Think Well, Live Healthy: Positivity

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PEBTF
Learning objectives

Think Well, Live Healthy: Positivity

- **Increase** awareness of how one’s thoughts and beliefs contribute to stress
- **Explain** the impact of stress on the body, mind, and behaviors
- **Identify** common negative thought patterns
- **Provide** techniques for reframing thoughts to reduce stress
What is stress?

- **Physical** and **emotional** response to change
- **Normal** reaction to increasing demands and changes in life
- When brain perceives stress, it signals the **release of hormones** to address stress
  - “Flight or fight response”
  - When threat is gone, body is meant to return to normal state
- When stress is **excessive** or **prolonged** this can negatively impact health
- Stress is **different for everyone**, and people can use **multiple ways to cope**
Effects on your **body, mind, and behavior**

**Body**
- Upset stomach and nausea
- Headaches
- Tense muscles and pain
- Fast heartbeat and breathing

**Mind**
- Overwhelmed
- Feeling anxious or worried
- Unable to focus

**Behavior**
- Affects eating patterns (overeating/under-eating)
- Drug or alcohol abuse
- Difficulty sleeping
- Withdrawal from others
External stressors

Events and situations that may cause you stress:

• Routine or daily stress
  – Work/family balance
  – Job-related stress
  – Relationships (communication and conflict)
  – Financial stress

• Major event or life change
  – Marriage
  – Unemployment
  – Losses (death or divorce)

• Traumatic experience
  – Accident
  – Natural disaster

Change is a key trigger of stress!
Internal stressors

Stress caused by your own thoughts and beliefs:

- Inability to accept uncertainty
- Negative self talk
- Negative thought patterns
- Unrealistic expectations
- Perceptions

The way we handle life’s various challenges is determined by the way we think—often unconscious—about these challenges.
“Life is lived in the mind; the quality of your thoughts determines the quality of your life.”

-Unknown

We can take control of our thoughts!
Taking control of your thoughts

• Your thinking is not fixed – you can change thoughts

• Changing how you think can have a positive effect
  – Physical, emotional, and behavioral

• Help you cope better

• Reframe your thoughts
Common negative thought patterns

• All or nothing thinking
• Mental filter
• Personalizing
• “Should” thoughts
Common **negative thought patterns**

- **All or nothing thinking**
  - Thinking in extremes, such as “always” or “never”

- **Mental filter**
  - Look over positive events and focus on one negative event

- **Personalizing**
  - You take it personally how someone acts towards you

- **“Should” thoughts**
  - Judgmental attitude and expecting perfection
Reframe your thoughts

• Benefits
  – Change physical responses to stress, boost your energy, and improve how you cope

• Process for change
  1. Identify your thoughts
  2. Challenge your thoughts
  3. Reframe your thoughts
Process for **changing thoughts**

1. **Identify your thoughts** (pause and reflect)
   - STOP the negativity

2. **Challenge your thoughts**
   - ASK questions:
     - What is the truth in this thought?
     - Are these thoughts helpful?
     - How are these thoughts affecting me?

3. **Reframe your thoughts**
   - CHOOSE another, more positive thought
   - View things differently
Be resilient!

- Resiliency means...
  - Adapting in a positive way and having the ability to maintain or regain your mental state when faced with stress or hardship
  - Being able to bounce back from a life set back
How do we **develop resiliency?**

- **Life events**
  - We learn from our experiences

- **Attitude**
  - Focus on the positive
  - Be optimistic
  - Anticipate change and be proactive

- **Social support**
  - Build and maintain strong powerful relationships with friends and family
  - Asking for help
Who Wants to Lower Stress?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Which of the following scents can help us de-stress?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Lavender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Mom’s home made soup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Lilac bush</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. All of the above</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Who Wants to Lower Stress?

Our immune system can be weakened by chronic stress. Vitamin C plays a crucial role in strengthening our immune function. Which food has the most amount of this vitamin?

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Milk</td>
<td>B. Banana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Fresh Salsa</td>
<td>D. Almonds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Who Wants to Lower Stress?

Chronic, prolonged stress may lead to high blood pressure. Potassium has been found to have the effect of reducing high blood pressure. Which of these foods is rich in potassium?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Tuna</th>
<th>B. Olive oil</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C. Rice</td>
<td>D. Cheese</td>
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Summary

Mindful thinking
- Notice your thoughts and how they feel
- Pay attention to effects
- Identify stress symptoms

Thought, feelings, behavior
- Begin with addressing thoughts
- Feelings and behaviors will change

Thought patterns
- Be aware of negative patterns

Changing your thoughts
- Follow “stop, ask, choose”

Practice, practice, practice!
- Set a goal for shifting your thoughts
- Practice reframing your thoughts
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Thank you!