



INDIVIDUAL EXERCISE

Identifying Stressors

STRESS

A reaction to a situation that isn't about the actual situation. We usually feel stressed when we think that the demands of a situation are larger than our resources to deal with that situation.

Source: "Stress", Canadian Mental Health Association, 2018

BURNOUT

A syndrome resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed and is characterized by three dimensions:

1. Feeling of energy depletion or exhaustion
2. Increased mental distance from one's job, or feelings of negativism or cynicism related to one's job
3. Reduced professional efficacy

Source: World Health Organization

COMMON STRESS SYMPTOMS	COMMON BURNOUT SYMPTOMS	THE DIFFERENCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Fatigue » Muscular tension » Headaches » Heart palpitations » Sleeping difficulties » Stomach issues » Skin conditions » Irritability » Feeling anxious » Aggression » Mood swings » Frustration » Impatience » Reduced ability to concentrate » Diminished initiative » Isolation » Pessimism 	<p>Can experience regular stress symptoms paired with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Disengagement » Blunted emotions » Creating unusual errors or higher amount of errors » Unfinished work » Self-doubt » More time working with less accomplished » Developed poor physical health signs and symptoms 	<p>Stressed individuals can still see the light at the end of the tunnel. It might be a stressful project or period, but they feel they have the internal and external resources to make it through.</p> <p>If stressful reactions last for an extended length of time and individuals lack the resources and positive coping skills to recover, they are at a risk for burnout.</p> <p>Burnout can significantly impact health and the ability to function at work and home.</p>

*Continue to page 2 for the "Identifying Stressors" exercise.

IDENTIFYING STRESSORS EXERCISE

Approximate Time Recommended: 1 week

Instructions:

A great first step in managing stress is to recognize what causes stress reactions. The events, interactions, and situations are called **stressors**. Stressors are unique to everyone and can be internal or external. Over the next work week, take time to reflect on your thoughts, feelings, behaviors, and environment to identify your stressors.

List 10 stressors that you recognize over the next week.	What were your thoughts, feelings, behaviors, and reactions that helped you recognize these stressors?
<i>EX: A newer team member consistently needs help with assignments. I'm spending more time helping them allowing less time for me to get my work done.</i>	<i>EX: Frustration, feeling I need to do their work, negative feelings and thoughts toward them. Holding them to the expectations and standards of how I work.</i>

Why is this important?

Awareness allows us to prepare for situations that may cause stress. It helps us recognize the thoughts, reactions and emotions associated with stress. Were any of these stressors external and out of your control? Was your stress internal and coming from your thoughts or perceptions about a situation? Often, stress comes from our perception of a situation. With consistent practice, it is possible to change your perception to help reduce the stress you feel. Start by practicing below.

Pick 3 stressors. Begin to shift your perception by changing your reactions and thoughts about that stressor to be more positive.

Example: *I am not allowing time for the new employee to get used to the job. Maybe this employee wants to ensure that their work is getting done correctly and is more comfortable coming to me vs. our manager. I should reassure them they are doing great, and instead of doing their work, give them good direction to help them do it on their own.*

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.