

# Stress Management

A Holistic Approach

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# What is stress?

- ◆ **Difficult to distill into single definition**
- ◆ **Stress is a subjective experience**
- ◆ **Stress can be harmful or helpful**
- ◆ **Stress does not discriminate**

# Defining Stress

- ◆ **Stress is a condition or feeling experienced when a person perceives that demands exceed the personal and social resources the individual is able to mobilize.**
- ◆ **Richard S. Lazarus**

# Types of Stress

- ◆ Acute/Obvious Stress-often short-lived such as a deadline, or cramming for a test.
- ◆ Chronic Stress-the possibility of....
- ◆ Internal Stress-worrying about things you have no control over. What if.....
- ◆ Career Related vs. Personal Life

# Stress Crossover

- ◆ **Job stress can overlap into home life and vice versa**
- ◆ **Financial stress is one of the top five areas attributed to divorce and/or marital discord.**
- ◆ **Some believe stress/anxiety can attribute to somatic disorders which cannot otherwise be explained better by a medical condition. Fibromyalgia is thought by some to be a somatic type disorder.**

# Stress/Anxiety vs. Anxiety Disorders

- ◆ **Stress/Anxiety are normal, and everyone experiences it.**
- ◆ **Anxiety Disorders are more serious, and interfere in daily living.**

# Anxiety Disorders

- ◆ Agoraphobia-fear of social settings, groups of people, or being in public.
- ◆ Panic Attacks-heart attack like symptoms
- ◆ General Anxiety Disorder
- ◆ Obsessive Compulsive Disorder

# Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

- ◆ **A condition that can develop following a traumatic and/or terrifying event, such as a sexual or physical assault, the unexpected death of a loved one, or a natural disaster. People with PTSD often have lasting and frightening thoughts and memories of the event and tend to be emotionally numb.**

# COP SHOCK

- ◆ **Repeated exposure to traumatic events**
- ◆ **Shift work**
- ◆ **Second Class citizenship**
- ◆ **Repeated exposure to negative people**

# COP SHOCK

- ◆ **Type A Personalities**
- ◆ **Blessings or a Curse?**
- ◆ **Refusal to express emotion due to perception of being weak**
- ◆ **Fear of being labeled with a mental illness**

# Neuroscience behind Stress

- ◆ **Is stress management really “BS”?**
- ◆ **Chronic/prolonged stress can interfere with the smooth operation of our neuropathways, which impacts behavior, affect, and can lead to addictive and/or maladaptive behaviors**

# Neuroscience behind Stress

- ◆ **Brain scans reveal that chronic stress and PTSD negatively impacts the connection between the subcortical regions of the brain with the frontal cortex of the brain**
- ◆ **The frontal cortex is responsible for cognitive/decision making processes**

# Neuroscience behind stress

Left superior parietal lobule



# Neuroscience behind Stress

- ◆ Oftentimes traumatic events occur in our childhood that negatively impact our ability to maintain strong physical, mental, and emotional health.
- ◆ When these events are not properly processed they can lead to maladaptive and even pathological behaviors or mental illness

# Stress Management the Holistic Way

🟢 **Physical**

🟢 **Mental**

🟢 **Emotional**

🟢 **Spiritual**

# PHYSICAL

- ◆ **A recent study revealed that regular aerobic exercise consisting of between 20 to 45 minutes per day at least 4 times per week was more effective for stress and depression than psychotropic meds**
- ◆ **Jogging, running, & walking emulate bilateral stimulation used in EMDR therapy for PTSD**

# MENTAL

- ◆ **In order to tame it, you must be able to name it.(Assessment, self awareness)**
- ◆ **In order to heal it, you must be willing to feel it (Peer Support, Therapy)**
- ◆ **Knowledge of self is empowerment**

# Self Awareness is a key component to mental wellness

- ◆ *People travel to wonder at the height of mountains, at the huge waves of the sea, at the long courses of rivers, at the vast compass of the ocean, at the circular motion of the stars; and they pass by themselves without wondering.*
- ◆ *St. Augustine*

# Mental-Internal Stress

- ◆ **God grant me the serenity  
to accept the things I cannot change;  
courage to change the things I can;  
and wisdom to know the difference.  
Living one day at a time;  
Enjoying one moment at a time;  
Accepting hardships as the pathway to peace;  
Taking, as He did, this sinful world  
as it is, not as I would have it;  
Trusting that He will make all things right  
if I surrender to His Will;  
That I may be reasonably happy in this life  
and supremely happy with Him  
Forever in the next.  
Amen.      --Reinhold Niebuhr**

# SELF ADMINISTERED TESTS

- ◆ [http://psychologytoday.tests.psychtests.com/take\\_test.php?idRegTest=1308](http://psychologytoday.tests.psychtests.com/take_test.php?idRegTest=1308)
- ◆ <http://www.adaa.org/living-with-anxiety/ask-and-learn/screenings/screening-posttraumatic-stress-disorder-ptsd>
- ◆ [http://psychologytoday.tests.psychtests.com/take\\_test.php?idRegTest=3265](http://psychologytoday.tests.psychtests.com/take_test.php?idRegTest=3265)

# EMOTIONAL

- ◆ **Cathartic relief by expressing strong emotions and/or feelings to trusted individuals and/or professionals**
- ◆ **Trusted Friends**
- ◆ **Peer Support**
- ◆ **Mental Health Clinicians**

# SPIRITUAL

- ◆ **Mindfulness**
- ◆ **Meditation**
- ◆ **Prayer**
- ◆ **Hobbies**
- ◆ **Religious expression**