Managing Stress

Make stress work for you, not against you

Stress is your natural reaction to change in your environment. That’s why your stress level is always changing, from year to year, day to day, even hour to hour. There’s no doubt that too much uncontrolled stress can have a negative impact on your life. However, stress can also be used to your advantage. The key is to understand your stressors and your values, and then get these two things to support each other. Here’s how:

FIRST, make a list of your stressors.

Stressors can vary for individuals, and may include things such as work-related tasks, finances, and traffic. Then, on a scale of 1-10, rate them on their level of impact. 0=very little impact/10= high impact.

Ex: Finances 10

Ex: Work 6

Ex: Travel with family 10

Ex: Healthy Eating 8

NEXT, make a list of the values that are important in your life.

Make sure you are selecting your values and not the values of other people in your life. On a scale of 1-10 rate them on their level of importance 0=important/10=extremely important.

Ex: Travel with family 10

Ex: Healthy Eating 8

Call your health coach if you have questions.
Now that you know what is truly important to you and what’s causing you the highest stress, ask yourself, “How can I align my values with the level of stress I operate best under?” You’re trying to figure out how to use your stress to work in your favor for each category based on their ratings!

For example:

After rating my _____ finances _____ stressor at a _____ 10 ___, I will _____ spend 30 minutes _____ each day after work at 6:00pm researching ways to improve my financial _____ planning knowledge _____, starting _____ Monday, April 22, 2013 ___, until the next time I reassess my stress and values in _____ 1 month ___. This will help me _____ spend more _____ time traveling with family by allowing me to save money for a fun rafting trip _____.

After rating my _________ stressor at a __________, I will ________________________________ ________________________________, starting ________________________________, until the next time I reassess my stress and values in __________. This will help me ________________________________ ________________________________.

**Attention: Please speak with your doctor or a mental health professional if you ever feel you can’t manage your stress, have exhausted all your resources, or are feeling too overwhelmed. Outside resources are available.**

Sources: Healthwise database: “Stress Management” “Examining Your Beliefs to Manage Stress”
Author: Healthwise Staff Medical Review: Kathleen Romito, MD - Family Medicine & Lisa S. Weinstock, MD - Psychiatry

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