STRESS and the MIND/BODY CONNECTION

FIGHT, FLIGHT or FREEZE RESPONSE

Stress Response = Faster and Stronger for Survival
- Muscles: Tense Up, Ready for Action
- Mind: Instinctive; Thinking shuts down
- Stress Hormones: Adrenalin, Cortisol boost energy
- Heart Rate: Speeds Up, pumps blood to muscles
- Immune System: Shuts down
- Breathing: Shallow and Fast
- Stomach: Digestion shuts down
- Sweat Glands: Overactive
- Emotions: Strong—Fear, Anger, Panic

Muscles: Tense as needed then Relax
- Mind: Focused, Thinking Clearly, Memory Good
- Heart Rate/Blood Pressure: Normal
- Breathing: Smooth, Deep, Slow
- Stomach: Digesting normally
- Sweat: To cool off
- Emotions: Normal range, Manageable

Primal Stress Response + Highly Developed Brain = STRESS
- Our minds do not differentiate between real danger & stressors
- The Stress Response impairs our ability to think and function
- Mental Stress is unique to humans: Much of our stress comes from worries, fears, expectations, self-criticisms, & negative perceptions
- We have no natural release from stress: The Stress Response (gas pedal) is automatic—the Relaxation Response (brake) is not
- Releasing Stress—“Putting on the brake” takes awareness & training

With Time and Effort...
- We can develop new habits of stress release enabling us to calm ourselves & improve our performance amidst the stresses of modern life.

Relaxed or Working Mind and Body

Chronic Stress can result in...
- Fatigue
- Poor Concentration
- Poor Memory
- Decrease in Performance
- Sore, Tense muscles
- Headaches
- Insomnia
- Frequent Illness
- Chronic Anxiety/ Nervousness
- Depression
- Gastrointestinal problems
- Ulcers
- High Blood Pressure
- Heart Disease
- Auto-Immune Diseases
- Poor Immune System
- Emotions: Bottled up/Erupt

Activating the Relaxation Response

STRESS BUSTERS
- Plan Breaks for Rest and Fun
- Develop Realistic Expectations
- Prioritize
- Eat Well
- Get Enough Sleep
- Exercise Regularly
- Use Stress Release techniques all day long
- Learn to Tolerate & Manage Emotions

EXERCISE

RELAXATION
TECHNIQUES

CHANGING
THOUGHTS &
PERCEPTIONS

Psychological STRESS

THE STRESS RESPONSE

Low

High

Physical Threat or Danger

Action and Safety triggers the Relaxation Response

Constant Psychological Stressors can keep us in Fight/Flight Mode

Counseling & Career Center
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