

STRESS BUSTING IDEAS

It seems it is that time of year when the days are dark, the blues start to set in and there is stress over the holidays. Within MSU Extension we have a Mont Guide you can download free from our MSU Extension website entitled “50 Stress Busting Ideas for Your Well-being. I won’t go through all 50 but here are some that work for me.

First, identify a stressor, then choose an activity or two that you think would help you deal with it. Apply yourself to doing that particular activity for a day, a week, or a month. Then, look back and note the difference in your stress level and what has or has not changed.

Often people need an outlet for positive and negative feelings. Keeping a journal where you can express your feelings is harmless and can be therapeutic. Exercise and burn calories. Exercise is a great way to manage stress and by burning calories while helping your body stay fit. A well-rested body is more resistant to stress. Go to bed at a reasonable time, do something relaxing before bedtime and let go of the troubles of the day. The next step is to think positive as then you can meet stressors head-on. With rest, exercise and positive thinking also comes proper nourishment. A properly nourished body is more resistant to stress. A diet with vegetables, fruits, protein and whole grains can help you manage your stressors.

At the end of the day often we are tempted to focus on what we did not accomplish instead of what we did accomplish. Get in the habit of praising what you did accomplish and focus on your daily success. Celebrate your talents! Your sister may be a wonderful cook and your neighbor may have a beautiful yard but don’t compare yourself to them. No one has every talent, but all do have talents. Discover yours, celebrate them and use those talents to help others.

Learn to say “no” (this seems to be one of my problems). Learn to say no to requests you can’t reasonably handle. Don’t feel guilty or make excuses for your response and remember you can always say yes later.

Learn to draw strength from friends and family members. If stress becomes unmanageable or overwhelming, seek professional help from your doctor, counselor or minister.

What about surrendering those stressors you cannot change and think about how to adapt to them. Gravitate toward the things you love to do. Do you love to sing? Do you love to cook? Make a list of 20 thing you love to do and start making time for those things.

How about things that waste your time? Divide all your tasks into three categories. A’s are essential to life goals, B’s are important but not essential. C’s are trivia. Forget about them and do the A’s first, and at the time of day when you are most alert and creative. Set your priorities, stop running late and keep a log for one week detailing your use of time. However, while your setting priorities make sure you take mental vacation breaks during the day to rejuvenate your mind, body and soul.

This one is probably my favorite. Don’t forget to read the funnies. Read a comic strip, poem, newspaper column, story or book that tickles your funny bone. And don’t forget to laugh every day and don’t forget to be a kid every day as well. Kids need playtime....so do adults.

Finally learn to adapt, be flexible, change up your routine and do what works for you.

For more information contact the MSU Powell County Extension Office at 846-9791