

Establishing and Promoting the Importance of Self-Care



OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, participants will be able to:

- Discuss the importance of self-care and social support
- Create a self-care contract for themselves



INSTRUCTIONS

1. Before the session begins, label four flip chart sheets with the questions that appear on slide 2.
2. Welcome participants and review the objectives.
3. Ask the group to reflect on the four questions about stress on slide 2. Give participants a few minutes to write their answers on sticky notes and post on the corresponding flip chart sheets.
4. Review the definition of stress (slide 3).
5. Review the problems that stress can cause (slide 4).
6. Review benefits of stress (slide 5).
7. Activity: Self-care contract
 - Ask, "What are some ways you manage stress?"
 - Distribute the Handout: 101 Ways to Take Care of Yourself and Reduce Stress. Give the group a few minutes to look over and highlight some things that they can do to take care of themselves.
 - Distribute and review the My Self-care Contract handout. Then give the group a few minutes to complete the contract. Have participants share what they have written in their contracts with their neighbor. Tell participants that they can use this handout with their CHW staff during a supervision session, as well as checking in periodically on how they are dealing with stress in their lives. CHWs can also use this contract with their clients.
8. Distribute the handouts Ten Things You can do to Enhance Your Emotional Well Being if You are Living with HIV and Examples of Self-Talk. Tell participants that as supervisors, they can help their CHWs help their clients manage stress. They can share these handouts with their CHWs, and CHWs can share them with their clients.

9. Wrap up. It's not about removing stress from our lives, it's about managing it!

Remember, we can turn to one another as resources when we feel stressed.

If we don't take care of ourselves, we'll have nothing left to offer others who we want to support.

Live smarter, healthier, and happier by being in control.



Method(s) of Instruction

Facilitated discussion, large group activity



Estimated time

30 minutes



Key Concepts

Self-care, stress management



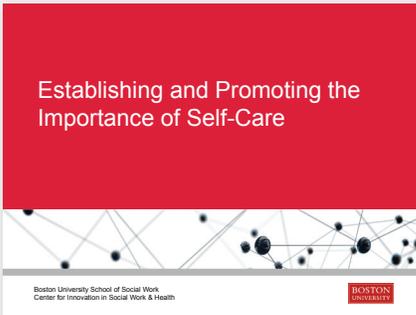
Materials

- Computer with projector and internet connection
- PowerPoint slides
- Flip chart
- Markers
- Sticky notes

Handouts

- 101 Ways to Take Care of Yourself and Reduce Stress
- Examples of Self-Talk
- My Self-care Contract
- Ten Things You can do to Enhance Your Emotional Well-Being if You are Living with HIV

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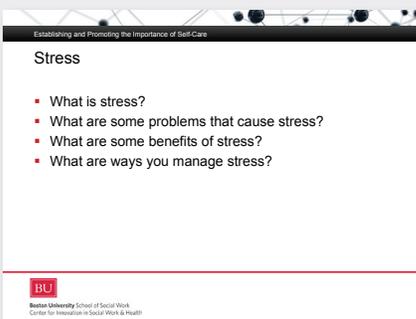


SLIDE 1



SLIDE 2

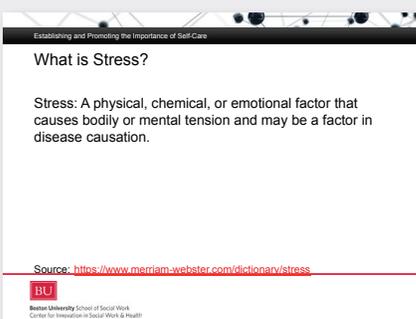
Review the objectives.



SLIDE 3

In this session, we want to talk about stress. Stress not only impacts our health and well-being but it can impact the work we do and how well we do what we do. As supervisors of Community Health Workers (CHWs), we need to think about these issues especially since we are dealing with a serious health issue that is impacting our clients and even some of us or our CHW staff. Stress can make any health condition worse so it is important that we find ways to manage stress.

We are going to review these four questions. Take a few minutes to write down your responses to these four questions on the sticky notes.



SLIDE 4

Ask for a volunteer to read the slide.

Ask participants, "How does this definition compare to what you wrote for a definition?" Ask for volunteers to share their responses.

Ask for examples of stress.

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What are Some Problems Stress Can Cause?

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graph TD; Stress((Stress)) --> HeartDisease(Heart disease); Stress --> HighBloodPressure(High blood pressure); Stress --> ImmuneSystemDisorder(Immune system disorder); Stress --> IrritableBowelSyndrome(Irritable bowel syndrome); Stress --> Migraines(Migraines); Stress --> SkinDisorders(Skin disorders);
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SLIDE 5

Review the slide.

Ask participants to share other ideas for problems that stress can cause.

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What are Some Benefits of Stress?

- Helps us handle emergencies
- Motivates you to succeed
- Builds resiliency
- Boosts memory temporarily
- Makes us learn coping strategies

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SLIDE 6

Review the slide.

Ask for other ideas on benefits of stress.

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Activity: Self-Care Contract

What are some ways you can manage stress?

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SLIDE 7

Conduct the self-care contract activity.

101 Ways to Take Care of Yourself and Reduce Stress

1. Get up 15 minutes earlier
2. Prepare for the morning the night before
3. Avoid tight-fitting clothes
4. Avoid relying on chemical aids
5. Set appointments ahead
6. Don't rely on your memory...write it down
7. Practice preventative maintenance
8. Make duplicate keys
9. Say no more often
10. Set priorities in your life
11. Avoid negative people
12. Use time wisely
13. Simplify meal times
14. Always make copies of important papers
15. Anticipate your needs
16. Repair anything that doesn't work properly
17. Ask for help with the jobs you dislike
18. Break large tasks into bite-sized portions
19. Look at problems as challenges
20. Look at challenges differently
21. Unclutter your life
22. Smile
23. Be prepared for rain
24. Tickle a baby
25. Pet a friendly dog or cat
26. Don't know all the answers



27. Look for the silver lining
28. Say something nice to someone
29. Teach a kid to fly a kite
30. Walk in the rain
31. Schedule play time into every day
32. Take a bubble bath
33. Be aware of the decisions you make
34. Believe in yourself
35. Stop saying negative things to yourself
36. Visualize yourself winning
37. Develop your sense of humor
38. Stop thinking tomorrow will be a better today
39. Have goals for yourself
40. Dance a jig
41. Say hello to a stranger
42. Ask a friend for a hug
43. Look up at the stars
44. Practice breathing slowly
45. Learn to whistle a tune
46. Read a poem
47. Listen to a symphony
48. Watch a ballet
49. Read a story curled up in bed
50. Do a brand new thing
51. Stop a bad habit
52. Buy yourself a flower
53. Take time to smell the flower



54. Find support from others
55. Ask someone to be your “vent partner”
56. Do it today
57. Work at being cheerful and optimistic
58. Put safety first
59. Do everything in moderation
60. Pay attention to your appearance
61. Strive for excellence NOT perfection
62. Stretch your limits a little each day
63. Look at a work of art
64. Hum a jingle
65. Maintain your weight
66. Plant a tree
67. Feed the birds
68. Practice grace under pressure
69. Stand up and stretch
70. Always have a plan “B”
71. Learn a new doodle
72. Memorize a joke
73. Be responsible for your feelings
74. Learn to meet your own needs
75. Become a better listener
76. Know your limitations and let others know them too
77. Tell someone to have a good day in pig Latin
78. Throw a paper airplane
79. Exercise every day
80. Learn the words to a new song



81. Get to work early
82. Clean out one closet
83. Play patty cake with a toddler
84. Go on a picnic
85. Take a different route to work
86. Leave work early (with permission)
87. Put air freshener in your car
88. Watch a movie and eat popcorn
89. Write a note to a faraway friend
90. Go to a ball game and scream
91. Cook a meal and eat it by candlelight
92. Recognize the importance of unconditional love
93. Remember that stress is an attitude
94. Keep a journal
95. Practice a monster smile
96. Remember you always have options
97. Have a support network of people, places, and things
98. Quit trying to “fix” other people
99. Get enough sleep
100. Talk less and listen more
101. Freely praise other people

P.S. Relax, take each day one at a time...You have the rest of your life to live.

Examples of Self-Talk

Examples of Rational Self-Talk

- I'll just relax and do the best that I can.
- I've had to deal with this before and I managed well.
- This is really a pain in the neck and I sure don't like it, but I won't panic.
- I'll just take one thing at a time, stay calm, and see it through.
- I know it won't help to get upset.
- I can't control what someone else does.

Examples of Coping Self-Talk

- I'll take one step at a time.
- I'll just think calmly about what I can do.
- I'm in control; I can handle this.
- Relax. Take a deep, slow breath.
- It's okay to be a little anxious; it doesn't mean I can't handle it.
- These feelings will pass.

Examples of Reinforcing Self-Talk

- I did it, and it worked.
- That wasn't so bad.
- I'm really getting better at dealing with this stress.
- I've learned more about myself and these feelings.
- I like how I handled this.
- Next time, I'll know what works for me.
- Don't worry about things that you have no control over, because you have no control over them. Don't worry about things that you have control over, because you have control over them. — Mickey Rivers

My Self-care Contract

I, _____, do hereby agree to begin to focus on my health and to take better care of myself as of _____, and to continue it for a period of _____.

What I plan to do is: _____.

The barriers/challenges I think I may have in meeting my goals are: _____.

The people who support me and what I want of them are: _____.

My short-term (daily) rewards will be: _____.

My long-term reward(s) will be: _____.

Signature

Witness

Ten Things You Can Do to Enhance Your Emotional Well Being if You Are Living with HIV

By J. Buzz von Ornsteiner, Ph.D.

1. Build a strong, supportive, trusting relationship with an HIV/AIDS doctor. You should be able to freely discuss everything and anything and, if needed, to challenge your doctor's advice.
2. Develop consistent contact with a health care case manager who can help to make the rocky road to benefits and services easier for you. One mold does not fit all, so try to find a case manager that you trust, even if you have to switch to a new one.
3. Join an HIV/AIDS support group. Find out if they use an ongoing, drop-in format or if they are time-limited and require pre-enrollment. Also find out about the training and qualifications of the group leaders.
4. Get a therapist, preferably a good licensed psychologist or certified social worker. Remember anyone can state they are a "therapist"; request more information about their background and experience. Keep looking until your instincts tell you that you have found a good match.
5. Attend workshops or other HIV/AIDS events so that you can find out as much as you can about HIV/AIDS. You must be the expert on this disease and be on top of any new developments and programs.
6. Stay informed about your HIV/AIDS medications by seeking out information from any and all sources, including people, websites, and periodicals. The more you know about the medication you are taking and its potential side effects, the more you know what to expect about your emotions and mental well-being.
7. Address any substance use issues you may have by looking into substance use programs and groups. Consider working towards being clean and sober.
8. Exercise regularly and maintain good nutrition because the mind and the body are closely linked, and physical health enhances mental health.
9. Work if you can for income but also work for the structure and well-being that employment can provide. Everyone can benefit from structure, and we all need to feel we are productive members of this world.
10. Seek a sense of belonging outside of HIV/AIDS such as by starting a hobby, traveling and exploring, getting a pet, starting or finishing school, or volunteering. The bottom line is that keeping your stress low will help you to keep your immune system high.

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