

# Stress Management Seminar

Stress Management Handout

Counselling Services

# Stress symptoms

---

Check the symptoms of stress you've noticed lately in yourself.

## Physical

- Appetite change
- Headaches
- Tension
- Fatigue
- Insomnia
- Weight change
- Colds
- Muscle aches
- Digestive upsets
- Pounding heart
- Accident prone
- Teeth grinding
- Rash
- Restlessness
- Foot-tapping
- Finger-drumming
- Increase of alcohol, drug, or tobacco use

## Emotional

- Anxiety
- Frustration
- The blues
- Mood swings
- Bad temper
- Nightmares
- Crying spells
- Irritability
- Feeling that no one cares
- Nervous laugh
- Worrying
- Easily discouraged
- Little joy

## Spiritual

- Emptiness
- Loss of meaning
- Doubt
- Unforgiving
- Martyrdom
- Looking for magic
- Loss of direction
- Needing to prove self
- Cynicism
- Apathy

## Mental

- Forgetfulness
- Dull senses
- Poor concentration
- Low productivity
- Negative attitude
- Confusion
- Lethargy
- Whirling mind
- No new ideas
- Boredom
- Spacing out
- Negative self-talk

## Relational

- Isolation
- Intolerance
- Resentment
- Loneliness
- Lashing out
- Hiding
- Clamming up
- Lowered sex drive
- Distrust
- Fewer contacts with friends
- Lack of intimacy
- Using people

# The stress-free week checklist

---

Thinking about the last week, how many of the following things have you done?

- 1. Set aside time just for you**
  - Took small breaks during your day  Yes  No
  - Took some time to relax  Yes  No
  - Balanced work with some enjoyable activities  Yes  No
- 2. Gave yourself permission NOT to**
  - Do everything perfectly  Yes  No
  - Always be in control  Yes  No
  - Take care of everyone  Yes  No
- 3. Increased your intake of**
  - Vegetables and fruits  Yes  No
  - Fresh food  Yes  No
  - Water and juices  Yes  No
- 4. Limited your intake of**
  - Caffeine (coffee, tea, and chocolate)  Yes  No
  - Alcohol  Yes  No
  - Other stimulants  Yes  No
- 5. Ate at regular times**
  - Ate slowly  Yes  No
  - Ate three moderate meals  Yes  No
  - Ate regular snacks  Yes  No
- 6. Exercised**
  - At least 20 minutes, three times  Yes  No
- 7. Spent time with friends**  Yes  No
- 8. Slept 7-10 hours every night**  Yes  No
  - Went to bed at a regular time  Yes  No
  - Gave yourself an hour to unwind before bed  Yes  No

If you answered Yes to most of these, you are on your way to a stress-free lifestyle. This will increase the energy that you have to deal with your stressors when they occur in your life. When stressors happen, remember to use positive self-talk, do relaxation exercises, and breathe.

# My stress reduction strategy

---

## **Preventative measures:**

I can try to cut off stress before it develops by...

## **Problem-solving strategies:**

I can seek to reduce or eliminate stress by developing new alternatives such as...

## **Symptom reduction skills:**

I am learning to reduce the emotional symptoms of stress (such as anxiety, fear, frustration, anger etc.) by...

## **Adaptation strategies:**

I am working towards developing positive attitudes and behaviours to help me adjust to, live with, and manage situations that cannot be changed. Some strategies are...