

Dealing With Stress

Stress is defined as strain and pressure from physical, chemical, emotional, or environmental factors, resulting in increased tension or "wear and tear" on the body. Sometimes stress can serve as a positive force, improving our performance and increasing our productivity. Too often, however, the stresses of our lives leave us feeling drained and overwhelmed. Since stress cannot be completely eliminated, learning to manage stress effectively is the best solution.

Learning to effectively deal with stress takes time and energy. People's natural tendency is to reduce stress in familiar ways they've learned over time. Sometimes those ways are not healthy and can sometimes cause more harm than good. To effectively manage stress a person must develop healthy behaviors that are long lasting and promote health and wellness.

Tips for Effectively Managing Stress Over Time

- **Make connections** - Good relationships with family and friends are important. Make an attempt to reconnect with people. Accepting help and support from those who care about you can help alleviate stress.
- **Set realistic goals** - Take small concrete steps to deal with tasks instead of overwhelming yourself with goals that are too far-reaching for busy times.

- **Keep things in perspective** - Try to consider stressful situations in a broader context and keep a long term perspective. Avoid blowing events out of proportion.
- **Take decisive actions** - Instead of letting stressors get the best of you, make a decision to address the underlying cause of a stressful situation.
- **Take care of yourself** - Pay attention to your own needs and feelings. Engage in activities that you enjoy and find relaxing. Taking care of yourself helps keep your mind and body primed to deal with stressful situations.

Stress is something that every person experiences in some way. It is important to know when you are not effectively dealing with it. Here are a few indicators that stress is getting the best of you:

- **Feeling irritable and tired most of the time**
- **Having trouble concentrating**
- **Experiencing sleep disturbances**
- **The way you feel affects your relationships**

If any of these apply to you or you feel that the stress is overwhelming call 665.6262 or stop by the lower level of Main Hall to make an appointment with a counselor at the UM Counseling & Career Center.

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Call 665.6262 or stop by the lower level of Main Hall



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