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Living Peacefully in a Stressful World

Stress is a lifelong occurrence. No matter the age, culture, or socioeconomic status, stress affects everyone. Stress is the “wear and tear” on our minds and bodies. Much as a car does not run as effectively after an accident or long road trip, our thoughts and emotions can become tired and clogged with too much stress. And the effect stress can have on our physical bodies is profound. Stress has been known to cause high blood pressure, migraines, intestinal issues, ulcers, and heart trouble.

While some stress is unavoidable, it can be successfully managed. The first step is to recognize what is causing the stress. Some stressors are positive- getting married, a new baby, or a job promotion. While these are things that we celebrate, they are also big transitions that can cause stress in our lives. Other stressors are not as positive- losing your job, death of a loved one, or marital conflict. Identifying what is causing you stress will enable you to make more informed choices in how you deal with it. Here are a few tips in effectively managing stress:

Cope. Find something that you enjoy and use it as an outlet for your feelings. Some suggestions would be journaling, listening to music, or exercise.

Plan. Have a basic idea of how you are going to handle the stressor. Break it down into small, manageable steps. When we try to ignore the problem, it just gets bigger and more stressful.

Breathe. Try taking slow, deep breaths whenever you feel the stress getting out of control. This will help to slow your breathing, lower your blood pressure, and provide your brain with more oxygen. Once you feel back in control, you can try to tackle the issue again.

Talk. Find a trusted friend, confidante, or counselor. Bottling up our thoughts and emotions can make them seem even more powerful. Talking to someone you trust about how you are feeling can help to bring clarity and perspective to a stressful situation.

Stress can be managed effectively without controlling your life. If you or someone you know is struggling with a stressful situation, one of our therapists would love to help. Please call our administrative office at (919) 649-5882 for more information.



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