

**HUMOR AND
STRESS MANAGEMENT**

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WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

- o To recognize the risks of prolonged stress and implement effective stress management skills

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SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

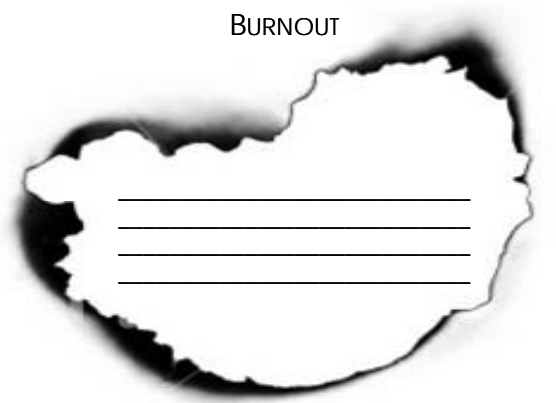
- o Identify the health risks of prolonged stress on the body
- o Describe the benefits of humor and laughing
- o List and utilize at least 3 stress management techniques
- o Develop and implement a personal stress management plan

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WHAT IS STRESS?

Adapted from Selye (1986) © SGRI 2007

BURNOUT



Adapted from Maslach (1982) Copyright SGRI 2007

STRESS ON THE BODY

o Stress has negative effects on your health


- Half of all doctor visits are stress-related
- According to a report by the United Nations International Labor Organization, **“Stress has become one of the most serious health issues of our time.”**
- Stress is a factor in health problems such as multiple sclerosis, Alzheimer’s disease, cardiac failure, high blood pressure, and cancer

Adapted from Bell (1996), Wilde (2006), and Maté (2003) © SGRI 2007

STRESSED PERSONALITIES

o P _____

o T _____



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PERFECTIONISTS

- o We get stuck back in our stressful rut, even after relaxing
- o When perfection is not achieved, we are left with three choices
 - Give up and say its not important
 - Push harder and further damage his or her health
 - Live with continual disappointment
- o Learn to laugh at things that do not matter, and to try again for things that are important
- o We will never be filled with inner peace unless we learn to accept some imperfection

Adapted from Bell (1996) and Carlson (1997)

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TYPE A PERSONALITY

- o Type A people are very driven, motivated by success and accomplishments, and push themselves very hard
- o Type A personalities are more prone to greater stress and heart disease
- o It is important for us to take breaks and relax in order to not expose ourselves to greater health risks

Adapted from McGhee (1999)

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HARDINESS

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DEVELOPING HARDINESS

Four factors in developing hardiness:

1. C _____
2. C _____
3. C _____
4. C _____

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TAMING OUR CATASTROPHIZING TENDENCIES

“I have been through some terrible things in my life, some of which actually happened.”
--Mark Twain



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Adapted from Bell (1996)
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REEVALUATING YOUR STRESSORS

"Life is a continuing process of reevaluating your beliefs to decide whether they are false or unrealistic, searching your soul to determine what you need to accept as is, and where you need to apply your energy to encourage change in your life."


--Steve Bell, author of *Stress Control*

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EFFECTS OF LAUGHTER ON THE BODY

Humor: the quality of being laughable or comical; a state of mind, mood, or spirit



Those who find humor in their lives have stronger immune systems, which keeps them out of **the stress-sickness-more stress cycle**

Adapted from Woolen (1996) and McGhee (1999)
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LAUGHTER AND HEALTH

- o "The simple truth is that happy people generally do not get sick."
- Bernie Siegel, M.D.
- o "Frame your mind to mirth and merriment, which bars a thousand harms and lengthens life."
- William Shakespeare
- o "A clown is like an aspirin, only he works twice as fast."
- Groucho Marx

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JOKES AND ANXIETY

- o "Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson were going camping. They pitched their tent under the stars and went to sleep.
- o Sometime in the middle of the night Holmes woke Watson up and said, "Watson, look up at the stars, and tell me what you see."
- o Watson replied: "I see millions and millions of stars."
- o Holmes said: "And what do you deduce from that?"
- o Watson replied: "Well, if there are millions of stars, and if even a few of those have planets, it's quite likely there are some planets like Earth out there. And if there are a few planets like Earth out there, there might also be life."
- o And Holmes said, "Watson, you idiot, it means that somebody stole our tent."

Adapted from Wiseman (2007)

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LAUGH AT YOURSELF

o Laughing at yourself is one of the greatest talents you can possess

- Encourages a _____ attitude
- Staves off feelings of _____ and _____
- Prevents _____ on all the bad aspects of life
- Provides _____ benefits



Adapted from Wooten (1996)

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STRESS MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

Progressive Relaxation



Adapted from Bell (1996)


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STRESS MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

1. Live in the present moment
2. "Seek first to understand"
3. Value kindness over rightness
4. Be grateful
5. Laugh
6. Take care of yourself

Adapted from Wilde (2006), Bell (1996), and Carlson (1997)
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PERSONAL STRESS MANAGEMENT PLAN



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SUGGESTED READING

- o Bell, S. (1996). *Stress Control*. Mission, KS: SkillPath Publications.
- o Maslach, C. (1982). *Burnout - The Cost of Caring*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- o Maté, G. (2003). *When the Body Says No: Understanding the Stress-Disease Connection*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- o McGhee, P.E. (1999). *Health, Healing and the Amuse System: Humor as Survival Training*; Kendall Hunt Publishing Co.
- o Selye, H. (1986). *The Stress of Life*. New York, NY: Springer-Verlag.
- o Wilde, L. (2006). *Humor Rx for Alleviating Stress in the 21st Century*
- o Wooten, P. (1996). Humor: An Antidote for Stress. *Holistic Nursing Practices*, 10 (2), 49-55.

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