STRESS MANAGEMENT IN WORK PLACE
“It’s not stress that kills us, it is our reaction to it.”

- Hans Selye
STRESS defined

Emotional and Physical Strain caused by a person’s response to pressure from the Outside and Inside.

It occurs when there is a mismatch between what the people aspire to do what they are capable of doing.

In other words, stress results when the pressure to perform a certain task is greater than the resources available to perform it.
Eustress and Distress

- **Eustress** or positive stress occurs when the level of stress is high enough to motivate a person to move into action to get things accomplished. Eustress provides a sense of urgency and alertness needed for survival when confronting threatening situations.

- **Distress** or negative stress occurs when the level of stress is either too high or too low and the body and/or mind begin to respond negatively to the stressors.
Different Kinds of Stress

1. Acute Stress

Acute stress is the most common form of stress. It comes from demands and pressures of the recent past and anticipated demands and pressures of the near future.
2. Episodic Acute Stress

The symptoms of episodic acute stress are the symptoms of extended over arousal: persistent tension headaches, migraines, hypertension, chest pain, and heart disease.
3. Chronic Stress

• Chronic stress comes when a person never sees a way out of a miserable situation.
• It’s the stress of unrelenting demands and pressures for seemingly interminable period.
• With no hope, the individual gives up searching for solutions.
Workplace Stress Defined

Stress

Job Stress

Acute

Chronic
Acute

1. Uneasiness and Worry
2. Increase in Energy
3. Alertness and Excitement

Chronic

1. Loss of Appetite
2. Immune System Suppression
3. Increased Metabolism
4. Loss of Sex Drive
5. High Blood Pressure
6. Anxiety and Panic Attacks
7. Depression
8. Eating Disturbances
9. Lowered Resistance
10. Irritability

Feelings of Sadness
Two Models of Workplace Stress

- Demand-Control Model
- Effort-Reward Imbalance Model
Demand-Control Model

- **Low Strain (EUSTRESS)**
  - High Job Control, High Job Demands
  - Low Job Control, Low Job Demands

- **Active (EUSTRESS)**
  - High Job Control, High Job Demands

- **High Strain (DYSTRESS)**
  - Low Job Control, High Job Demands
  - High Job Control, Low Job Demands

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Effort-Reward Imbalance Model

Overcommitment

High Effort

Demands
Obligations

Low Reward

Pay Esteem

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Work-Related Stressors

- Ambiguity
- Overload
- Occupation
- Inadequacy
- Working Conditions
- Management Style
- Monitoring
- Job Security

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Individual Influences on Experiencing Stress

Type A vs. Type B Personality

Gender

Self-Esteem

Hardiness

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Consequences of Stress

- Individual
- Organizational
Individual Consequences of Stress

**Psychological**
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Low self-esteem
- Sleeplessness
- Frustration
- Family problems
- Burnout

**Behavioral**
- Excessive smoking
- Substance abuse
- Accident proneness
- Appetite disorders
- Violence

**Physiological**
- High blood pressure
- Muscle tension
- Headaches
- Ulcers, skin diseases
- Impaired immune systems
- Musculoskeletal disorders
- Heart disease
- Cancer
ORGANISATIONAL

• Stress is now the number one reason behind sickness from work.”
  (Gee Publishing Survey)

• “More than two-thirds of people are suffering from work related stress.”
  (ICM Research)

• “Stress in the workplace is undermining performance and productivity in 9 out of 10 organizations.”
  (Industrial Society)
Stressors

- External Psychological Stress
- Internal Psychological Stress
External Psychological Stressors

- **Physical Environment**
  - Noise
  - Poor Lighting
  - Heat
  - Confined Spaces
- **Social Interaction**
  - Rudeness
  - Bossiness
  - Aggressiveness
  - Bullying

- **Organisational**
  - Rules
  - Regulations
  - Deadlines
- **Major Life Events**
  - Birth
  - Death
  - Transfer
  - Promotion
  - Marital problems
- **Daily Hassles**
  - Breakdowns
  - Commuting
Internal Psychological Stress

- Lifestyle choices
- Caffeine
- Lack of sleep
- Overloaded schedule
- **Negative self – talk**
- Pessimistic thinking
- Self criticism
- Over analysing

**Mind traps**
- Unrealistic expectations
- Taking things personally
- Exaggeration
- Rigid thinking
- **Personality traits**
- Perfectionists
- Workaholics
Responses to Stress

• **General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS).**
  - Hans De Solye, 1920

• 3 stages
  1. Alarm
  2. Adoption
  3. Exhaustion
Stage 1: Alarm reaction

- This is the “Fight or Flight” response that prepares the body for immediate action. The physical and emotional “fight or flight” response to stress ensues automatically, as a natural defense mechanism, whether or not the threat is real. Its major characteristics are:
  - Adrenaline starts pumping
  - Breathing quickens
  - Heart starts pounding (beats quicker, too)
  - Blood pressure increases
  - Blood vessels constrict
  - Blood rushes from the internal organs to the muscles
Stage 2: Adaptation Reaction

• If the stress persists, the body prepares for long-term protection, secreting hormones to increase blood sugar levels. For example, if the stressor is starvation (possibly due to anorexia), the person might experience a reduced desire for physical activity to conserve energy, and the absorption of nutrients from food might be maximized.

• This phase is common and not necessarily harmful, but must include periods of relaxation and rest to counterbalance the stress response. Fatigue, concentration lapses, irritability and lethargy result as the stress turns negative.
Stage 3: Exhaustion Reaction

- In chronic stress situations, sufferers enter the exhaustion phase: emotional, physical and mental resources suffer heavily, the body experiences ‘adrenal exhaustion’ leading to decreased stress tolerance, progressive mental and physical exhaustion, illness and collapse.
- It means the immune system and the body’s ability to resist disease, may be almost totally eliminated. People who experience long-term stress may succumb to heart attacks or severe infection due to their reduced immunity.
Coping with Stress – A 5-Step Framework

- **Step 1: Identify if stressed.**
- One can identify his/her own response to stress, which tends to be stable over time. When he/she experiences this group of signs and symptoms, he/she should consider that stress might be an issue.
Step 2: Identify the stressor(s)

- Stress is usually related to change. So looking at recent changes in one’s life is a good place to start.
- One can narrow down the stress-related changes by looking back at when the symptoms started.
- Close friends and family members might be able to shed some light on what is causing the stress.
Step 3: Determine the reason for this stressor

- This step requires honesty and self-reflection. Some people may not be able to immediately identify why an event or situation leads to stress.
- Examining beliefs, values, and attitudes as well as stress-promoting ways of thinking may help narrow down the reason for the stressor.
Step 4: Select and apply an appropriate stress management strategy or skill

- LEVEL-1
  - Avoid or eliminate the event or situation that is stressful
  - Reduce the intensity of the stressor
  - Reduce exposure to the stressor
The goal here is to reverse the stimulating effects of the “fight or flight” response through activities that relax.

Some common relaxation techniques that a person can use are breathing exercises, meditation, visualization, massage, exercise, humor, hot bath or a hobby.
LEVEL-3

- Modify stress producing beliefs, attitudes, and values
- Dispute irrational beliefs
- Become a positive thinker. Keeping a positive attitude and looking for the best in people and in situations is an excellent stress management strategy.
- Examine values — an assessment or estimation of the worth, merit, or desirability of something.
- Talk things out with someone.
- Cultivate healthy relationships.
- Build skills, such as time management, problem-solving, conflict resolution/ negotiation, and communication.
STEP-5: EVALUATE

- Continuously evaluate the stress levels and monitor the activities.
- Am I still stressed?
- Stop ..Question.. Evaluate
Individual Stress Management

- Find jobs that provide a personally acceptable balance between demands and control and between effort required and rewards.
- Redesign a dysfunctional job.
- Follow the tactics presented in the Managerial Advice feature.
- Develop healthy ways of coping.

- Exercise
- Proper Diet
- Support Network
- Relaxation Techniques
Individual Stress Management in Work Place

- Exercise regularly
- Practice healthy habits
- Be realistic
- Use systematic relaxation
- Meditate
- Develop and use planning skills
- Simplify your life – Delegate
- Take one thing at a time

- Avoid unnecessary competition
- Recognize and accept personal limits
- Develop social support networks
- Focus on enjoying what you do
- Go easy with criticism
- Take time off
Work Place Stress Management

- Increase individuals’ autonomy and control
- Ensure that individuals are compensated properly
- Maintain job demands/requirements at healthy levels
- Ensure that associates have adequate skills to keep up-to-date with technical changes in the workplace
- Increase associate involvement in important decision making
- Improve physical working conditions
- Provide for job security and career development
- Provide healthy work schedules
- Improve communication to help avoid uncertainty and ambiguity
Coping with Stress – Physical Techniques

- People need to develop a regular exercise program to reduce the effects of stress before it becomes distress. Regular physical activity improves health.
  - 1. Stretching Exercise / Surya Namaskara
  - 2. Breathing Stretching Exercise / Pranayama
  - 3. Meditation / Yoga
  - 4. Visual Imagery
  - 5. Walk Around
  - 6. Diet (Proper)
  - 7. Rest (Appropriate)
  - 8. Laughter
Pleasurable Everyday Experiences That Can Help You Relax

- A warm bath
- Listen to favorite music
- A hike in the woods
- Watch a funny movie
- Phone a friend
- Eat out
- Take a nap
- Play with your children
- Enjoy a sunset

- Write in your diary
- Walk/play with your pet
- Meditate
- Pray
- Trim the roses
- Read a good book
- Enjoy a hobby
- Sit in the sunshine
- Get a massage
Coping with Stress – Behavioral Techniques

1. Time management
2. Positive Thinking
3. Reframing
4. Ventilation
5. Problem-Solving
Coping with Stress – Diversion Techniques

- Music
- Hobbies
- Vacation
- Sleep
Coping with Stress – Study and Workplace Techniques

1. Getting Organized
2. Delegating
3. Being Assertive
4. Balancing work and personal time
5. Learn how to set limits - and stick to them
6. Prioritize your multiple roles
BALANCE

- work with recreation
- weariness with rest
- disappointments with hope
- sadness with humor
- doubts with optimism
- excitement with quiet times
- loneliness with friendship
- rush with serenity
- clutter with order
- unsightly with beauty
- fear with peace
- stress with relaxation
All the Best