

The Holiday Season

Once again, the holiday season has arrived. The holidays are a time to enjoy the company of family, friends, and co-workers.

However, the holidays can also be hectic as we try to make deadlines, complete reports, and multi-task; and all of this is during a time when we are thinking of spending the season in our own way.

According to the Harris Interactive poll, the top hassles that cause stress are: rising prices (74%), money for emergencies (53%), too much to do (56%), and trouble sleeping (53%). Interestingly, the poll found that one group, older adults, have much less stress than others.

Each of us perceives stress differently. A situation that one person finds exhilarating, challenging, or enjoyable can propel another person into a stressful crisis. Also, what helps to relieve stress often varies from person to person.

Often, we cannot control situations that lead to stress, but we CAN control how we react to them. When you know what pushes your buttons, you will be better prepared to handle stressful situations. When you know what relaxes you, then you will be better able to recover faster. While you can change some of the stressors at work, all will not disappear completely. Therefore, you need a handy grab-bag of techniques to cope with daily stress and long-term stress.

The keys are exercise, nutrition, and rest. A half-hour at the gym, a daily swim, even a daily walk can work wonders. Although longer is better, consistency is also important. You decide: is a 15-minute daily walk going to help you more than an hour at the gym a couple of times a week? At the office, take the breaks to which you are entitled. For many of us, a break is grabbing a cup of coffee and eating a doughnut at our desks. Instead, make the most of your breaks by taking them in the break room where social interaction will distract you, thus relieving stress. Take a walk during your break or lunch time – the exercise is a stress-buster, and the mental break will sharpen your abilities for the rest of your day or shift. Also, pay attention to what you eat – a good balance of the right foods will help you feel better and probably even less stressed.

Try to get at least 8 hours of sleep every night. If you go to bed the same time every night, you will benefit from the consistency of rest. Proper exercise, nutrition, and rest will help in keeping the daily stress situations at arm's length and in YOUR control. So, relax, and enjoy this holiday season stress-free.