

Work Well

Introduction

Welcome to the Virtual Self-guided Wellness Exhibit Managing Stress: **Work Well**. This learning module contains 16 posters and takes approximately 15 minutes to complete.

Before you get started, print the **Passport to Work Well** which is on the next page of this Virtual Exhibit. Answer the questions on the Passport as you go through the Virtual Exhibit.



Passport to Managing Stress: Work Well



Name: _____

Answer these questions as you go through the virtual educational exhibit to reinforce your learning.

Exhibit 1: Overview Of Stress

Circle one: The first indicator of stress for me is usually: a) Physical b) Behavioral c) Mood Changes

Exhibit 2: The SCARF Model And Stress Triggers

Recognizing that the _____ trigger from the SCARF model is a major stress trigger for me will help me to identify and respond more effectively to stress.

Exhibit 3: Responding To Stress

Circle one: My typical response to stress is: a) Fight b) Flight c) Freeze

Exhibit 4: Coping With Stress

Two examples of stress management practices that I am willing to do on a regular basis to help me cope with stress are:

Exhibit 5: Overview of Burnout

List any physical, emotional, or behavioral symptoms of burnout you are experiencing:

Exhibit 6: Burnout: Risk Factors and Causes

List any risk factors and potential causes that may influence your risk for burnout:

Exhibit 7: Work-Life Balance

List 3 things you can do to improve your work-life balance.

Exhibit 8: Mental Health: Take Control of Your Workday and Workspace

It would help me feel less overwhelmed and more in control if I “decluttered” these areas of my workspace:

It would help organize my day by doing the following:



Exhibit 9: Mental Health: Take Meaningful Breaks

List ways to take meaningful breaks throughout your workday:

Exhibit 10: Meditation

Try this 5 Minute BBLISS Meditation as way to take a meaningful break and try to make time each day for brief meditation.

Exhibit 11: Food & Beverages to Avoid When Stressed

I am willing to consume less of these foods during stressful periods:

Exhibit 12: Food to Enjoy When Stressed

I am willing to consume more of these foods during stressful periods:

Exhibit 13: Beverages and Stress

I am willing to consume more of these beverages during stressful periods:

Exhibit 14: Managing Stress At Work – Physical Health

Two ways that I am willing to add movement into my workday are:

Exhibit 15: Multi-tasking and Stress

When multitasking overwhelms me, it usually results in:

Circle all that apply: Poor Work Quality Decreased Productivity Increased Temper

List other factors that multitasking results in at work:

Exhibit 16: Curb Multitasking

Practices that I will try to curb multitasking and be more time-efficient at work are:

OVERVIEW OF STRESS



What is Stress

Stress is a normal physical response to events that make you feel unsettled, threatened or upset your balance in some way.

Recognizing Stress

By understanding the ways stress affects your body, you can learn to quickly identify the signs of stress and how to cope with it in a healthy way.



Physical Indicators

- Headache
- Muscle pain or tension
- Chest pain
- Fatigue
- Upset stomach
- Change in sex drive
- Sleep problems



Behavioral Response

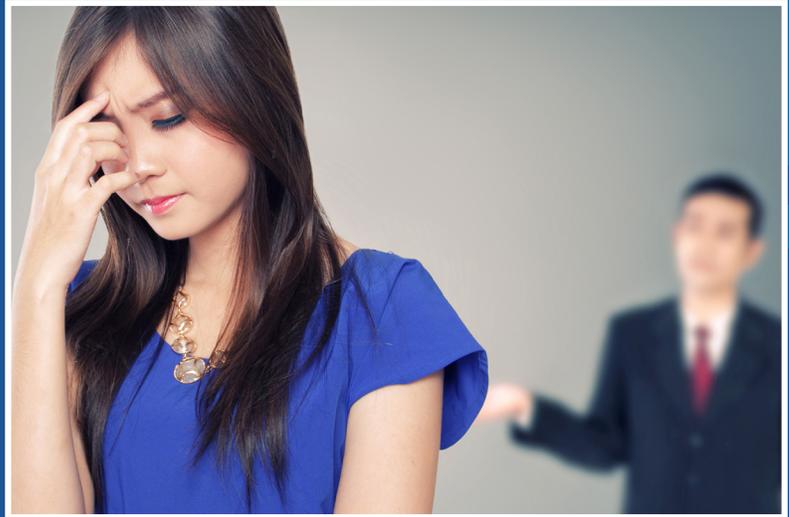
- Over or undereating
- Drug or alcohol use
- Tobacco use
- Social withdrawal



Mood Changes

- Anxiety
- Low motivation
- Restlessness
- Irritability
- Sadness/depression
- Anger

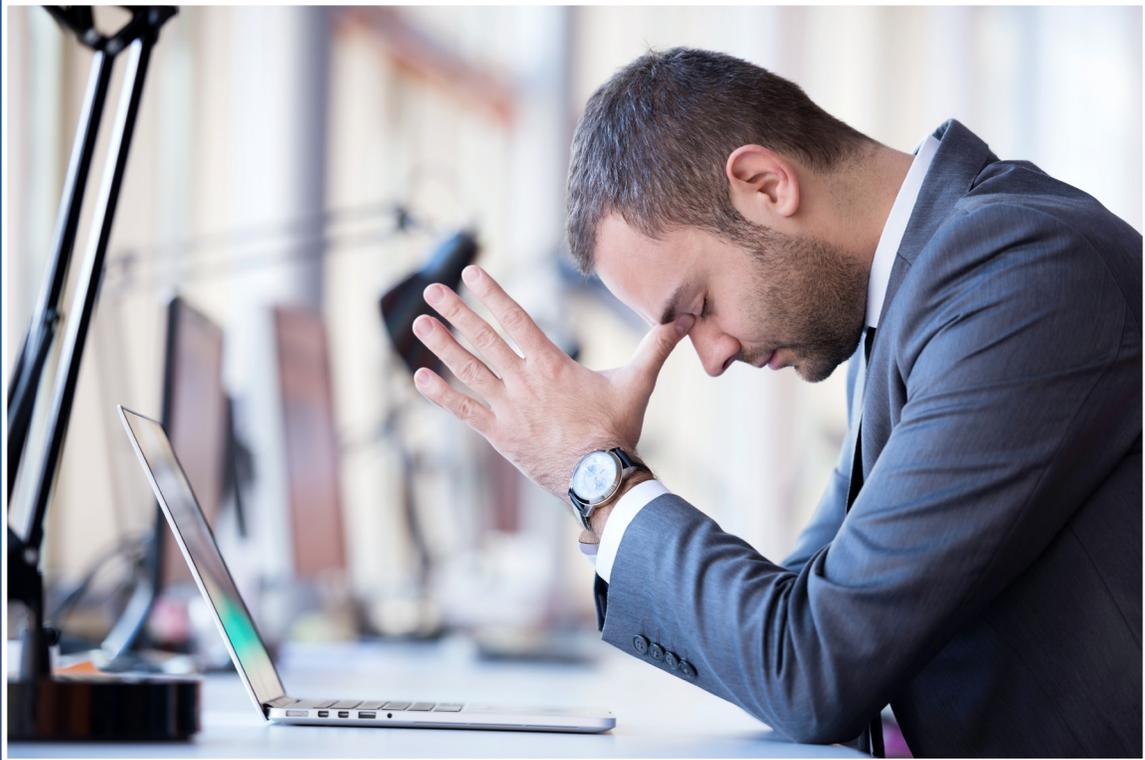
THE SCARF MODEL AND STRESS TRIGGERS



The SCARF Model provides a framework for understanding core stress triggers. This model labels the major key stress triggers, enabling people to take measures to respond effectively.



- S Status:** refers to one's sense of importance relative to others, e.g. peers, co-workers, friends, and supervisors.
- C Certainty:** refers to one's need for clarity and the ability to make accurate predictions about the future.
- A Autonomy:** is tied to a sense of control over the events in one's life and the perception that one's behavior has an effect on the outcome of a situation, e.g. getting a promotion, finding a partner.
- R Relatedness:** concerns one's sense of connection to and security with another person.
- F Fairness:** refers to just and non-biased exchange between people, e.g. praise for or acknowledgement of one's efforts, equivalent pay for equivalent work.



RESPONDING TO STRESS

The Fight/Flight/Freeze Model of Stress Response describes typical ways in which people respond to stress. Think about your stress response in situations and how certain people in your life influence your response to stress.



Fight

Also known as the “attack” mode. This alertness causes one to perceive everything in their surroundings as potential threats. The threats can be real or imaginary. Blood flow to the muscles is increased by 300% and causes the muscles to tense. Forms of the fight response include physically acting out or emotionally lashing out at others.



Flight

Also known as the “retreat” mode. In times of perceived danger or threat, one may run away from the situation. This can be beneficial in times where one is making a conscious decision to remove themselves from a toxic situation, but often times, this response is a temporary avoidance of the real stressor at hand.



Freeze

Also known as a state of physical, emotional, or mental stillness. Hopeless, powerless, or overwhelming feelings may cause one to completely freeze. This response is common when the fight/flight responses are not options.



COPING WITH STRESS

Pay attention to signals of an oncoming fight-flight-freeze response.

Signals may include:

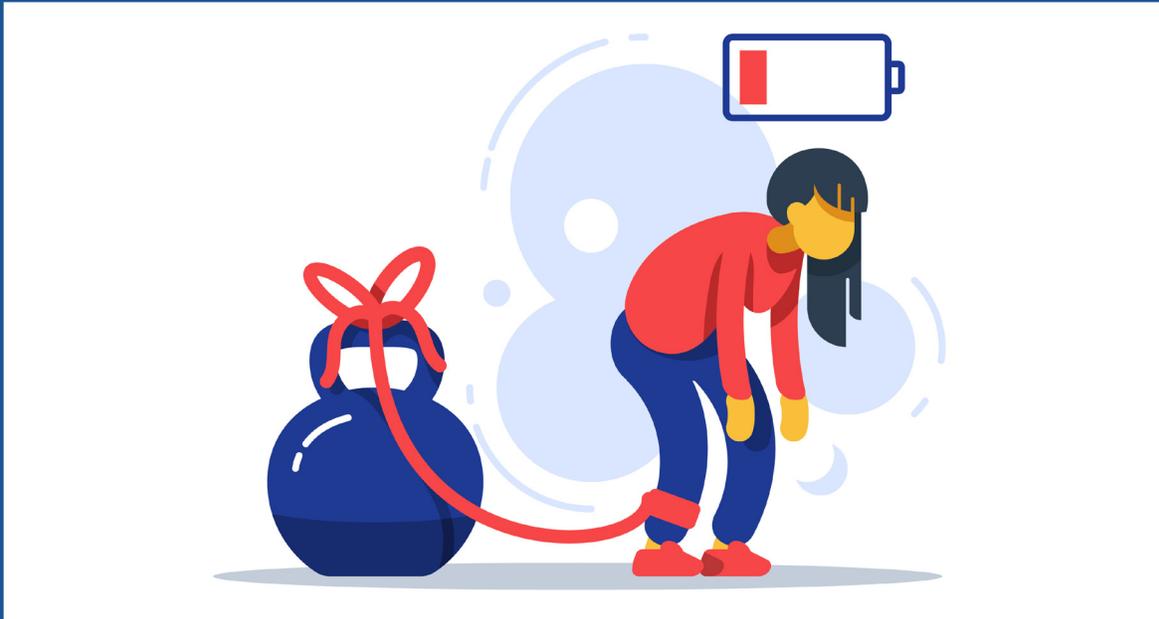
- Physical symptoms such as tension in our muscles, headaches, upset stomach, racing heartbeat, or quick breaths.
- Emotional symptoms such as anxiety, poor concentration, depression, hopelessness, frustration, anger, sadness, or fear.

Overcome the Stressor

-  **Fight:** Confront the threat or stressor and deal with it.
-  **Flight:** Get as far away from the threat or stressor as quickly as possible if it is likely to be a dangerous situation.
-  **Freeze:**
 1. Focus your eyes on one spot.
 2. Concentrate on your breathing.
 3. Notice the environment around you, using the senses of touch, hearing and vision.
 4. Evaluate your surroundings and decide what is the healthiest, safest way to react to the stressor.

To cope with stress, make time each day to engage in stress management practices.

OVERVIEW OF BURNOUT



Burnout is feeling that you have come to the end of your rope, are burdened by your stresses, and out of battery life. The effects of burnout extend beyond your work and effect many aspects of your life.

Physical Symptoms of Burnout:

- Feeling exhausted or sleeping poorly
- Headaches, high blood pressure, or digestive disorders
- Inability to focus, reduced creativity, loss of memory, or difficulty problem solving

Emotional Symptoms of Burnout:

- Being irritable or unusually quick to anger
- Increased pessimism or frustration
- Decreased satisfaction
- Feelings of dread

Behavioral Symptoms of Burnout:

- Taking longer to get ready in the morning
- Missing more work than usual
- Increased conflicts with those around you — at work and at home
- Working longer but accomplishing less
- Less patience
- Misusing food, alcohol, or other substances



BURNOUT: RISK FACTORS AND CAUSES

Burnout occurs when the demands of a job outstrip a person's ability to cope with the stress of that job.

Risk Factors for Burnout:

- High expectations of yourself and your performance
- Large workload that requires after-hours work
- Negative self-talk
- Feelings of inadequacy or incompetency
- Regularly volunteering to take on more work
- Feelings that "no one else can do this"

Causes of Burnout:

- Job or the job role is not a good fit
- The job expectations are unclear or constantly changing
- Job is poorly designed
- Little or no control of schedule, assignments, workloads, deadlines
- Bullying or lack of supervisory support
- Mismanagement or micromanagement
- Exclusion of family, friends, outside activities due to work
- Personal stress added to work-related stresses...just too much





WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Whether you work outside the home or at home, it is important to maintain a healthy work-life balance.

Things to Consider:

- Do I have clear work goals?
- Do I have a dedicated place to work?
 - With space, size, lighting, and other features appropriate to my work
 - With necessary equipment that incorporates ergonomics and optimizes work and workflow
- Do I have predetermined times of availability, focused work times, and time to collaborate with colleagues?
- Am I able to prioritize and delegate tasks?
- Am I able to set boundaries?
- Whether working from home (WFH) or onsite, do I have a daily routine?

MANAGING STRESS AT WORK

Mental Health

Take Control of Your Workday and Workspace

Create a To-Do List

- Take a few minutes to prepare for the day by prioritizing essential tasks.
- Revisit your To-Do list, at the end of the day.
- Identifying key action items will help you feel in control, which can greatly reduce your stress levels.



Control your Workday

- Schedule “No Meeting” time for focused work.
- Set times in the day to respond to email.
- Do challenging work when you have the most energy.
- Give yourself deadlines.

Declutter your Workspace

- Get organized to help you feel less overwhelmed and stressed by the commotion around you.
- Keep your workspace decluttered so you can find what you need and you have space to work effectively.
- Organize your digital workspace by placing documents in folders so you can access them easily.
- On a regular basis, delete paper and electronic files and messages you don't need.

MANAGING STRESS AT WORK

Mental Health

Take Meaningful Breaks

Get outside for some fresh air and a change of scenery.

- Step away from your workspace during lunch.
- Go outside in the afternoon to recharge.



Find a quiet place for deep breathing or a quick meditation.

- Meditation can be done at your workspace.
- A grassy and shaded area is a great place to meditate in nature.

Listen to music or a podcast.



MEDITATION

Meditation is a proven practice that reduces stress, increases mindfulness, and improves well-being. Meditation can be done anywhere and for small increments of time.

5 Minute BBLISS Meditation

B - BODY

Bring your awareness into your body. Scan every part of your body from your feet up to your head and notice your sensations.

B - BREATH

Take three full, deep breaths. Fully inhale. Fully exhale. As you do, let go of what is old. Notice how the new breath comes back all by itself.

L - LISTEN OUT

Listen to and notice the sounds around you. Let your hearing become receptive, as if you are breathing in and out of your ears.

L - LISTEN IN

Listen internally to your thoughts and the stories you are telling yourself in the moment. Simply notice them, without judgment.

I - ACKNOWLEDGE THE "I" STORIES

Acknowledge the stories you are telling yourself. "I hear that I am telling myself (fill in your own story in the moment)."

S - SENSATIONS

Again without judgment, notice the sensations that happen in your body as a result of those stories. For instance, "My breathing gets more deep, my throat feels more open."

S - SENSE

Sense the life force pulsating through you, and recognize that you are alive. Name something you are grateful for.

FOOD AND BEVERAGES TO AVOID WHEN STRESSED:

1. Energy Drinks, Caffeinated Soda, Coffee, Sweetened Coffee

Beverages containing high caffeine and sugar can affect your mood and sleep patterns.



2. Spicy Foods

Stress slows down metabolism and makes it harder to digest food, so food sits in the stomach longer leading to things like acid reflux; spicy foods make acid reflux worse.



3. Candy & Sweets, Sugar-Sweetened Beverages

Sugar leads to higher level of stress hormones, and the consumption of refined sugar can lead to crashes, irritability, and increased food cravings.



4. Processed Foods

Foods high in sodium, fat, and artificial additives increase cortisol levels, which contribute to weight gain.



5. Alcohol

Alcohol elevates cortisol levels leading to weight gain.



FOOD TO ENJOY WHEN STRESSED

During stressful periods, consume these foods to maintain your health and energy level.

Snack on Nuts, try cashews, pistachios, almonds, and walnuts.



Eat foods high in vitamin C such as citrus fruit and red peppers. Remember eat the fruit, don't drink the juice.

Consume fish that are high in omega 3 fatty acids, aim for about 2 servings a week of wild salmon or other oily fish.



Eat foods that are high in magnesium, good magnesium sources include: spinach, beans, brown rice, and seeds (sunflower, flax, pumpkin).

Focus on foods that make you feel full, shut down stress eating by adding half an avocado to your lunch.



Focus on healthy carbohydrates, complex carbohydrates like oatmeal are digested more slowly and don't cause spikes in blood sugar.

Eat tryptophan-rich foods such as turkey, chicken, bananas, dairy foods, oats, and soy.



When indulging, have some dark chocolate as it has been found to improve mood. Choose chocolate that's at least 70 percent cocoa and remember that dark chocolate is high in calories so mind your portions. Since dark chocolate contains caffeine, enjoy during the day.

BEVERAGES & STRESS



During stressful periods, consume these beverages to maintain your health and energy level.

Drink more water:

Repeated high stress levels weakens the adrenal glands and leads to dehydration. During stressful periods, increase your water intake to keep your body functioning well. To make sure you are drinking enough, drink half your body weight in ounces of water daily (body weight in pounds/2).



Sip tea at work:

While sipping tea can be a relaxing activity, certain herbs are scientifically proven as the best for relieving stress. Some of the best stress-reducing teas are valerian, passion flower, and St. John's wort.



Warm up your milk:

Drinking a glass of warm milk at any time of the day is a great way to reduce stress. Milk contains the protein lactium, which helps relax the body by lowering blood pressure, and potassium, which helps relax muscles.



MANAGING STRESS AT WORK

Physical Health



Add Movement at Work

- During phone calls, you can:
 - Stand or pace
 - Try some balance exercises like standing on one foot
 - Use hand weights.
- Stand 5 minutes for every one 30 minutes of sitting.
- Use at least part of your lunch break to go for a walk.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Schedule walking meetings.
- Use the gym at your workplace.



MULTITASKING AND STRESS

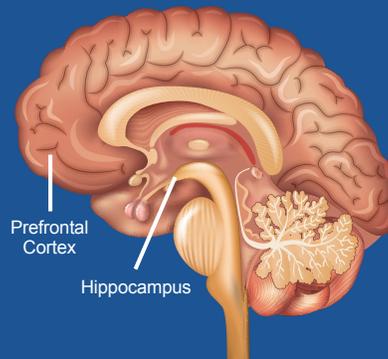
Multitasking overwhelms the brain and it responds by pumping the stress hormones adrenaline and cortisol.

The Negative Consequences of Multitasking

- Poor quality of work.
- Focusing on more than one task decreases productivity by 40%.
- Lowers your IQ by ten points, the same loss of IQ points after getting no sleep for one night.

Effects of Multitasking on the Brain

- Prolonged stress on these frontal lobes can cause serious damage.
- Continued stress may cause damage to the prefrontal cortex and death of brain cells in the hippocampus, the memory and learning-processing center of the brain.





CURB MULTITASKING

To become more time-efficient at work, develop work practices that reduce your urge to multitask by following these tips:

- Create set times to check email, phone, and text messages.
- During meetings — pay attention.
 - Put phone on “Do Not Disturb.”
 - Do not check emails.
 - Do not do other work – focus on the meeting.
- Keep your workspace quiet and organized to minimize distractions.
- Put a “Do Not Disturb” sign on your workspace.
- Allocate a specific amount of time to work on a single task without distractions or interruptions.
- Give yourself deadlines to help you focus and get work done efficiently.



Work Well

Close

We hope you have enjoyed the Virtual Self-guided Wellness Exhibit **Managing Stress: Work Well**. Additionally, we hope that you learned more about stress, the different responses to stress, ways to cope with stress, and managing stress at work. You are now ready for the **Work Well Challenge** to put these practices into daily living.