Life in Balance: Relaxation & Stress Relief
Presented by Military & Family Life Counselors

Objectives
» What is work/life balance?
» Identify your stressors
» Signs and symptoms of stress
» Stress management strategies
» Stress reduction
» Relaxation skills

Is This You?

What is Work/Life Balance?
» Necessary for everyone
» On-going process
» Responding to multiple demands
  – Balancing children’s activities
  – Balancing career and family

Things That Get in the Way

Identify Priorities
» Clarify your values
» Create personal mission
» Establish goals

External Stressors
» Work
» School
» Community

Internal Stressors
» Attitudes
» Beliefs
» Expectations
» Behaviors
Under stress your body may have:
» Increased pupil dilation
» Perspiration
» Increased heart rate and blood pressure
» Rapid breathing
» Muscle tension
» Increased mental alertness/focus
» Decreased/stopped digestion

Symptoms of Stress
» Physical
» Emotional
» Mental
» Behavioral

Unhealthy Stress Management
» Alcohol and/or other drugs
» Food
» Displaced anger/frustration
» Distorted thinking
» Overspending

Healthy Stress Management
» Change your behavior
» Change your lifestyle
» Change your thinking
» Create social support

Change Your Behavior
» Be assertive
» Get organized
» Vent emotionally
» Use humor
» Use diversion and distraction
Change Your Lifestyle

» Healthy diet
» Stop smoking
» Reduce alcohol consumption
» Exercise
» Sleep
» Pursue leisure activities
» Engage in active relaxation
» Other stress reduction techniques

Change Your Thinking

» Cognitive reframing
» Examine your beliefs

Cognitive Reframing

» Re-frame “failures” as new opportunities
» Challenge the “shoulds”
» Avoid “all or nothing” thinking
» Be compassionate with yourself
» Focus on the present
» Embrace optimism

Examine Your Beliefs...
Influencing Reactions to Stress

Creating Social Beliefs

» Identify your social support needs
» Identify helpful/non-helpful behavior
» Communicate your needs

Stress Hardiness

» Having a strong commitment
» Seeking change as a challenge
» Having a sense of control
» Participating in creative activities
» Having a strong support network
The ABC’s of Stress Reduction

A stress reduction action plan includes:

A = Awareness
B = Balance
C = Control

Achieving Balance

» Think Positively
» Work Efficiently

Relaxation

» Relax your “stress triangle”
» Meditate
» Take a deep breath
» Progressive muscle relaxation
» Exercise
» Visualization
» Laughter

Emphasize the FUNdamentals

Life balance is…

…an on-going process,

…not a permanent state

When to Seek Help

» If stress symptoms are interfering with your life and stress reduction methods aren’t working, you may want to seek help from:
  – Military Community Services
  – A Chaplain
  – Behavioral Health Services
Summary

» Recognizing stressors and stress symptoms is a first step in working toward life balance
» It’s important to examine priorities and decide which are most important
» Practicing relaxation and other stress reduction methods can help to change your perspective and achieve a more balanced life
» Seek help if stress symptoms persist

Questions

Resources

» Military Community Services
» Chaplain and Local Clergy
» Military OneSource (800) 342-9647
» TRICARE www.tricare.osd.mil
» Behavioral Health Services

References

» www.parlay.com