

MANAGING STRESS

Life isn't something we can always control, and at times it can feel extremely stressful. You may not be able to remove all stress from your life, but you can learn to manage it.

MAKE "TO DO" LISTS

 To-do lists can be a great option to reduce stress in the present, as well as in the future. Try working these three lists: 1) A master to-do list. This list will include everything that you want to accomplish. 2) A will-do-today list. This list includes what you want to spend your time on today. 3) A will-do-later list. This list enables you to schedule tasks at a later date.

ORGANIZE YOUR TIME

 Do you ever feel like there's just not enough time in the day? A few organizational skills can help maximize the time you do have. 1) Plan your next day the night before. Wake up with a purpose. 2) Schedule for interruptions. Set up time allowances in your plan. Give yourself time in between scheduled work for unexpected interruptions.

UNPLUG

 Modern technology certainly has its advantages, productivity being one of them. It can also allow work stressors to intervene with family time, social activities and vacation. Set boundaries to help you spend your time and energy away from work. Try turning off cell phones at dinner and decide on a certain time to check email.

EAT A WELL BALANCED DIET

 During stressful times, we often turn to traditional "comfort" foods. Ironically, these foods make us feel lethargic and reduce our ability to deal with stress. Try avoiding these foods and instead eating foods with low-fat, high-fiber, carbohydrate-rich meals with plenty of fruits and vegetables. Following these guidelines will help reduce stress.

SLEEP

 The stresses of life and work will leave anyone tossing and turning. Try one of these tips tonight for sweet dreams. 1) Quit caffeine by noon. Caffeine can remain in your body for 8-14 hours. 2) Practice relaxation 1-2 hours before bedtime. Decrease stimulation and do something you find relaxing, such as reading or taking a bath.

LEAVE WORK AT WORK

 You've had a long day at work, the last thing you need to do is take your work stress home with you. Try out one of these techniques to help your mind focus on the present, not on work. 1) Treating your commute home as a positive time to wind down and start the process of relaxation. 2) Once you get home, take a relaxing walk.