Stress Management

Overview
Stress is our body's reaction to pressure or other demands that are placed on us. There are two types of stress: Good Stress (sometimes referred to as "Eustress") and Bad Stress (sometimes referred to as "Distress"). Good stress is the kind of stress that keeps us motivated to work harder. Without good stress, we would not feel motivated to study for a test or go out to lunch with a friend we have not seen in a long time. Bad stress is the kind of stress that causes us to perform poorly at work, school, and at home. There are many factors in our lives that can cause us stress. These factors are called "stressors".

The amount of stress a person will experience is directly related to:

• **The degree to which the stressor is present**
• **How the stressor is perceived**

If we don't take measures to deal with the stressors in our lives, they can impact us in many different ways. Some examples of the physiological and emotional effects of stress are: chronic pain, isolation from friends and family, anxiety, and depression.

Think about how you feel when you are stressed out. Now, think about how those feelings might impact your ability to learn. As students, you need to stay focused on task. You also need to stay healthy so you can attend your classes and stay in school. Researchers believe that students who feel continuously stressed do not learn as efficiently as they would otherwise. For this reason, think about how the stressors in your life may interfere with your ability to learn.
People deal with stress in a number of different ways. Some people take a nap when things get rough, some people self-medicate by taking drugs or alcohol, and some people even take their frustrations out on friends or family members.

It's impossible to avoid stress in our lives completely, but we can find ways to deal with our stressors more appropriately.

The Basics of Stress Control:
1. **Become a time management expert.** Learn how to tell the difference between important obligations and trivial activities. Know how to manage your day so you work to complete the most important tasks first.

2. **Pay attention to your physical health.** Your mind and body work together to ward off stress. In order for your mind to cope effectively with challenges, your body must function at optimal levels. Make time to eat a healthy diet and exercise regularly.

3. **Develop your relaxation skills.** Due to our busy lifestyles, many people have actually lost the ability to relax and set aside the demands of everyday life. Work to create distance from troubling thoughts for at least one hour a day.