance the conflicting demands of their lives
- Identify resources that can be used to meet needs
- Examine personal values and choices
- Learn skills for managing multiple demands

# Definitions

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A **stressor** is an outside stimulus (something we may or may not have control over). **Stress** is how we respond to that stimulus.



# Myths We Live By

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- I must never fail.
- I must never get angry.
- I must never look foolish.
- I must always play it safe.
- I must work hard at all times.
- I must never make a mistake.

# Accept Certain Realities

Life is unfair

Rush hour traffic is slow

We can't have everything

We can't please everyone

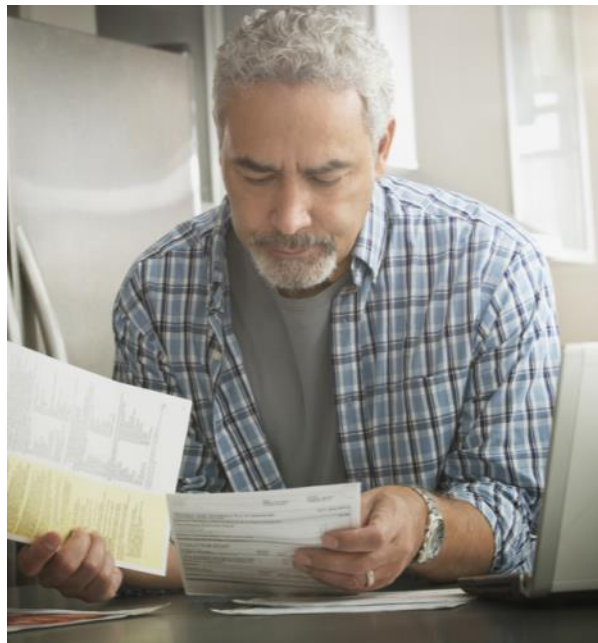
Things won't always go our way

Some people will never understand



# Sources

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## Stress ...

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- ... is natural
- ... can be managed and used for growth
- ... can threaten our health if unmanaged
- ... is the physiological opposite of relaxation
- ... comes from positive and negative stressors
- ... affects us physically, emotionally and mentally





# Diversion and Distraction

Autogenic training

Deep breathing

Imagery or visualization

Music, massage, journal,  
laughter

Progressive muscular  
relaxation



# Changing Thoughts and Attitudes

Change internal dialogue

Develop stress-busting thoughts

Express gratitude

Give yourself positive reinforcement

Separate worries from concerns



# Changing Lifestyle

Create regular rituals

Develop support systems

Do something for the “kid”  
in you

Eliminate daily minor  
irritations

Make a relaxation  
technique a new habit



# Changing the Situation

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## Moderate Change

Eliminate, minimize, react differently

Eliminate “shoulds”

Prioritize

Reduce importance of event

Say “no”

## Complete Change

Change careers. Become a stay-at-home parent

Create a change plan

Move

Return to school

Separate/divorce

# About Professional Support

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You may consider seeking professional support if you experience any of the following:

- Sleep problems
- Performance issues at work
- Relationship difficulties with family or friends
- Loss of interest in hobbies you normally enjoy
- Lack of care about normal everyday work tasks
- Excessive anxiety or worrying more than normal
- Feeling overwhelmed or sad for more than two weeks
- A noticeable change in appetite, eating too little or too much
- Behavior and coping methods have become harmful to yourself or others, whether that is through aggressive behavior or unhealthy habits, such as drinking too much alcohol or taking drugs
- Thoughts of harm to self and/or others

**Keep in mind some of these conditions warrant more urgent professional help and you should seek support if you are unsure.**

Thanks for attending  
today's presentation.

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