

**Stress Management**

**SupportLinc Employee Assistance  
Program**

**Revolution Company**



# Disclaimer

The general views, thoughts and opinions expressed in this presentation are expressly those of the presenter. The presentation is intended to provide general tips, advice and coping skills, and may not entirely pertain to your circumstance or you as an individual in a professional or clinical capacity. For specific advice on your unique situation, please reach out to a licensed clinical professional for a confidential, one-on-one consult. CuraLinc Healthcare and the presenter are not held responsible or liable for any consequences or damages due to an individual taking action based on the information presented herein.

Please use the Chat or the GoToWebinar Question box throughout today's session for any questions, comments, feedback or to share resources!

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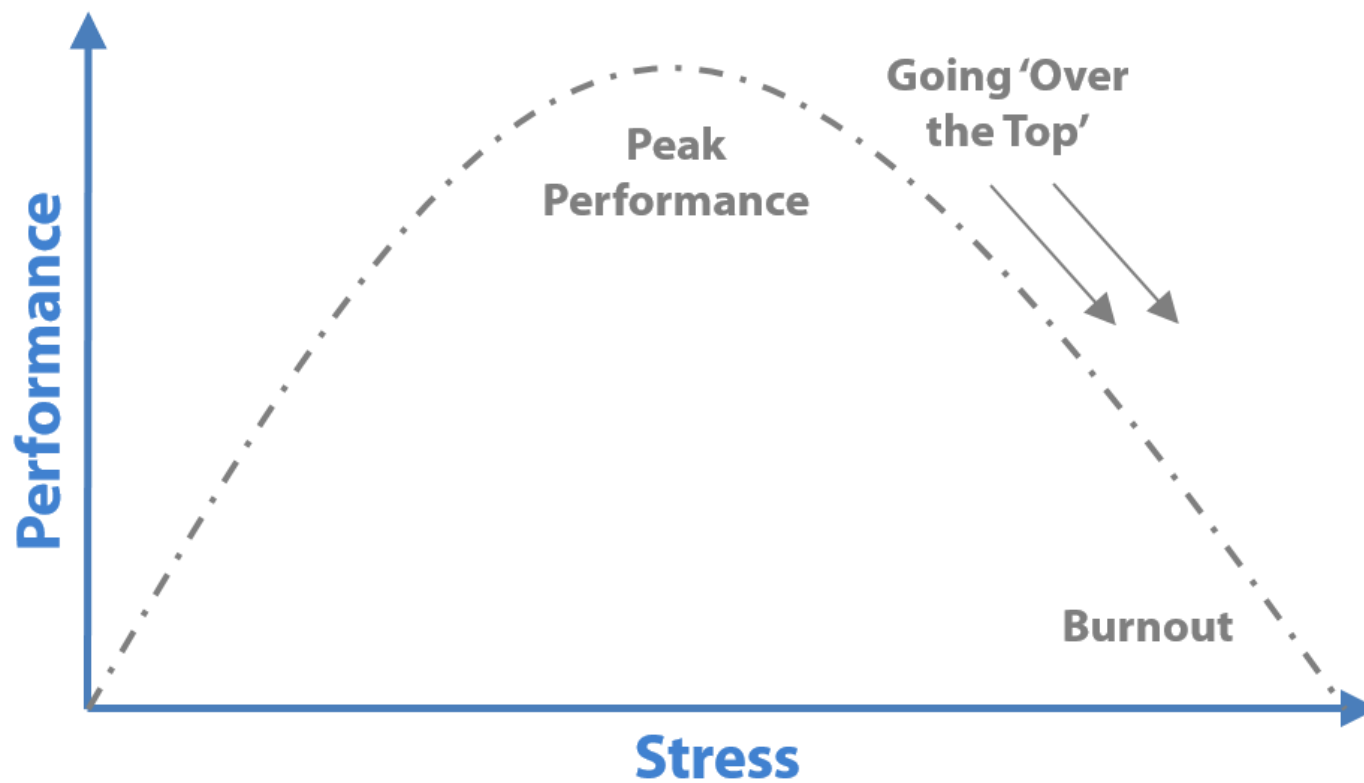


# Objectives

## This training is designed to help you:

- Understand the different types of stress
- Review the most common effects of stress
- Improve your awareness of stress, and your ability to manage it effectively
- Gain practical tools and information regarding healthy habits and coping skills
- Learn specific strategies to address stress in the workplace

# Impact of stress



# Stress we encounter

## Everyday stressors

- Poor communication with spouse/partner
- Difficult customers/co-workers/boss
- Finding time for exercise
- Worrying about money
- Traffic/running late
- Projects/deadlines
- Difficulty sleeping
- No “me time”
- Meal prep/dinner



# Stress we encounter

## Sudden trauma or loss



- Death of a family member, friend or co-worker
- Loss of health - onset of illness or injury
- Relationship loss - divorce or break-up
- Victim of crime, accident or disaster
- Loss of trust - betrayal/infidelity
- Job loss

# Stress we encounter

## Chronic/long-term stressors

- Poverty
- Chronic illness
- Financial strain
- Abusive relationships
- Extended separation from family/loved ones
- Living with long-term mental illness or addiction
- Caring for a chronically ill or troubled family member





# Life stress test

## Life stress scores

- 0 - 149: Low susceptibility to stress-related illness.
- 150 - 299: Medium susceptibility to stress-related illness: learn and practice relaxation and stress management skills and a healthy well lifestyle.
- 300 and over: High susceptibility to stress-related illness: daily practice of relaxation skills is very important for your wellness. Take care of it.

## Which have taken place in the past 12 – 14 months?

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| _____ 1) Death of spouse (100 points)                                | _____ 22) Change in work responsibilities (29 points)       |
| _____ 2) Divorce (73 points)   | _____ 23) Trouble with in-laws (29 points)                  |
| _____ 3) Marital separation or from relationship partner (65 points) | _____ 24) Outstanding personal achievement (28 points)      |
| _____ 4) Jail term (63 points)                                       | _____ 25) Spouse begins or stops work (26 points)           |
| _____ 5) Death of close family member (63 points)                    | _____ 26) Starting or finishing school (26 points)          |
| _____ 6) Personal injury or illness (53 points)                      | _____ 27) Change in living conditions (25 points)           |
| _____ 7) Marriage (50 points)  | _____ 28) Revision of personal habits (24 points)           |
| _____ 8) Fired from work (47 points)                                 | _____ 29) Trouble with boss (23 points)                     |
| _____ 9) Marital reconciliation (45 points)                          | _____ 30) Change in work hours, conditions etc. (20 points) |
| _____ 10) Retirement (45 points)                                     | _____ 31) Change in residence (20 points)                   |
| _____ 11) Change in family member's health (44 points)               | _____ 32) Change in schools (20 points)                     |
| _____ 12) Pregnancy (40 points)                                      | _____ 33) Change in recreational habits (19 points)         |
| _____ 13) Sex difficulties (39 points)                               | _____ 34) Change in church activities (19 points)           |
| _____ 14) Addition to family (39 points)                             | _____ 35) Change in social activities (18 points)           |
| _____ 15) Business readjustment (39 points)                          | _____ 36) Mortgage or loan under \$20,000 (17 points)       |
| _____ 16) Change in financial status (38 points)                     | _____ 37) Change in sleeping habits (16 points)             |
| _____ 17) Death of close friend (37 points)                          | _____ 38) Change in number of family gatherings (15 points) |
| _____ 18) Change to a different line of work (36 points)             | _____ 39) Change in eating habits (15 points)               |
| _____ 19) Change in number of marital arguments (35 points)          | _____ 40) Vacation (13 points)                              |
| _____ 20) Mortgage or loan over \$30,000 (31 points)                 | _____ 41) Holiday season (12 points)                        |
| _____ 21) Foreclosure of mortgage or loan (30 points)                | _____ 42) Minor violations of the law (11 points)           |

# Effects of stress

## Common signs

- Physical (aches and pains)
- Energy level and sleep
- Negative feelings
- Other signs

**Always ask your doctor about any new or unexplained physical symptoms.**





# Common responses to stress

Rushing around, but not getting much done

Drinking alcohol or smoking to calm down

Trying to do too many things at once

Sleeping too little, too much or both

Speaking and eating too fast

Working too much/too long

Eating to cope with stress

Delaying important tasks

# Healthy habits

Embrace things you can change

Engage in daily physical activity

Talk with family and friends

Remember to laugh

Get adequate sleep

# Healthy habits continued

Give up unhelpful habits

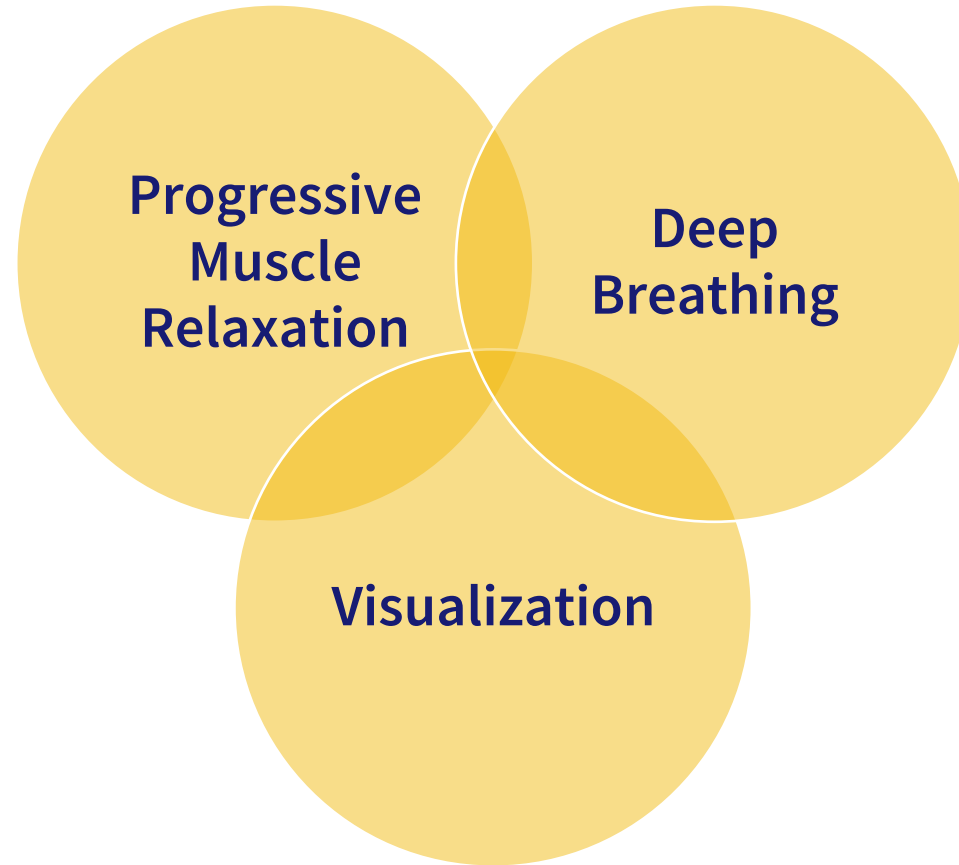
Try not to worry

Get organized

Slow down

Give back

# Relaxation techniques



# Deep breathing



Practice exercise



# Tips for the workplace



**Identify your stress triggers**

**Tackle your stress triggers**

**Work on time management**

**Keep things in perspective**

# Interactive toolkits

## Mindfulness

[www.mindfulness.tools](http://www.mindfulness.tools)

Practical tools and exercises for incorporating mindfulness into everyday life.

## Meditation

[www.meditate.tools](http://www.meditate.tools)

Easy-to-use collection of resources that includes guided meditations, tip sheets and more.

## Resiliency

[www.resiliency.tools](http://www.resiliency.tools)

Skill development resources to help you 'bounce back' from challenging situations.

## Sleep fitness

[www.sleepfitness.tools](http://www.sleepfitness.tools)

Information and resources to help you learn good sleep habits and achieve healthy sleep.

As we get ready to finish today's session, please use the Chat or the GoToWebinar Question box for any questions, comments, feedback or to share resources!



# What is SupportLinc?

The SupportLinc Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a health benefit, separate from your medical insurance, offered by your employer to help you manage life's daily challenges.

SupportLinc can refer you to professional counselors, services and resources that will help you and your eligible family members resolve a broad range of personal and work-related concerns.

# What services are included?

## Work-life benefits



### Legal consultation

Free in-person or telephonic consultation with a licensed attorney

No employment law



### Dependent care referrals

Expert referrals to child and adult/elder care providers, facilities and other resources



### Financial consultation

Expert guidance and consultation from financial professionals



### “Convenience” referrals

Guidance and referrals to a variety of daily living resources: home improvement, entertainment services, pet care, auto repair, wellness, travel, handymen, volunteer opportunities etc.



### Identity theft consultation

Free consultation with an identity theft recovery professionals

Tailored recovery action plan

# Getting started



**Call:** 1-888-881-LINC (5462)



**QR Code:**



**Visit:** [www.supportlinc.com](http://www.supportlinc.com)



**Log in or create account**  
(code: revolution)

## SupportLinc

Support for everyday issues. Every day.

# Additional resources

Everyone experiences increased levels of stress from time to time. However, if left unaddressed, stress can continue to build and affect your health and ability to cope with life. This process can occur with chronic stress that builds gradually over time, or with acute stress that suddenly overwhelms your ability to cope.

Each of us reacts to and deals with stress with differently. Events like political unrest, natural disasters and community violence will create a variety of responses – for you, your family members and co-workers. Strong emotions like fear, sadness or other symptoms of depression are normal, as long as they are temporary.

## **Symptoms of stress**

Common reactions to a stressful event include:

- Disbelief and shock
- Tension, irritability or anger
- Fear and anxiety about the future
- Difficulty making decisions; trouble concentrating
- Being numb to one’s feelings
- Loss of interest in normal activities
- Loss of appetite
- Nightmares and recurring thoughts about the event
- Increased use of alcohol and drugs
- Sadness and other symptoms of depression; crying
- Feeling powerless
- Sleep problems
- Headaches, back pains, and stomach problems

## **Techniques to reduce stress now**

It’s important to remember that you can reduce the intensity of stress. Listed below are some techniques to try:

- Keep breathing. Take some slow, deep breaths and relax your muscles.
- Take a walk, go exercise and get out for a run. Physical activity can alleviate some of the tension in your body.
- Know your limitations. Avoid taking on extra responsibility if you can.
- Find ways to disconnect, such as reading a book, listening to some music or taking a long bath.
- Start a Stress Journal of your thoughts and feelings. Writing them out can help you process difficult emotions and see ways to better deal with them.
- Pick and choose your battles. Some arguments are not worth having and can create more tension. Spend your time and energy on something that will be more constructive.
- Whenever possible, focus on the positives. Looking at the good in your life is an important reminder that the current situation is only temporary.
- Use your support system. Friends and family can be great support systems to use when stressed.

# Additional resources

## Tips for self-care

You should also adopt healthy self-care activities during stressful times, such as the recommendations below:

- Avoid drugs and alcohol. They may seem to be a temporary fix to feel better, but in the long run they can create more problems and add to your stress – instead of taking it away.
- Find support. Seek help from a partner, family member, friend, counselor, doctor or clergy person. Having a sympathetic, listening ear and sharing about your problems and stress really can lighten the burden.
- Connect socially. After a stressful event, it is easy to isolate yourself. Make sure that you are spending time with loved ones. Consider planning fun activities with your partner, children or friends.
- Take care of yourself. This can mean eating a healthy, well-balanced diet, exercising regularly, getting quality sleep, or maintaining a normal routine. Or, giving yourself a break if you feel stressed out – for example, treating yourself to a therapeutic massage, a relaxing bath, or quiet walk.
- Stay active. Give yourself a mental break by helping a neighbor, volunteering in the community, or just taking the dog on a long walk. These can be positive ways to channel your energy and feel more positive.

When stressful feelings become chronic, counseling can help. A mental health professional can provide support and guidance to build your emotional resiliency as well as make changes in your life to reduce or eliminate stress. Call your Employee Assistance Program or health insurance provider for assistance in locating a licensed clinician.

## Deep breathing tips

It may sound surprising, but most people do not breathe properly. Natural breathing involves your diaphragm, a large muscle in your abdomen. When you breathe in, your belly should expand. When you breathe out, your belly should fall. Over time, people forget how to breathe this way and instead use their chest and shoulders. This causes short and shallow breaths, which can increase stress and anxiety. Fortunately, it is never too late to "re-learn" how to breathe and help protect yourself from stress. Practice the simple exercise below to improve your breathing.

1. Find a comfortable position either lying on your back or sitting. If you are sitting down, make sure that you keep your back straight and release the tension in your shoulders. Let them drop.
2. Close your eyes.
3. Place one hand on your stomach and the other on your chest.
4. Take a few breaths as you normally would. Does your belly rise and fall with every inbreath and outbreath? If you can answer "yes," that is good. This is the natural way of breathing. If your belly stays still but your chest rises and falls with every breath, practice breathing deeply and slowly by only allowing your belly to rise and fall as you slowly breathe in and out.
5. Continue to take deep breaths, concentrating on only moving your belly.
6. Continue as long as you would like!

Tips:

- It can take some time to re-learn how to breathe. The more you practice, the easier it becomes. Take some time each day to practice this exercise. You can do it anywhere.
- Try to practice this exercise at a time when you are already relaxed. This will make it easier to take deeper breaths.
- If you are having trouble taking deep breaths, try breathing in through your nose and exhaling through your mouth. Also, slowly count to five in your head as you breathe in and out.

For more guidance or information regarding deep breathing, or to learn about other ways of managing stress, contact your Employee Assistance Program.

For further resources, please go to your portal and use the search bar to type in “Stress Management Flash Course” and “When It’s Time to Seek Support Flash Course.”



# Moving ahead



What did you get out of today's presentation?

Which concepts are working in your life and why?

Who can be a support for you to make change?

Which concepts are *not* working in your life and why?

What 3 ideas are going to be the most helpful for you?

How can you support someone else with change?

What can you do in the next 24 hours to apply these concepts?

What are your biggest barriers for change?