



Reaching Immigrants Through Community Empowerment



SESSION 5: Conquering Stress & Staying Motivated

Welcome back!



- Questions from the last session?



Conquering Stress & Staying Motivated



At the end of today's session, you will be able to:

- Identify stress
- Describe the effect of stress on physical and emotional health
- Describe healthy ways to manage stress
- Identify negative thoughts and ways to manage them
- Identify ways to incorporate family support and stress management techniques into your lifestyle



Review: Our Goals For a Healthy Lifestyle



- Have a healthy diet
- Lose weight if you're overweight
- Be more physically active
- Quit smoking if you smoke
- Limit alcohol
- **Reduce stress**

Don't deny it!



EVERYONE can benefit from a healthy diet, physical activity, and a healthier lifestyle!

We've already learned how a healthy lifestyle can prevent:

- Diabetes
- Heart disease
- Metabolic Syndrome
- Heart attack
- Stroke
- Kidney failure
- Gum disease
- Certain types of cancer



Emotions and our Health



It can be difficult to change your diet, be more active, and live a healthier lifestyle. For some of us, prevention of chronic diseases is a lot of work.

Let's first take a look at the relationship between stress and health.

Stress affects our diet and lifestyle, and pursuing a healthier lifestyle can also increase stress.

Emotions and our Health



Stress

- This emotion can include feeling unable to handle the events of your life well.

Example:

“I just am so overwhelmed.”

What is stress?



- Stress is tension or pressure. Stress is a natural part of living our life. Any change, good or bad, big or small, can cause stress.
- Beyond a certain point, stress can begin to cause major damage to your health, your mood, your productivity, your relationships, and your quality of life.

What does stress feel like?

What do you do when you are under stress?

What does stress do to your body?

The effect of stress on physical health



- In the short-term, stress can cause:
 - Muscle tension, rapid pulse, anxiety, cold and clammy hands, sweating, difficulty breathing, shaking, extreme sensitivity
- Long-term exposure to stress can disrupt nearly every system in your body and lead to serious health problems.
 - It can raise blood pressure, weaken the immune system, increase the risk of heart attack and stroke, contribute to infertility, and speed up the aging process.
- Long-term stress can even rewire the brain, leaving you more vulnerable to anxiety and depression.

Stress can cause:

- Pain of any kind
- Heart disease
- Digestive problems
- Sleep problems
- Depression
- Obesity
- Autoimmune diseases
- Skin conditions, such as eczema



Translation:

Stress can alter blood sugar levels



- Stress hormones (cortisol) may increase blood sugar levels directly because they cause resistance to insulin, which is responsible for regulating blood sugar.
- When stress occurs, the body prepares to take action— the fight-or-flight response— and levels of many hormones shoot up. One effect of stress is to make a lot of stored energy— glucose—available to cells. These cells are then primed to help the body get away from danger.
- Both physical and emotional stress can cause an increase in these hormones, which in turn leads to an increase in blood sugars. While stress can't cause diabetes, it can encourage its onset in a person who is predisposed.

Stress can alter blood sugar levels



- People under too much stress may not have good eating habits and may reduce their physical activity. They may be less motivated to stick to their healthy lifestyle goals. This can lead to weight gain and increase the risk for diabetes.
 - People who are anxious and under pressure and may lose their appetite and eat too little. Or, they may reach for unhealthy foods as a source of ‘comfort’, such as fast food, sweets, or chips. These foods are often high in fat, salt, and sugar.
 - People who are under too much stress may be too tired or may not be motivated to exercise.

Good & Bad Stress

- Good Stress

Working toward resolving the cause of stress is possible.



Healthy motivation to learn something new, complete a project, meet a deadline, or find a solution to a problem.

- Bad Stress

Stress is beyond one's ability to cope, or the wrong approach is taken to resolve stress.



Muscle tension, rapid pulse, anxiety, cold and clammy hands, sweating, difficulty breathing, shaking, extreme sensitivity, elevated blood pressure/ sugar



**Fight
or
Flight**

**Long-
term**

Lack of motivation, problems sleeping, depression, pain, heart disease, stroke, obesity, weakened immune system, digestive problems, rapid aging, skin problems



**What are some things that
cause you stress?**

Common external causes of stress



- Major life changes
- Work
- Relationship difficulties
- Financial problems
- Being too busy
- Children and family

Common internal causes of stress



- Inability to accept uncertainty
- Pessimism
- Negative self-talk, negative thoughts
- Unrealistic expectations
- Perfectionism
- Lack of assertiveness

Reacting to Stress



- But these common causes of stress do not necessarily cause stress in a person...
- Feeling stressed also depends on how you REACT to a potentially stressful situation.
- **We can't always control what happens in our daily lives, but we CAN influence how we react!**

Stress trigger + **Perception** = **Reaction**

Stress trigger:

The subway stops moving and is held up for 25 minutes.

Let's take a look at how 2 different people perceive this situation.

Perception:

Mrs. Park thinks to herself: “Trains should always run on time and it is unacceptable and incompetent of the subway company if they do not.”

Mrs. Lee thinks to herself: “This is a pain, but getting upset won't make the train move any faster and luckily this doesn't happen every day. We will be moving soon.”

Stress trigger + Perception = Reaction

The 2 different ways that Mrs. Lee and Mrs. Park perceive this situation influences how they react to it, and therefore whether or not they will become stressed.

Reaction:

Mrs. Park becomes very stressed, and feels very upset and angry. Her reaction has triggered her fight/flight response but it has not made the train move any faster and she will probably continue to feel angry and upset long after the train starts running again. She has not been able to use the time effectively and will probably have difficulty being efficient later in the day because of this stress response.

Mrs. Lee thinks there is nothing she can do to make the train go faster. She opens up her notebook and uses the time as an opportunity to get some work done that she would have had to do later. She does not get stressed because her perception has led her to have a positive reaction.