Guidelines for Stress Management
TEACHING PHASE – DEBRIEFING – INFORMATION PHASE – DEFUSING

Diet  MIND WHAT YOU EAT
Focus on high protein, raw fruits and vegetables. Limit the consumption of carbohydrates, sugar, fat, and salt when stressed. Cortisone levels rise when stressed. Due to this, our immune system depletes and our brains tell our body that it is starving to death.

Exercise
Sweat out the 132 chemicals that mixed together when your body went into the stress response. Sweat is the only way we can remove the chemicals quickly. Get physical therapy massages to ease the pains in the body.

Let it Run
Your unconscious has to find a fit for the event in your memory that your memory can accept. It will run it at your request or when it feels it can. Let it run when you control it. If this is overwhelming now, set it up to ‘run on Friday’.

Breathing Techniques
Roll your shoulders back. Breathe in to the count of four, breathe out to the count of six. INHALE OXYGEN, EXHALE CARBON MONOXIDE. Most people use 1/3rd of their lung capacity. Deep breathing, using more than 2/3rd of your lung capacity, increases oxygen flow to the brain, so we think clearer, and dumps the carbon monoxide in our lungs, allowing us to breathe better. Deep breathing also increases the serotonin levels in our body.

Compassion Fatigue
The cost of caring – take care of yourself

*Your EAP is here to help!
If excessive stress is negatively impacting your personal, work or family life, The Village Employee Assistance Program (EAP) can help you. The Village EAP is staffed with trained counselors who can help you assess the situation, suggest ways to help, and help you determine a plan of action. Call us at (800) 627-8220.
PHYSIOLOGICAL REACTIONS TO STRESS

1. The adrenal glands kick in to produce ACTH (CORTIZON)
   + Calms body tissue and prevents a major allergic reaction
   - Destroys the body’s resistance, immune response weakens, starvation mode

2. Thyroid kicks in to regulate the speed of chemical reactions
   + Thyroid speeds up body’s metabolism, burns fuel faster, extra energy
   - Exhaustion and burnout - shaky nerves - jumpiness, weight loss

3. Endorphins - Pain Killer
   + The natural morphine painkiller
   - Depletes normal levels of endorphin, and little hurts become big

4. Hormone females (progesterone) and males (testosterone) diminishes
   + Body focuses on survival, not reproduction
   - Ovulation and menstrual cycle changes, testosterone levels are lowered

5. The digestive system shuts down
   + Blood supplies are diverted to the engine room -- heart and lungs
   - Dry mouth, hard to get system started again

6. Release of sugar into blood, increased insulin levels to break up sugars
   + Body’s short distance energy,
   - Tough on diabetics

7. The liver sends cholesterol into the bloodstream
   + Cholesterol is the “long distance” fuel since the stomach factory shut down
   - Coronary arteries load up, causes heart attacks and strokes

8. Racing heart
   + The heart pumps blood to the lungs and the muscle tissues
   - Blood pressure escalates, causes strokes and heart attacks

9. Lungs dilate while the breathing becomes deep and rapid
   + The increased oxygen feeds increased blood supply coming into the lungs
   - Breathing dangerous chemicals stick to tiny cells in throat and lung tissue

10. The blood thickens with red and white blood cells
    + More thick blood cells into your circulatory system to expand your capacity
    - Can cause a blood clot, a stroke, or an aneurysm

11. The skin pales, sweats, “crawls”, hairs heighten our sense of touch
    + The hypersensitivity of the skin detects minute environmental dangers
    - Pasty face, clammy cold hands and stained armpits

12. The five senses become super sensitive and acute
    + This super sensing brings the body to peak functional
    - High error rate
HELPFUL HINTS FOR LONG TERM HANDLING OF STRESS REACTIONS

Following are positive steps you can take to overcome stress:

1. Learn yoga, deep breathing, and meditation or progressive relaxation exercises. Set aside a few minutes each day when you can practice these. For example, work breaks in the mid-afternoon.
2. Engage in vigorous aerobic exercise (jogging, brisk walking, swimming) 20 to 30 minutes, three or more times per week.
3. Join a social group outside your family or work, and then make time for it.
4. Avoid setting impossible deadlines or goals. Make a realistic list of tasks for each day and tackle them one by one.
5. Don’t let yourself be constantly interrupted or distracted. Learn to ignore the phone or turn on your answering machine.
6. Find a quite place where you can spend a few minutes alone each day.
7. When tension mounts, excuse yourself for a few minutes of meditation, deep breathing, or walk around the block.
8. Avoid constant clock watching. Allow yourself enough time to get to meetings or other obligations.
9. Try to keep hostile feelings in check. If someone or something makes you angry, voice your feelings in a calm, rational manner.
10. Learn to avoid situations that make you tense or angry. If you can’t stand waiting in lines at the bank, for example, go at times when the bank is not busy.
11. Cultivate a supportive network of people with whom you can share your feelings and ideas.
12. Take up a hobby or activity you enjoy.
13. Avoid turning to alcohol or cigarettes to relieve tension. The effects are temporary and end up increasing tension.
14. Make sure you get enough sleep.
15. Avoid taking work home. If this seems impossible, consider whether you are managing your time effectively.
16. Plan at least one vacation during the year, which you can truly escape.
17. Learn to manage your finances so that you can avoid constant worry about bills.
18. Try something new occasionally – a different type of ethnic food, a new route to work, a visit to a new art exhibit.
19. Acquire a pet, especially if you live alone. The undemanding devotion of a cat or dog can make living in a frustrating, often hostile world, more endurable.
20. Accept your limitations. Every now and then, make a list of your accomplishments and positive aspects of your life.

HELPFUL HINTS FOR IMMEDIATE HANDLING OF STRESS REACTIONS

Trying some of the following hints, shortly after the stressful event, may help alleviate the emotional pain associated with traumatic events.

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<tr>
<th>FOR YOURSELF</th>
<th>FOR FAMILY MEMBERS AND FRIENDS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▪ Within the first 24-48 hours, engage in both vigorous physical exercise and get more rest than usual</td>
<td>▪ Listen carefully</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Contact friends</td>
<td>▪ Spend time with the traumatized person</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Have someone stay with you for at least a few hours or periods of a day or so</td>
<td>▪ Offer your assistance and listening ear even if they have not asked for your help</td>
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<td>▪ Reoccurring thoughts, dreams, or flashbacks are normal – don’t try to fight them – they’ll decrease over time</td>
<td>▪ Help them with everyday tasks like cleaning, cooking, caring for the family, minding the children, etc.</td>
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<td>▪ Maintain as normal a schedule as possible</td>
<td>▪ Give them some private time</td>
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<td>▪ Eat well-balanced and regular meals (even when you don’t feel like it)</td>
<td>▪ Don’t take their anger or other feelings personally</td>
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<td>▪ Try to keep a reasonable level of activity</td>
<td>▪ Don’t tell them that they are “lucky it wasn’t worse.” Those statements do not console traumatized people, instead, tell them that you are sorry that such an event has occurred and you want to understand and assist them</td>
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<td>▪ Keep a journal – write down your feelings</td>
<td>▪ Reduce your use of coffee, alcohol and cigarettes</td>
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<td>▪ Fight against boredom</td>
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<td>▪ Express your feelings as they arise</td>
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<td>▪ Talk to people you trust</td>
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<td>▪ Find a good counselor if the feelings become prolonged or too intense</td>
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If the symptoms described above are severe or if they last longer than six weeks, the traumatized person may need professional counseling. Contact a psychiatrist or psychologist through your healthcare provider, local clergy or hospital chaplain, or a peer counselor to listen and assist you in contacting the appropriate professional agency.

Adopted from articles prepared by Jeffrey T. Mitchell, Ph.D., of University of Maryland Emergency Health Services Program.