



STRESS MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

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Abstract

Everyone experiences stress to some extent in day to day lives because of several factors. Stress can be defined as any type of change that causes physical, emotional, or psychological. It is the response of the body to any demands placed on it. It is the response to anything that needs action or focus. Stress is caused by stress hormones cortisol and adrenaline. Stress response, induces 'fight or flight response'. 'Eustress is a positive stress and Distress is a negative stress. Stress lasting for shorter periods called as acute and inability to manage stress in long term results in chronic illness. Hence stress should be managed effectively with stress management techniques like yoga, meditation, cognitive behavioural therapy, aerobics, relaxation exercises etc. Reduction of stress promotes health and wellbeing and enhances quality of life.

Keywords: Stress, CBT, Stress Management, Eustress, Distress.

What is Stress?

The term stress was first coined by Hans Selye in 1936. It is described as the non specific reaction of the body to the demands placed on it to change.

According to Lazarus, in his book "Psychological stress and coping Process" defined stress as "it is a situation encountered when a person perceives that demand exceed the social and personal resources, the individual is able to mobilize.

Stress is the "Physiological, Psychological and behavioural responses exhibited by an individual when exists a lack of equilibrium between the demands placed upon them and their ability to meet those demands, which, over a period of time, leads to ill-health"

Stress Management Techniques:

"Set of techniques and programs implemented to help people cope effectively with stress in their day to day lives by analysing the specific stressors and taking positive measures to minimize their effects"

(Gale Encyclopaedia of Medicine, 2008).

A comprehensive stress management program comprises of specific techniques focused on individual basis

1. Identifying stressors
2. Ensure adequate rest
3. Time management
4. A healthy diet plan
5. Regular physical exercises.
6. Mobilize a support network



1) Deep Breathing Exercises

Deep breathing is also called as diaphragmatic breathing, abdominal breathing, belly breathing, and paced respiration.

Procedure: First find a quiet, peaceful and comfortable place to sit or lie down. Then take a deep breath: through your nose breathing slowly, allowing your chest and lower belly to rise once air fills your lungs. Feel the expansion of your abdomen fully. Then slowly breathe out.

Breath Focus

During deep breathing, follow following measures.

1. Should be done with eyes closed.
2. Initially take a few, deep breaths.
3. Breathe in: Feel the filling of air with a sense of calm and peace Try to feel it throughout your body.
4. Breathe out. Feel the filling out of air with your tension stress and anxiety.
5. Continue for 10 to 20 minutes.

2) Yoga

The health benefits of yoga

The potential health benefits of yoga include:

- **Stress reduction.** Multiple studies have shown that yoga helps to reduce stress, tension and anxiety. it can elevates the mood and overall sense of well-being.
- **Improved fitness.** Regular yoga practice aids to improve balance, flexibility, endurance range of motion and strength.
- **Management of chronic conditions.** Yoga can help reduce risk factors like diabetes, high blood pressure which are causative factors for chronic diseases. Yoga may address many cardiovascular, neurological, muscular, gastro-intestinal disorders. It helps to relieve symptoms of several chronic conditions, like pain, asthma, arthritis chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

Yoga precautions

Yoga is generally considered safe for most healthy people when practiced under the guidance of a trained instructor. But there are some situations in which yoga might pose a risk.

Consulting a doctor before you begin yoga is important if any of the following conditions prevail:

- Disc Herniation
- Risk of blood clots
- Optic conditions, including glaucoma
- Pregnancy —Avoidance of certain poses .
- Balance and equilibrium problems
- Chronic osteoporosis
- Fluctuating blood pressures

There are different forms of yoga with different objectives focus, mindfulness and peace. Hatha yoga focuses on mindful meditation and breathing techniques along with flexibility, whereas power yoga focuses on maintenance of powerful poses, endurance of muscles, a . Both meditative and power yoga

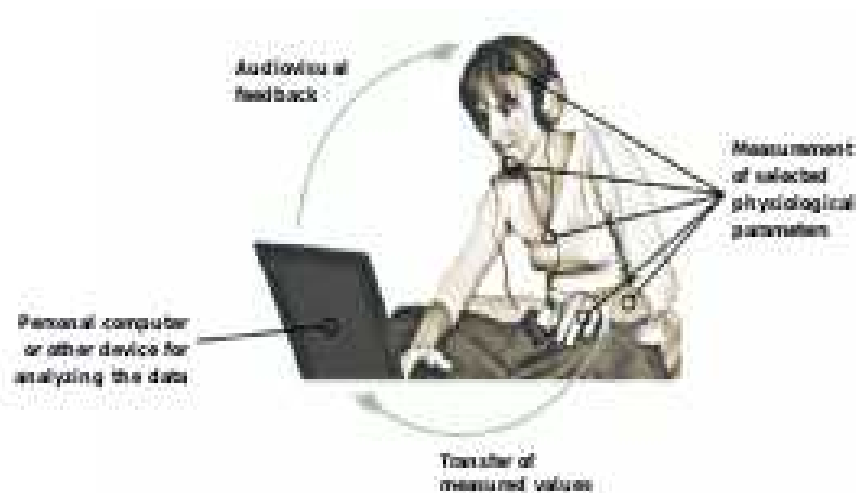


have been proven to decrease stress levels .A 90 minutes of Hatha Yoga on a regular and long term basis proven to reduce the stress more significantly.

Meditation is unity of mind and body. Meditation can reverse the physiological signs of stress like increased blood pressure and heart rate and reduces blood and , reduces blood adrenaline levels.

Biofeedback

Biofeedback is the process of getting more awareness of many physiological functions of one's self body, by using electronic or other instruments, and with a objective of being able to manipulate the body's systems. Biofeedback is used to improve health, performance, and the physiological changes along with changes of our thoughts, emotions, and behavior.



The above diagram shows how a feedback loop is connected between an individual, sensor and processor in biofeedback training.

How Does Biofeedback Work?

It helps to reverse the stress response. It can be useful with a variety of conditions, including:

- Anxiety
- General stress
- IBS
- Pain
- Tension headaches

Guided Imagery: It is a stress management technique where a imagination of pictures are used that makes you to feel relaxed, calm, peaceful and happy. Imagination can be of a place, thing, person. . Usage of all senses in imagination gives a relaxing experience and it aids in coping up of stress.

Guided imagery is a useful technique for managing stress and coping with difficult situations. In this technique, you imagine a scene, time, or place that is peaceful and that has an emotional connection with you.



Step 1: Find a comfortable ,quiet place.

Step 2: . Imagine yourself there, use all of your senses to immerse yourself in the experience, and include as many details as possible.

Step 3: Relax, for as long as your schedule allows you to.

Keep in mind that imagery is most effective when you use all your senses. The more details that you can include in your imagined scene, the easier it will be to relax.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation

PMR was developed by American physician Edmund Jacobson in the 1920s. It was based on the concept that physical relaxation favours mental relaxation.

The method involves, tensing and relaxing a muscle .You can relax a muscle by tensing and then releasing it. In addition to that ,it relaxes the mind.

It provides a framework for achieving state of relaxation. You have to target a specific muscle group ,tense it and feel the tension .While relaxing feel the relaxation too. Emphasizing the sensation of relaxation is important.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is a short-term form of behavioral treatment. It helps to solve problems.. CBT also draws the relationship between emotions, thoughts, feelings and the behaviors that accompany. By CBT, people learn that their perceptions have an direct impact on, how they respond to specific situations. A person's thought process depicts in their behaviors and actions.

It is a general term which refers to a combination of therapies with similar modalities used in therapy. It includes rational emotive behavior therapy, cognitive therapy, and dialectical behavior therapy.

Exercises

Regular exercise reduces the stress levels. The emotional benefits of aerobic exercise have a neurochemical basis. Exercise reduces levels of stress hormones, such as adrenaline and cortisol. It increases the production of endorphins, the chemicals in the brain ,which are painkillers and mood elevators. Endorphins are responsible for creation of feelings of relaxation and optimism. Walking, skipping, jogging, dancing, cycling, treadmill walking etc. can be used as aerobic exercise. Aerobic exercise of 20–40 min at 50– 75% estimated heart rate, 3–5 times per week was advised.

Music Therapy

High-level evidence proved that music interventions can be effective in reducing stress and can be used for both medical and mental health care practices and applications. With low costs, and lesser side effects of music therapy, it is widely used for prevention of stress induced issues.

Tips for stress Management

People can learn to manage stress and lead a happier, healthier lives. Following are the listed tips to lower the stress levels.



- Keep a positive attitude.
- Acceptance of situations that are out of your control.
- Be assertive instead of aggressive. Instead of anger, passive, be assertive and relaxed.
- Practice relaxation techniques with meditation and yoga.
- Regular Exercising.
- Eat healthy, balanced diet..
- Effective management of stress.
- Make time for hobbies and interests.
- Get enough rest and sleep. Your body needs time to recover from stressful events.
- Don't rely on alcohol, drugs, or compulsive behaviors to reduce stress. Seek out social support. Spend enough time with those you love.
- Psychologist Intervention or other mental health professional trained in stress management or biofeedback techniques helps to deal with the stress in your life.

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