



HELP SHEET

HOW STRESSED ARE YOU?



When we believe we are being placed under a lot of demand and beyond our capabilities we can become

stressed. Stress places enormous pressure on our bodies and we will often do things that are not always helpful to ourselves to gain relief from the demands being placed upon us. Clinical Psychologist, Marriage and Family Therapist Larry Alan Nadig Ph.D. defines stress in this way “Stress is an internal process that occurs when a person is faced with a demand that is perceived to exceed the resources available to effectively respond to it and where failure to effectively deal with the demand has important undesirable consequences”. In other words what is being demanded of us is felt to be beyond what we feel we can do or cope with.

When we feel stressed we can then feel strain. Dr Nadig says, strain is the negative results of stress and can show up in many forms such as fatigue, irritability, difficulty concentrating, medical and physical problems, insomnia, depression, anxiety, over eating, drug and alcohol abuse or gambling.

Stress can be a positive thing for us, it can alert a person that they are out of their depth, that they have too much to deal with or, that its simply time to take a break.

A person’s body will show the signs of strain and its important to listen to and know when and what steps to take to relieve the stress and strain being placed on you. There are many causes of stress, they can be, a change in life that is difficult to deal with this could be the loss of a loved one, moving house or kids leaving home, it could be that you have a job that it is too demanding, financial problems or trying to cope with raising children alone, unemployment, loneliness and /or isolation or retirement. There are many reasons why a person may feel under pressure and become stressed, however too many people try to cope alone or escape from the strain by doing things that can often lead to other health or life problems

There is no absolute right way of dealing with stress but identifying what it is that is the cause of stress is the first step. Finding a friend, counsellor or other health professional to assist is the beginning of overcoming stress.

Stress that is handled incorrectly can be damaging; stress lowers resistance and makes us more exposed to illness and disease.

How stressed are you?

This is a short list of some of the signs of stress

- High blood pressure
- Grinding teeth
- Headaches
- Twitching and trembling
- Lack of interest in sex



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- Nervousness
- Fatigue
- Loss of appetite or a tendency to overeat
- Depression
- A strong urge to cry
- Inability to think clearly
- Difficulty falling asleep
- Inability to concentrate.

When we are under stress and then strain, we have a tendency to keep it to ourselves, making some small changes in our lives can make a huge difference to our wellbeing.