

STRATEGIES for MINDFUL LIVING

Courtesy of UAB Employee Assistance & Counseling Center

Stress Management

Stress is a feeling of emotional, mental or physical tension in response to any change requiring you to adapt, or to everyday life stressors. Stress can be positive. It can be a source of increased energy, motivate us, and increase our awareness. It can also improve performance. It can be a source of high energy and increased awareness. Stress becomes negative when a person faces continuous challenges/stress without relief or relaxation between stressors.

THE 3 TYPES OF STRESS

- **Acute Stress** is the body's immediate reaction to a new and challenging situation.
- **Episodic Acute Stress** is when you have frequent episodes of acute stress.
- **Chronic Stress** is when you have high-stress levels for an extended period.



SYMPTOMS OF STRESS

Stress can impact our mental, emotional and physical health.

Symptoms of stress can be:

- Agitation/Irritation
- Sleep Disturbance
- Low motivation
- Difficulty relaxing
- Avoiding others
- Decreased self-esteem
- Feelings of burnout
- Excessive worry
- Forgetfulness
- Difficulty with focus and attention
- Poor judgment
- Negative thinking
- Changes in appetite
- Muscle tension
- Headaches
- Chest pain
- Frequent sickness
- High blood pressure

COPING WITH STRESS

We can build resistance to stress with coping tools to aid in stress management. The way to begin building resistance to stress is to:

- 1. Identify your stressor:** What is impacting me? How does it impact me?
- 2. Avoid the stressor when you can:** Learn to set boundaries.
- 3. Alter what you can:** Make changes to how you manage stress. Communicate needs.
- 4. Adapt yourself:** Reframe thinking and adjust expectations.
- 5. Acceptance:** Focus on what's in your control and learning to forgive.

CARING FOR YOURSELF

An important part of stress management is taking care of yourself. Some ways to care for yourself include:

- Move your body — exercise.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Add healthy foods to your diet.
- Decrease alcohol use.
- Deep breathing.
- Talk to someone.
- Have fun! Engage in activities you enjoy.