



KAPLAN UNIVERSITY

HW410 Stress: Critical Issues in Management and Prevention

Stress Management and Prevention Program Resource Guide

KAPLAN UNIVERSITY

Stress Management and Prevention Program Resource Guide

By

Alexandra Arizmendi

Kaplan University

HW410: Stress: Critical Issues in Management and Prevention

Table of Contents

Example

UNIT 1 THE NATURE OF STRESS

Information to Remember

3

Self-Assessment Exercises

3

Journal Writing

4

UNIT 2 THE PHYSIOLOGY OF STRESS

Information to Remember

5

Self-Assessment Exercises

5

Journal Writing

6

UNIT 3 PSYCHOLOGY OF STRESS

Information to Remember

7

Self-Assessment Exercises

7

Journal Writing

8

UNIT 4 PERSONALITY TRAITS AND THE HUMAN SPIRITUALITY

Information to Remember

9

Self-Assessment Exercises

10

Journal Writing

11

UNIT 5 DEALING WITH STRESS: COPING STRATEGIES

Information to Remember

12

Journal Writing

13

UNIT 6 RELAXATION TECHNIQUES 1: BREATHING, MEDITATION, AND MENTAL IMAGERY

Information to Remember

14

Self-Assessment Exercises

14

Journal Writing

15

UNIT 7 NUTRITION AND STRESS

Information to Remember

16

Self-Assessment Exercises

16

UNIT 8 PHYSICAL EXERCISE AND ACTIVITY

Information to Remember

17

Self-Assessment Exercises

17

Journal Writing

18

UNIT 9 APPLYING STRESS: CRITICAL ISSUES FOR MANAGEMENT AND PREVENTION TO YOUR PROFESSIONAL LIFE

Information to Remember

19

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

REFERENCES

(This page intentionally left blank)



Unit 1: The Nature of Stress

Information to Remember:

Key Learning Point: Stress is the experience of a perceived threat to one's mental, physical, or spiritual well-being resulting from a series of physiological responses and adaptations (Seaward, 2015). Being able to understand myself and to what stress's me out will help deal with any situation.

Key Learning Point: Stress is caused by the fight-or-flight response that prepares the body, when confronted with a threat, to either fight or flee, an evolutionary survival dynamic (Seaward, 2015). Being able to flee will allow the body to come back to homeostasis and prevent unwanted health conditions.

Key Learning Point: There are many different ways to manage stress that evolve around a holistic approach that involve the mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual components of well-being. (Seaward, 2015). Finding a holistic approach that works for me not only controls my stress level but will keep me healthy.

Self-Assessment Exercise:

This exercise introduced the holistic wellness paradigm model where I was able to balance my life in the integration balance of mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being. These four components of total well-being are closely connected that is virtually impossible to divide them (Seaward, 2015). Upon doing so I found that my mental and physical well-being play a bigger part than my emotional and spiritual well-being do.

Journal Writing:

This journal writing was an assessment intended to help me determine what the current stressors are in my life so I can begin to work with dealing with them (Stahl & Goldstein, 2010).

Situation	Start	Midway	End
My child getting kicked out of school	7	5	3

My husband being stationed in GA	4	2	1
Dealing with household chores alone	3	2	1
Training for my fist show being on a strict meal plan	4	3	2
Having my truck break down after dumping thousands in it	4	2	1
Not having time to myself	1	1	1

Unit 2: The Physiology of Stress

Information to Remember:

Key Learning Point: Stress caused from the fight-or-flight response is associated with the sympathetic nervous system that releases substances epinephrine (adrenaline) and norepinephrine (noradrenaline) causing several events to happen in other organ tissues to prepare the body for rapid metabolic change and physical movement (Seaward, 2015). This drive is also responsible for relaxation which is why when I work out after being stressed by CNS counter acts and I become calm after.

Key Learning Point: Between health care, living conditions, and food choices chronic diseases have plagued the planet leaving a colossal link between stress and disease according to researcher Richard Sapolsky (Seaward, 2015). To understand stress and disease I would need to recognize the factors that are activated from the nervous system, endocrine system, and the immune system.

Key Learning Point: Any organ or tissue receiving excess neural or hormonal stimulation that increases metabolic function or abnormal cell growth, result in eventual dysfunction of the organ (Seaward, 2015). This targets organs and creates related disorders. Knowing what disorders are caused by which system in your body will help you better understand where excessive metabolic activity is coming from.

Self-Assessment Exercise:

This exercise helped me determine the difference between neuroscience and neuroplasticity being one is the study of and the other is the synapses due to changes in behavior, environment, neural processes, thinking and emotions as well as changes resulting from bodily injury (Seaward, 2015). These all play a role in our CNS and how it can cause stress. The CNS works with other systems, such as our immune system, to create stress causing diseases and illnesses.

Journal Writing:

How is stress or anxiety about people affecting your life?

I try not to get too stressed out but when another person is stressed out it seems to get me stressed out. I find myself being a very simple and reserved person. I don't like to be bothered much and carry long conversations. With my job I will come face to face with people that ask silly questions and when I answer them it is as if they didn't understand what I said, which leads to more questions or I have to explain it differently. It stresses me out a little to have to keep answering the same questions over and over. I have to take a step back and reflect on those days when I didn't know what I was doing and try and teach instead of get annoyed with it.

How is stress or anxiety about work affecting your life?

I am a personal trainer at my local gym. It's easy to become stressed or overwhelmed while being there. In the mornings while I do my workout I find people coming up to me and asking questions which frustrates me because that is an important time for me and I don't have time to talk. I also have clients and I need to be there for them and then have my short shift to work and clean. Before I know it I have worked up to 14 hours some days and I don't have time to do the things that I need to get done. I get a little stressed or more frustrated.

How is stress or anxiety about the world affecting your life?

I watch the news as little as possible because I have come to find out that some things that are being reported are really a waste of time. While things that should have been reported are not. It's amazing to me how reporting the news has become so political and one-sided. There have been numerous crimes, fires, and mother-nature events that it's sad to even watch it anymore.

How is stress or anxiety about food and eating habits affecting your life?

I don't stress too much about food or my eating habits. I chose what goes in my mouth and that is all that matters to me. I, however, find it nice that there has been more organic and farmers markets opened in my town. I enjoy the time I spend there. It's relaxing to me. There is an obesity epidemic due to restaurants and processed or preserved foods. I also find it stressing that government

programs such as the WIC or SNAP programs allow people to buy this type of food. I feel that anyone getting these benefits should only be limited to healthy and more natural foods.

How is stress or anxiety about sleep and sleeplessness affecting your life?

I don't stress about my sleep. My life is programmed around my eight hours that I will get each night. Sleep is very important to one's health and fitness improvements.

How is stress or anxiety about exercise or lack of physical activity affecting your life?

I don't stress about exercise or lack of physical activity. I work at a gym and am a personal trainer. This allows me to work out whenever I need and I know what works best for me so I am able to challenge myself for my muscle gains.

In summary, stress is a very important issue to anyone. Being stressed causes lack of sleep, mood swings, lack of exercise, unhealthy eating, and if prolonged can impact your life in a negative way. I feel it's important to find those things that stress yourself out and find a way that calms you down. Sometimes little motivational sayings, walks, exercise, or just talking about it helps.

Unit 3: Psychology of Stress

Information to Remember:

Key Learning Point: This chapter went over the many theories attempted to explain the psychological nature of stress or how humans attempt to deal with the problems they face. These theories are based on the many aspects of psychology, including personality, emotional responses, perceptions, and a wide range of human behaviors (Seaward, 2015).

Key Learning Point: I learned emotions of stress such as anger, fear, and joy. Anger and fear are two sides of the same coin. Both emotions are triggered by stimuli perceived to be a threat at a physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual level, or perhaps a combination of these (Seaward, 2015). Joy and happiness are the eustress emotions. The field of positive psychology has illuminated these two emotions as vital aspects of life, necessary for emotional balance (Seaward, 2015).

Key Learning Point: All forms of communication can lead to information overload, which compromises one's ability to communicate which compromises face-to-face interpersonal communication (Seaward, 2015). Technology has overpowered communication in homes, jobs, and day to day living.

Self-Assessment Exercise:

In this assessment I learned that Tibetan have spoken and written on the topic of stress and how it is viewed through the perspective of the mind (Seaward, 2015). There have been many theorist with their concept on stress, as it's a defense used to protect the mind from the threat of painful or dangerous events in our lives. Fear is an emotion that is associated with stress. Not being able to deal with this stress can lead to depression or anxiety. There are many ways to handle fear and being able to communicate about it can help.

Journal Writing:

Take some time to write about whatever you came up for you mentally, emotionally, and physically when doing this practice for the first time.

With each breath to be done by dusk, tomorrow, or even the week that I don't take a moment to enjoy the life that I live at the present moment. By doing this exercise it was nice to take the five minutes and just relax and breathe. However, I did find it a little challenging as I have three cats that used me as a body pillow. I found a spot on my bed, sitting up slightly, with a pillow behind my head. I closed my eyes for five minutes and with a beginners mind slowly took a deep breath in and out. With each breath I turned my brain off and opened my senses to my surroundings. I can smell the scent of fresh roses from the melted wax in my wax pot. I feel my body sinking into the bed with each breath and the more relaxed I become as the wind from the fan gives me chills. I can also feel the bed move with my cats moving across it and their fur rubbing across my feet. For a split second I lose track of my breathing but reconnect with it breathing in deeper and exhaling slowly. I can hear the purr from my cats and the birds chirping outside my window. I can also hear the motor running from my ceiling fan as it rotates in circles. As I lie there and the timer goes off after five minutes I found myself so relaxed and at peace I didn't want to get up. After doing this exercise I was given an opportunity to see my chiropractor and lie on a rotating table that rolled up and down your spine. I was given five minutes with a blanket, with the lights off to relax. I was able to concentrate on my breathing again and find that time to shut my body down.

In summary, finding time to yourself even if it is just that five minutes to take a break and relax gives you that peace of mind and energy to let things go. I feel so refreshed.

Unit 4: Personality Traits and the Human Spirituality

Information to Remember:

- Key Learning Point:** Personalities can be classified as either stress prone (seeming to attract stress) or stress resistant (providing a buffer against various stressors) (Seaward, 2015). Personality comprises several traits, characteristics, behavior, expressions, moods, and feelings as perceived by others (Seaward, 2015). Some personalities are thought to be molded by genetic factors, family dynamics, social influences, and personal experiences.
- Key Learning Point:** Spiritual well-being is as critical as overall well-being (Seaward, 2015). Harmony with self, others, earth, and a higher power is often considered a description of spirituality. Finding ways to become in touch with your spirituality is a great mind body technique that can strengthen the human spirit.
- Key Learning Point:** People are constantly trying to change, improve, and manipulate their behavior often associated with poor health (Seaward, 2015). To positively affect behaviors, a multimodal approach is advocated, where biological, psychological and social factors are all considered to provide a holistic approach to well-being. Certain behaviors can make up one's personality.

Self-Assessment Exercise:

This assessment I was introduced to self-esteem and how it responds to stress regardless of personality type described by one's self-value, self-respect, or self-love (Seaward, 2015). Having a high self-esteem helps in resolving stress where low self-esteem is caused to have higher stress. Depending on my self-esteem and stress level also effects my purpose in life and how I feel about certain things. This led me to define my perspective on the difference between values, attitudes, and beliefs.

Journal Writing:

FEAR: apprehension, anxiety, distress, edginess, jumpiness, nervousness, panic, tenseness, uneasiness, worry, fright, feeling overwhelmed.

Fear is a natural feeling for me. In this list I experience anxiety, edginess, nervousness, tenseness, uneasiness, worry, fright, and feeling overwhelmed more so than the others. I don't have a high level of anxiety but I feel more anxious when in tight enclosed spaces such as an elevator. I prefer to take the stairs. Once inside the elevator I feel warmth overcoming my body and then I start to sweat. The more people in the elevator I start to get fidgety and bite my nails. I can always remember the different smells from the mixture of people and the cooling of the air the rushes in once the door opens. I get edgy when I am tired or carb depleted right before my competition shows. Being nervous is a natural feeling for me. I become nervous all the time when it's the first time I do something or if I have to ask a complete stranger a question. The sense of not knowing what it going to happen or being in control of that situation makes me nervous. I usually bite my nails and my body will shake without having control to stop it. I get tense after working out. I don't really know if this is because my body is at a fatigue state or that I just don't know how to relax. The only time I feel uneasy is when I am not comfortable in a situation. I am not an "attention getter" or "drama queen" so I tend to feel uneasy when hit on by the opposite sex or same sex at that matter and I don't take good compliments very well. I would rather just be left alone. When it comes to being worried, I was given this right once I became a mother. I worry about them all the time and now that I have one driving and getting ready to graduate high school I worry that he is careful. I think I worry more about other people driving than him driving. I experience fright while watching scary movies, when alone in the house, or when I fear that someone is following me. My heart starts to race and I get paranoid with the little sounds around me. It's like they become louder so I can hear them. I get the feeling of being overwhelmed when I'm overworked. Your body has a way of letting your know when you need a day off.

CONFUSION: bewildered, uncertain, puzzled, mystified, perplexed, chaotic, foggy, or unaware.

Being confused with a new situation is normal. I feel uncertain about certain situations that don't seem legit. It makes me feel more alert. I feel puzzled when directions are given and they don't go as planned which leads me to be a little chaotic. Trying to find an address and finding out I am going the wrong way might cause me to do an illegal U-turn in the middle of the road. I hate being unaware of things especially when it comes to changes that I should know about. I feel many different emotions to why I am unaware of something important.

ANGER: aggravation, agitation, annoyance, destructiveness, disgust, envy, frustration, irritation, grouchiness, grumpiness, rage.

Getting angry is easy to do and I feel is the most used emotion out of the seven listed. I get aggravated when things don't go my way or when someone over steps me. I get annoyed with someone asking me too many questions that they start asking the same ones and when someone doesn't understand what I am saying. I get disgusted with dishonest people or ones that have to cheat to get by in life. I envy those that I feel are perfect and lead perfect lives. Mainly ones that have planned every step in a smart way. I get frustrated when I don't understand something or if I playing a game or doing a puzzle and I just can't figure it out. I get irritated when it's hot and I'm uncomfortable such as being in pain. I am grouchy when I am tired and I am full of road rage. I get so angry with people and their way of disrespectful driving these days.

SADNESS: alienation, anguish, despair, disappointment, gloom, grief, hopelessness, insecurity, loneliness, misery, unhappiness, rejection.

With many other emotions I don't express sadness very well. I personally just want to be left alone and not talk about things that bother me. Every day is a new day and I work through them as such and never carry problems into the next day. I do get disappointed with certain people especially in those situations that I get excited about and it doesn't happen. I have always been an insecure person and never felt good enough for anyone. By feeling this way I don't have time for rejection because I ignore it all together.

SHAME: guilt, embarrassment, humiliation, invalidation, regret, remorse, mortification.

I feel guilty when I feel I did something wrong. I am not a criminal by any means but making a moral decision that doesn't suit everyone makes me feel bad. This tends to go to a sense of regret only because I second question myself if I made the right decision. I feel embarrassed when I say or do something that was irrelevant.

LOVE: affection, arousal, attraction, caring, compassion, desire, fondness, infatuation, kindness, liking, longing, warmth, sympathy, sentimentality.

Love is a hard topic for me. I once wanted to feel love and I think I got it from all the wrong directions. I didn't come from a very affectionate family. I think in my life I always had felt attraction towards certain people but never felt good enough to be with them so I never tried. I am infatuated with female fitness pros that have the body that desire and work for on a daily basis but not in an obsessed way. I have a special kind of love for my children but when it comes to me I find love in my hobbies and job.

JOY: amusement, bliss, contentment, eagerness, elation, enjoyment, enthusiasm, excitement, exhilaration, hope, optimism, pleasure, satisfaction.

I am content after I exercise or go on a long peaceful hike in the woods. I am eager for each new day to begin a workout that will lead to progression. I find enjoyment in helping people making a difference in their health and wellbeing. It makes me happy when they come to me with weight loss stories and when their body starts to show muscle definition. This also excites me in to pushing them harder to achieve bigger and better goals. I hope I will be able to raise my children to the best of my ability so they can take on this world as a successful person. I find pleasure in pleasing people with small acts of kindness such as giving to the homeless or charities. I am satisfied with my job and way of living.

In summary, I experience many emotions every day. Some days are worse than others while others are great. I just take each day with a grain of salt and try to learn something new either by reading, researching, or by the many different people I meet. I find it important to be able to express feeling for which this is what defines a person.

Unit 5: Dealing with Stress: Coping Strategies

Information to Remember:

Key Learning Point: Perception is information received by the brain and processed through interpretation and classified as negative, neutral, or positive (Seaward, 2015). Sometimes perception can be decided by what others think or what the cool thing in life is to do. Each thought being negative or positive will have a different outcome of one's emotions.

Key Learning Point: Humor therapy if negative thoughts can result in illness and disease where positive thoughts should enhance health (Seaward, 2015). Humor is the best type to reduce stress which can come in forms such as parody, satire, slap-stick, absurd/nonsense, black, irony, dry, and sarcasm (Seaward, 2015).

Key Learning Point: Negative outcomes such as time and money can be stressful leading to a personal shipwreck (Seaward, 2015). Finding time in a day to accomplish every task can be stressful to whereas spending money you don't have can also be stressful. Time management and budgeting are two helpful tools to relieve stress.

Journal Writing:

As I begin this exercise I lie down and just took a moment to relax. My husband has just retired from the military and came home for good after two and a half years of on and off again separation. This life change has impacted me in many ways. I also have been watching the business of a local gym while the owner is doing his active duty training. I have put in over 65 hours in a week on my feet, training, and cleaning, this exercise couldn't have come at a better time. I am excited that my husband is back and safe, however, my space is now shared again and the things I used to do alone are now done before I can get to them. I am happy for the help but feel a bit overwhelmed by the changes that I was once in charge of and that I no longer am. This puts a little stress on me knowing that I am stuck at work from open to close and am unable to enjoy him being home but also feel it could be a good thing to slowly adjust to him being there. I'm focusing on my breathing as my chest rises and falls with each deep breath in and out. While scanning through my body I can feel the tightness in my arms and shoulders, the achiness in my back, and the tingling in my feet from working out and walking all day. I can feel and acknowledge the changes in my body and this excites me. I am extremely calm and continue on with my breathing. As I let my mind wonder I worry that I might mess something up by being in charge. I want to make sure that the owner can trust me to running it and I want to feel confident but keep second questioning myself if I'm doing the right things. I keep telling myself that I am not perfect and without direct expectations that there is really no way for me to mess anything up. I was left in control for a reason and he wouldn't have allowed me to do this if he didn't trust me. So instead of doubting myself I need to just take each day as a learning experience and keep calm if a situation does arise and handle it to the best of my ability. If it is wrong I will learn from it and know not to do it again. As far as my husband I need to just take it day by day and allow ourselves to grow together again. I should appreciate the things he does do and take for granted that he could leave the mess for me after this long busy week. It makes me feel like I need to be more grateful. Leaving my mindful inquiry, I picture myself on a beach, lying in a hammock while the breeze just blows through my hair. I can hear birds chirp and the ocean waves hit the beach. Understanding that the mind has a mind of its own and can switch thoughts, feelings, and likes and dislikes from anything I see, hear, or just think as they appear and disappear. The things that don't matter to me are easier to forget about but the one's that affect me physically or mentally seem to last longer than others. With these types of thoughts or feelings I need to find a way to except what is or talk about it to understand it better so I am able to let it go. Things like this are the small things that keep me focusing on the past and not the present. Clearing my mind and bringing it back to the present I can concentrate on my breathing as my body becomes more at ease and relaxed. I need to continue focusing on the present and what my life was lacking that now has again.

Unit 6: Relaxation Techniques 1: Breathing, Meditation, and Mental Imagery

Information to Remember:

Key Learning Point: Diaphragmatic breathing is thought to be the easiest method of relaxation and thought to give the body energy (Seaward, 2015). The average number of breaths is twelve to sixteen per minute and can be reduced to as few as three to four breaths in a relaxed state (Seaward, 2015). This type of breathing is also known to decrease episodes of chronic pain.

Key Learning Point: Meditation, the oldest form of relaxation, is a mind-cleansing that is focused concentration and increased awareness of one's being (Seaward, 2015). Mind cleansing is to rid the bad thought and save the good ones. This is also done by focusing on breathing.

Key Learning Point: Mental imagery has been used for years as a means to access the power of the mind to heal the body, mind, and soul (Seaward, 2015). Visualization is one aspect of mental imagery, wherein there is conscious direction of self-generated images. Guided mental imagery is a variation wherein images are suggested by another person (Seaward, 2015).

Self-Assessment Exercise:

This assessment taught me about diaphragmatic breathing, being the most basic relaxation technique (Seaward, 2015). There are three steps to engage in this technique. I was able to perform each technique seeing which one worked best for me. Learning about meditation and finding the mind body connection cleanses the soul which leads to inner peace. Along with meditation imagery and visualization promote physical calmness, increased concentration and expanded awareness of consciousness of the scene created in the mind (Seaward, 2015).

Journal Writing:

I feel that everyone is hard on themselves in some way shape or form. I don't normally find myself telling myself that I am worthless or feel hopeless. I am proud of who I am and where I have come from. I would never talk or address anyone in a way that I wouldn't want to be addressed or talked too. The time in my life that I feel down on myself is with the feeling of rejection. It breaks my heart to work hard for something and then it not happen. I can relate this in many different situations in my life such as relationships, work, and hobbies. When this happens my body doesn't feel any different I just feel tired and have no desire to do anything.

Seeds of suffering?

If I stopped watering the seeds of my own suffering the outcome of the situation would be different. When it comes to relationships instead of believing the person truly cares for me I need to open up and listen to his intentions and not get so attached. By doing this I wouldn't get so disappointed in things that I wish could happen that don't. When it comes to work I meet many people with intentions and I get excited for a better opportunity and I find myself trying so hard and the benefits going to other people. Sometimes I wonder if I'm not good enough then I should go somewhere that would appreciate my work ethic more. But I don't want to look like a failure by quitting so I try harder. When it comes to my main hobby, bodybuilding competitions, I work so hard in the gym and mentally feel like I look good until I stand on a stage next to others that I feel look better. This ruins my self-esteem. I need to stay focused on me and know where I came from to where I am at in that moment. If I stopped downing myself I could become a stronger person.

Day-to-day life feelings of resentment?

Feelings of resentment can happen anywhere. I try my best to avoid situations like those because I don't like drams or being in the middle of some silly stuff. With my job people press my buttons all the time but it's how I handle each situation is what determines my level of sanity. I have a big heart and get along with everyone and it seems by doing this people feel like they need to tell me things that I really don't want to know about. This can be about someone else I know or about other people I work with. I really need to find the courage to tell them that I'm not interested but this seems so rude. I never thought about it being connected to challenges that this person may face. It helps to talk about things that bother a person but some of the things that bother people aren't relative. This just goes to show how different people are and how just the small things can bother them.

Reflection on writing?

I started reflecting on the darkness of things that bother me such as my insecurities and how they affect me in my everyday living. Exploring the things that bother me and looking back to see how small they really are allows me to believe that everyone suffers from some small insecurities, which everyone handles in their own way. By talking about it or having someone talk to me helps ease the situation and instead of finding all the ways that it gets on my nerves I should look at the ways that I am helping. I don't have to reply or feed into drama or confrontations but just listen.

Unit 7: Nutrition and Stress

Information to Remember:

Key Learning Point: Physical exercise is a form of stress, the enactment of all the physiological systems that the fight-or-flight response triggers for physical survival (Seaward, 2015). This stress could be in the form of good stress or bad stress. Out of the two classifications aerobic exercise is the better type to promote relaxation.

Key Learning Point: The body adapts, either negatively or positively, to the stress placed upon it. Proper physical exercise will cause many adaptations that in the long term are thought to be effective in reducing the deleterious effects of stress by returning the body to a profound state of homeostasis. Physical exercise allows the body to use stress hormones for their intended purposes, detoxifying the body of stress hormones by utilizing them constructively (Seaward, 2015).

Key Learning Point: Food affects not only the physical body, but the mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects as well. The concept of spiritual nutrition suggests eating a wide variety of fruits, vegetables, and grains that nurture the health of the seven primary chakras. In addition, spiritual nutrition suggests ensuring a balance in all aspects of food, including the acid base balance (Seaward, 2015).

Self-Assessment Exercise:

This self-assessment exercised introduced mindful lying yoga practices. These were a series of poses done on the floor while bringing awareness to my breathing, movement, posture, thoughts, and emotions. These were simple yoga forms that in the end had me feeling relaxed and limber.

Unit 8: Physical Exercise and Activity

Information to Remember:

- Key Learning Point:** Hatha yoga is built on three concepts: the art of breathing, the art of conscious stretching, and the art of balance. It is known to decrease episodes of chronic pain particularly lower-back pain. (Seaward, 2015).
- Key Learning Point:** The Chinese believe that poor health is a result of blockages and congestion in the flow of internal energy, which in turn lowers one's physical resistance and makes one vulnerable to various pathogens (Seaward, 2015).
- Key Learning Point:** T'ai Chi is deeply rooted in philosophy. The premise of this exercise is to move with rather than against, the flow of universal energy. The positions reinforce the concept of consciously moving with rather than against, perceived stressors in everyday life (Seaward, 2015).

Self-Assessment Exercises:

There are six components of fitness that benefit a person when it comes to stress. Physical exercise also decreases resting heart rate, resting blood pressure, muscle tension, better sleep quality, increased resistance to colds and illness, decreased cholesterol and triglyceride levels, decreased body fat, improved body composition, increased efficiency of heart, decreased bone demineralization, decreased rate of aging, and increased tolerance of heat and cold through acclimatization (Seaward, 2015). Athletic training is viable as both a relaxation technique and a coping technique to deal with stress. Putting this all together provides added benefits to one's life.

Journal Writing:

OPENNESS: I can relate to openness when I first started dating my husband. I remember wanting him to like me for who I was so I felt honesty and being open was key. After dating for a while we were married and with him being in the military time has passed and there was a two and a half year separation. During this time I became extremely independent. Now that he is back the openness isn't there anymore and I find myself being more defensive over things I used to do while he was gone and now trying to except the change now that he is home. I need to find that way to reconnect and find that openness once again. I seem to more judgmental and very short.

EMPATHY: I need to realize that we both led two separate lives and grew a part. I need to find what it was that brought us together. It seems me being judgmental is stemmed from the small things that get on my nerves. I was adjusted to being on my own and taking care of things by myself.

COMPASSION: Along with empathy I can understand the position he is in. In the past we have both experience disappointments, failure, and losses and being in the military doesn't help. Being separated takes a toll on many and the divorce rate is very high. Not to mention he just retired and doesn't have a job lined up. It's hard knowing time is running out and not knowing how to pay the bills or taking care of his family has him a little stressed out. If I imagined him as my child I would

tell him that God has a plan for us and will throw challenges but if we stick together everything will work out.

LOVING-KINDNESS: I am loving and kind. I wish everyone the best even the difficult ones in difficult situations. Regardless of said feelings or emotions I can put my thoughts on hold to help another person.

SYMPATHETIC JOY: I am not a sympathetic person but understand that every person is in control of their own life's journey and past challenges, good or bad, which helped mold them into the person they are. It's hard for me to be sympathetic to a person who has put their self in their own troubles.

EQUANIMITY: This quality is hard. I clash with certain people, traits, customs and it's hard to imagine them as someone close to me. This quality test me in my day to day activities but once my mind is made up about someone it's hard to vision them otherwise. I can be the mature person to get through the day but it doesn't mean I have to like them.

In summary, this exercise has opened my eyes. It's easier to just live through the day knowing what bothers me but taking the time to analyze it and writing it down it serves as an outline on things I need to fix. I want to be a better person and not so judgmental or defensive.

Unit 9: Applying Stress: Critical Issues for Management and Prevention to your Professional Life

Information to Remember:

Key Learning Point: No one strategy works for all people in all situations to cope effectively with the causes of stress. For it to be effective, it must do one or all of the following increase awareness of the cause of stress, help process information about the stressor, and adjust attitude and possibly behavior to work toward a peaceful resolution (Seaward, 2015).

Key Learning Point: Stress can induce a sense of personal violation. Harboring feelings of resentment and anger is a means of maintaining control over someone we feel has unjustly attacked us. But

when feelings of anger are not released correctly, they become toxic. Forgiveness allows these feelings to be released so that a peaceful resolution is the final outcome (Seaward, 2015).

Key Learning Point: Prayer is one of the oldest coping techniques known to humankind and is the most common type in times of crisis (Seaward, 2015). Prayer has good intentions and relative to aspects of health and healing.

Additional Information



References

- Seaward, B. (2015). *Managing stress: Principles and strategies for health and well-being* (8th ed.). Boston, MA: Jones and Bartlett Publishers.
- Stahl, B. & Goldstein, E. (2010). *A mindfulness-based stress reduction workbook*. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications, Inc.