

Wellness TIPS

Spirituality

- Connect with yourself and nature
- Learn about your culture
- Respect the Elders and their wisdom
- Search for your path in life
- Practice mindfulness
- Pray and participate in ceremonies

Physically

- Eat well balanced meals and drink plenty of water
- Create: cook, paint, bead, colour, sew, write
- get enough sleep and relaxation
- use relaxation techniques such as: mindfulness, meditation, deep breathing, stretching
- physical activity and movement: walking, practicing yoga, biking, playing sports
- Connect with nature: plant a garden, hike, swim, pick berries or medicines

Mental

- Set realistic goals
- Practice time management
- Divide big tasks into small manageable pieces
- Don't try to be perfect
- Take time for yourself
- Reach out to someone to talk

Emotional

- Listen to or create your own affirmations for those down periods in your life; for example: "I am enough"
- Talk your problems out with others
- Learn to say "NO"
- Build and nurture healthy relationships
- listen to music or sounds that bring you joy
- Practice gratitude for your connections to the land, water, plants, trees, birds, animals, sun and moon



Humour – HA HA!

For Indigenous people, humour, connecting with culture, traditions, and nature has been used as coping mechanisms for stress relief.

It is impossible for the body to be laughing and stressed at the same time. Laughter is a proven pain reliever; it can trigger the release of endorphins into your system. Endorphins are the body's natural pain killer.

Furthermore....

Laughter is a great way to relate to others and is used in dealing with stressful situations.

At gatherings, it is not uncommon to hear laughter all around. So why not take time to laugh with others and even at yourself. Life is too short to miss out on laughter!

Humour is an effective way to improve morale & build positive relationships in our lives.

Humour does the following:

- Reduces stress
- Increases coping abilities
- Enhances creativity
- Increases personal power

Resources

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/a-to-z/s/stress>

<https://cmha.ca/documents/stress>

<https://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/infosheet/stress>

Cover Art by Emma Petahtegoose

603 Gabode Dr, Atikameksheng Anishnawbek,
Naughton ON P0M 2M0
705 692 0420
www.za-geh-do-win.com



Stress Management

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Information Clearinghouse



What is STRESS?

Stress is the body and mind's reaction to new and or unexpected changes, experiences, and challenges.

Stress has physical, mental, emotional and spiritual effects on you. Over time these effects can have major impacts on your physical and mental health. Stress can also be positive and keep us motivated, alert and able to handle difficult or dangerous situations.

Stress is an unavoidable part of life and everyone deals with it differently. Our ability to cope can depend on our genetics, early life events, personality, traumatic experiences, diet, physical activity level, and social and economic circumstances. The key is finding the right amount of stress in our lives to be healthy and happy.

Causes of STRESS

Spiritual

- Loss of Faith
- Feeling disconnected
- Confused about spiritual beliefs
- Loss of culture
- Lack of direction

Physical

- Unhealthy diet and lack of exercise
- lack of sleep
- sickness, disease, or injury
- unsafe sex
- unhealthy living conditions
- drug or alcohol abuse

Mental

- Grief
- Negative thoughts
- no variety (bored) or too much going on in one's life
- Dwelling on the past or worrying about the future
- Loss of connection

Emotional

- Big events in one's life (birth, sickness, death)
- Lack of social supports
- Emotional detachment (inability to express emotion)
- Lack of fun and laughter
- unhealthy romantic/family/work relationships
- low self-esteem
- Inability to say "no"

Signs of STRESS

- Increased heart rate and blood pressure
- Tension
- Sweating
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Insomnia (difficulty sleeping or oversleeping (trouble getting up in the morning
- Memory loss
- Headaches
- Acute illnesses such as colds & flu
- Tiredness & fatigue
- Feeling pressured
- Personality change
- Decreased digestion rate, that feels like butterflies or nausea
- Errors in judgement
- Sadness

STRESS Facts

When we experience stress our body produces stress hormones that trigger a fight or flight response and activates our immune system.

Stress affects our nervous system, cardiovascular system, immune system, joints, muscles, skin, reproductive system, and gut health.

We are often more aware of the weather or how messy our home is than we are aware of our own bodies.

Our attitude and perception about something will contribute to determining our stress level. For example: instead of seeing a rainy day as miserable, look at a rainy day as a beautiful day to feed the plants.

It's good to divert your attention when feeling overwhelmed by stress. For example: do something different, go for a walk, bike ride, or hike, make art, listen to music, or read a book. Even if it's a short break, this will help change your mood.

STRESS Management

Taking action is the first step in managing stress. Identify the problem, what you can do, and the possible outcomes and try to solve problems as they come, which sometimes means doing the best you can and/or asking for help.

Don't ignore physical warning signs such as: tense muscles, tiredness, headaches and upset stomach. Check in with your physician, mental health provider and/or Traditional Healer especially when your stress impacts your ability to cope with everyday life.