

How to Manage the Stress in Your Life

By Ann N. Gatty, Ph.D.



A certain degree of stress is a normal part of living. People adjust to life's changes daily. It seems when one stressful situation occurs, other stressors often follow!! Sometimes it appears that stress is becoming a series of layers adding barriers that prevent you from assuming the fulfilling abundant life you are seeking.

Wouldn't it be great to be both mentally and emotionally healthy, so that our mind and emotions function free from anxiety, depression or other malfunctions? The mind and body are so connected that psychological issues and stressors can affect the physical body, and physical conditions can affect the mind and emotions.

Unprocessed emotions such as stress, prolonged anger, and anxiety, put the whole body in a state of tension and weaken the immune system. Sometimes our emotional state can prove more detrimental to our well-being than lack of exercise or nutrition. When a period of stress is prolonged, and not followed by some form of physical exertion to "relieve the pressure," several things can happen.

Realize that all forms of stress are cumulative. As a result, the levels of adrenaline build up in the body, which can cause chronic, long-term increases in blood pressure, heart rate, etc. These increases are damaging and require more repairs by the body to set them back to normal. The result of this is that stores of nutrients, vitamins, minerals, enzymes, and balancing hormones are used up.

This leaves your body in a dilemma. It needs to replace the things that are depleted. If your digestive system is not providing the nutrients, then the body robs them from other sources, and this adds to the body's imbalance. Body systems will shut down over time to conserve energy and nutrients. Clearly, this is not a good long-term situation, and the results are predictable. What started as a position of balance and "ease" becomes a position of imbalance and "dis-ease"!

People experience stress for different reasons and their response to stress can be physical, mental, or emotional. Factors that trigger a stress response are called **stressors**. And the first step in conquering your personal stressors is to identify them.

Take an Inventory.

Can you identify what is causing your stress? Is it personal or work-related? Is it a health issue? Is it finances, home-life or the neighbors? Is the stress caused by a major change in your life? Stress comes from many sources, and like many women, stress is triggered by a combination of factors in our lives.

Identify your personal stressors.

Write down the things that cause stress in your life and next to each item identify the level of stress that each cause ranging from high, medium, or low. Over the next several days and weeks, check to see if these are really the important issues in your life.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Design your Coping Skills.

Coping with stress requires you to use skills to handle life's challenges in the most effective ways to minimize negative consequences. This ability to cope well depends most on your strengths in using your actions and your emotions. Can you design a solution? Do you allow your emotions to cloud your thinking and overwhelm your ability to make decisions? List what coping skills you currently try to incorporate in different situations. These might include making lists of activities you need to accomplish, or avoiding stressful situations, or having someone help you handle the situation.

Stress is one of the most detrimental ingredients in an otherwise healthy life. It can wreak havoc on business situations, life balance, family time and any other aspect of your time here on earth. Take care of yourself. You're worth it.

About the Author

Dr. Ann Gatty is a business development strategist. She helps her clients clarify the vision for their businesses, boost their leadership capabilities and add quality talent to help the clients reach their goals. Through a collaborative mentoring process, she and her clients create workable strategic business plans and success initiatives, while improving their workplace processes. Dr. Gatty is a frequent writer and contributor www.AllBusiness.com, www.MarketingInsiders.com, and www.WomenOnBusiness.com. Her interactive speaking engagements assist participants in discovering new-found talents and skills that they can immediately apply in the workplace. Join her [Facebook Group, Strategic Thinking Summit Elites](#) for strategies you can implement to grow your business success and enjoy camaraderie with others entrepreneur members.