

Unit-5 Work - Place Skills

Stress and it's Management (4 A's)

Stress is a mental situation in which people feel pressure to perform or act.

Stress management is a wide spectrum of techniques and psychotherapies aimed at controlling a person's level of stress, especially chronic stress, usually for the purpose of and for the motive of improving everyday functioning.

The 4 A's of Stress Management

When your stress level exceeds your ability to cope, you need to restore the balance by reducing the stressors or increasing your ability to cope or both. Try using one of the four A's:

1. Avoid

Stress can often be avoided by planning ahead, rearranging surroundings and carrying a lighter workload. Approaches include the following:

- **Take control:** Taking control of stressful, routine tasks helps to build confidence. For example, leaving earlier for work or taking a new route can ease the stress of traffic.
- **Avoid bothersome people:** Physical distance from someone who is causing stress can relieve tension.
- **Say "No":** Most people have a lot of responsibilities and very little spare time. For personal mental health, it is good to say "no" to social invitations & extra responsibilities at work.
- **Prioritize a to-do list:** Making a to-do list helps the mind let go of stressful thoughts regarding required tasks. Scratching an item off the to-do list can create a feeling of accomplishment.

2. Alter

When stressful situations cannot be avoided, behaviors, communication, and time management may need to be altered. Approaches include the following:

- **Ask others to change their behavior:** Small issues often snowball and turn into huge problems. It's okay to ask others to change bothersome behavior.
- **Communicate openly:** Honesty is always the best policy. When sharing feelings, using "I" statements rather than "you" statements helps to negate any blame on the other person.
- **Manage time better:** Grouping similar tasks together can increase efficiency, resulting in lessened stress.
- **State limits in advance:** Instead of stewing over a colleague's nonstop chatter, politely start the conversation with, "I've got only five minutes to cover this."

3. Access

Many times, acceptance is the best way to avoid stress. Approaches include the following:

- **Talk with other:** Feelings are legitimate even if frustrating situations cannot be changed. Discussing stressful situations with a friend who actively listens and understands is helpful.
- **Forgive others:** Forgiving takes practice. Learning forgiveness releases negative energy from the mind and body.
- **Practice positive self-talk:** Positive self-talk can reduce stress and help maintain objectivity.
- **Learn from mistakes:** Mistakes are inevitable and should be used as teachable moments rather than create feelings of self-loathing.

4. Adapt

Adapting often involves changing expectations, which in turn, lowers stress levels.

Approaches include the following:

- **Adjust standards:** Perfection is impossible. Striving for perfection can cause feelings of frustration and guilt. Adjusting personal expectations can reduce stress.
- **Practice stopping bad thoughts:** Negative thoughts should immediately be replaced with positive ones. Refusal to replay a stressful situation in the mind may actually cause it to be less stressful.
- **Adopt mantra sayings:** Mentally repeating confident sentences, such as, "I can do this," has a positive effect on stressful situations.
- **Create a list of happy resources:** Making a list of happy experiences, situations and thoughts can put things into perspective. Looking back on this list during a stressful situation can help calm the mind.
- **Look at the big picture:** Figuring out if something will matter in one year or in five years is important. If it won't, letting it go can relieve stress.

