

UNDER PRESSURE

Managing workplace stress

Presented by
Cigna Employee Assistance Program

Together, all the way.®



SEMINAR GOALS



- Explore signs and sources of work stress
- Learn how to respond to stressors you can't control and those you can
- Recognize the importance of balance in your work and personal life
- Discuss effective strategies for reducing stress
- Review the benefits of your Employee Assistance Program (EAP)



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POLL 1



Which question is a “yes” for you?

- Do you still feel exhausted after the weekend or a vacation?
- Do you find it difficult to separate from work-related tasks or problems?
- Do you know you need to de-stress but can’t “afford” the time needed to do it?
- Do you feel your health and/or relationships are stressed by your stress?
- More than one of the above



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“It’s like the weekend never even happened; I’m just as tired. Even a vacation doesn’t help.”



“I just have to check in on my project on the weekend or I’ll never catch up.”



“I know I should be finding ways to relax and recharge, but there’s just not enough time in the day for that.”



“When I think about it, it’s often my wife and kids who end up paying for my stress.”



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SIGNS OF TOO MUCH STRESS



Mental/Emotional signs:

- Feelings of anger or frustration
- Irritability
- Inability to concentrate

Behavioral signs:

- Disrupted eating patterns
- Job performance problems
- Conflicts with other people
- Increased tobacco or substance use
- Communication difficulties

Physical signs:

- Frequent illness, such as colds
- Feeling tired
- Headaches
- High blood pressure
- Muscle aches, tension
- Constipation or diarrhea
- Upset stomach
- Sweating
- Unable to sleep well



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WHAT'S THE SOURCE OF YOUR WORK STRESS?

Environmental

Situational

Physical

Mental



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TARGETING THE SOURCE OF YOUR STRESS



Shifting mindsets

- **Internal boundaries: Managing what you expect of yourself**
 - Notice unrealistic expectations
 - Try a more realistic and inclusive self-view
- **External boundaries: Managing actions in response to stressors**
 - Notice feelings of helplessness or powerlessness
 - Try a more assertive outlook



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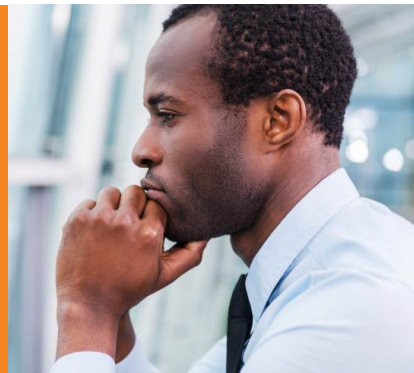
CORE QUESTION: WHAT CAN I CONTROL?

Identify the stressors you *can't* control

- Accept that they're outside of your control
- Monitor any negative internal beliefs
- Consider how you might think differently
- Look for ways to let go of tension

Identify the stressors you *can* control

- Take ownership of making a change
- Consider solutions
- Make and implement a plan of action



The goal is to accept, in an emotionally healthy way, the things you *can't* control and improve things you *can* control. Remember that shifting your internal beliefs about a stressor is a move that's always available to you.



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A BACKGROUND FACTOR: LIFE OUT OF BALANCE



What gets your time?

Work hours ◀.....▶ Personal time

What gets your focus?

Work commitments ◀.....▶ Personal life

Where are you growing?

Work skills, development ◀.....▶ Personal growth



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EFFECTIVE RESPONSE STRATEGIES



Preventative: Being prepared

What can I do to reduce potential stressors?

Immediate: "In the moment" focus on solutions

What can I do right now to improve the situation?

Restorative: release tension, reclaim positive perspective

What can I do to rebalance and move forward?



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STRESS TOOLBOX: MANAGE YOUR TIME

- Establish priorities
- Get input on prioritizing
- Create a realistic “to do” list
- Use your down time
- Maximize technology



Focus on tasks that are meaningful and important, not just urgent.



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STRESS TOOLBOX: MANAGE YOUR TIME

- Avoid perfectionism
- Put off procrastination
- Don't spread yourself too thin
- Build flex into your schedule



Start now! Commit to trying new strategies right away.



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POLL 2



What time management tool will you use to reduce your stress?

- Create a prioritized task list
- Include time limits for each task
- Do the hardest top priority task first
- Start building flex into your schedule
- One of the other tips discussed



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STRESS TOOLBOX: MAKE THE MOST OF BREAKS!



What sounds relaxing and rejuvenating?

- Take a walk
- Have a lunch break exercise session
- Find a quiet spot to read a good book
- Tackle the to-do list; run a needed errand
- Reach out to a friend and make plans
- Listen to your favorite music on headphones
- Sit outside on a sunny day and daydream



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STRESS TOOLBOX: MANAGE YOUR MOOD



- Start your day on a positive note
- Greet people with a smile
- Try to see the value in mistakes
- Don't let negative people get to you
- Be confident



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STRESS TOOLBOX

Manage your tension



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- Face-to-face sessions
- Confidential
- Prepaid
- Unlimited telephonic consultation
- Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- Household benefit
- Work/life support such as elder care, child care and pet care
- Financial services
- Legal services

BENEFITS OF THE EAP

Benefits vary by employer. Please check with your HR for your specific EAP benefits.



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Questions?



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