



Holy Family

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October Tip of the Month

Stress. It's a word that gets thrown about often. It's something that everyone experiences, but what exactly is it? Stress is simply the body and brain's response to changes that are more challenging than usual. There are even two different kinds of stress: distress and eustress (pronounced you-stress). Distress is usually what people are talking about when they say they are stressed out. Eustress comes from positive events that create more work. Examples of eustress include planning a vacation, accepting a job offer, and starting a new hobby because they all increase the effort--or stress--in day-to-day life.

While stress certainly has a bad reputation, and toxic stressors like abuse, neglect, violence, and poverty are harmful, the reality is that most stress is actually very good. In fact, it makes people stronger. Every time people experience a stressful situation and cope with it successfully, they build the ability to adapt and to be resilient. The reverse is true too. The more people avoid stressors, the more helpless they feel, and the more easily overwhelmed they become. This is the same for children.

So how can stress turn from foe to friend? Look at stress as a motivating force to tackle a task, or as a way to focus energy. The more adults do it, the more the kids around will too. In addition, figuring out what exactly the stress is stemming from and developing solutions to that specific problem can turn stress into a useful drive. For example, if the stress is coming from an upcoming exam, making flashcards and setting aside time to study or practise should replace the stress response with new skills and competence.

For more in-depth information on stress and the great things that can come from it, check out the following link:

<http://teenmentalhealth.org/schoolmhl/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/managing-the-stress-response.pdf>



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