Team Awareness Training For Workplace Substance Abuse Prevention

Module 4

Stress, Problem Solving, and Substance Use

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The self-report measure on page 22 was adapted from Lyle H. Miller and Alma Dell Smith at the Biobehavioral Sciences in Brookline, Massachusetts and Stress Directions. For more information visit their website (http://www.stressdirections.com)

The purpose of this 3-year project was to refine, implement, and evaluate a team-based substance abuse prevention program for work settings. The program is designed to increase employee awareness of issues relating to workplace alcohol and other drug use and its consequences. Because these issues and consequences occur within an organizational context, the training addresses specific factors that aggravate employee substance use and prevent effective policy implementation.

OVERVIEW OF THE TCU DRUGS IN THE WORKPLACE PROJECT

The Drugs in the Workplace Project at Texas Christian University has studied the prevalence, antecedents, and consequences of employee substance use for over 12 years. Results have emphasized the importance of work environments, policies, and employee characteristics in understanding the pervasiveness and impacts of substance use in the workplace.

In recognizing the changing social contexts in today's workforce, Principal Investigator Dr. Wayne Lehman and researcher Dr. Joel Bennett spearheaded the development of two prevention programs. This manual contains material from the participatory "team-based" program and emphasizes the impact of substance use problems on all team members in a work group (in terms of lost productivity, having to cover for absent co-workers, and work-place safety). The approach promotes awareness of group dynamics that serve to condone or create tolerance for drinking or drug use in a workgroup. Issues such as stress management, communication, risk identification, and how to gently "nudge" a troubled co-worker to seek professional help are discussed. The second program is an enhanced "informational" training that primarily uses didactic presentations to familiarize employees with their workplace substance abuse policy, the effects of alcohol and various drugs of abuse, and Employee Assistance Programs (EAP).

Both programs have been evaluated in two municipal workforces -- a medium-sized suburban city in which work groups from all city departments (except uniform fire and police) were included, and departments that had previously been identified as "at-risk" for substance abuse problems from a larger urban city.

Work groups were randomly assigned to receive either the team-based or informational training, or were assigned to a no-training control group. Work groups were assessed two weeks before and after the trainings, and again at six months post-training. Overall, employees who attended either of the two training conditions showed improve-

Workplace Training
6-month outcomes

City 1
ALL DEPARTMENTS

City 2
"HIGH RISK" DEPARTMENTS

Group Climate

Stress & Coping

Policy Knowledge

Drinking Norms

EAP

Team oriented (interactional training)

Informational (didactic training)

positive change

more substantial change

The 6 components of Team oriented training are:
1) risk identification   3) stress management   5) communication
2) policy awareness   4) understanding tolerance 6) peer referral skill training

ments in important areas compared to employees in the control condition. **Figure 1** summarizes the results at 6-month follow-up for both cities. Five domains of outcomes were examined, including a supportive group climate, stress and coping, drinking norms, policy knowledge, and information about the EAP. Arrows from the training condition to the outcome domain indicate a positive change. The bold arrows indicate more substantial change.
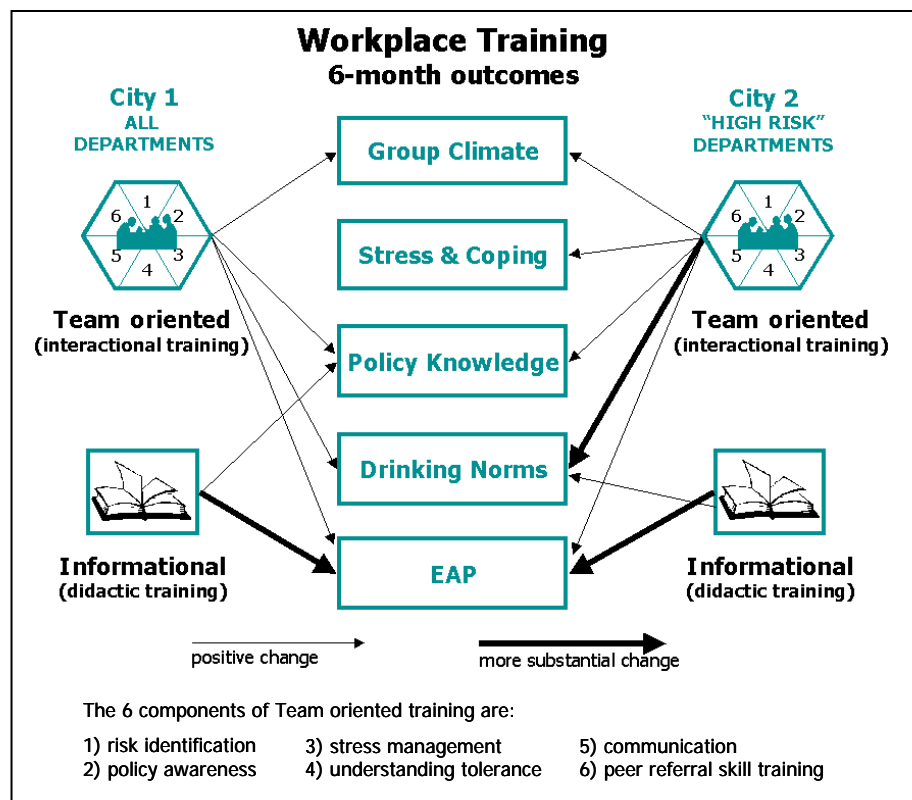
TEAM AWARENESS – TABLE OF CONTENTS TO ALL MODULES

In its original form, the Team Awareness program was delivered as two 4-hour (half-day) sessions, each session delivered a week apart. Session I consisted of Modules 1 and 2. Session II consisted of Modules 3 through 6. We used slightly different steps in different work sites and so the length of the modules here are longer, if facilitators choose to use all the steps provided. These different options and an overview are explained in the manual titled "Introduction and Facilitator Overview." Each module has (1) an accompanying manual in Acrobat/PDF format and, (2) overheads and speaker notes as separate PDF files.

Module	Manual	Overheads/Speaker Notes
Introduction & Facilitator Overview	Teamaware.pdf	None
Session 1		
(1) Relevance to you and your work group: Orientation and Risk Identification	Module1(Relevance).pdf	Module1(Relevance)ho.pdf Module1(Relevance)ho-notes.pdf
(2) Team Ownership of Policy: The Risks & Strengths Game	Module2(Policy).pdf	Module2(Policy-Part1)ho.pdf Module2(Policy-Part1)ho-notes.pdf Module2(Policy-Part2)ho.pdf Module2(Policy-Part2)ho-notes.pdf Module2(gameboard).pdf
Session 2		
(3) Reducing Stigma & Tolerance and Increasing Responsiveness	Module3(Tolerance).pdf	Module3(Tolerance)ho.pdf Module3(Tolerance)ho-notes.pdf
(4) Work Stress, Problem Solving, and Substance Use	Module4(Stress).pdf	Module4(Stress)ho.pdf Module4(Stress)ho-notes.pdf
(5) Improving Workplace Communication	Module5(Communication).pdf	Module5 (Communication)ho.pdf Module5 (Communication)ho-notes.pdf
(6) Encouragement: The NUDGE Model	Module6(NUDGE).pdf	Module6(nudge)ho.pdf Module6(nudge)ho-notes.pdf Module6(casestudies)ho.pdf Module6(casestudies)ho-notes.pdf

Module 4

Work Stress, Problem Solving, and Substance Use
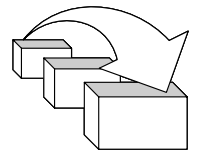
Participants will:

- **Identify the effects of stress and signs of not coping well.**

- **Identify their own personal coping style and whether stress is a risk factor for alcohol or drug use.**

- **Recognize healthy alternatives for dealing with stress.**

Facilitator Overview and Session Outline:

- The following page (Page 2) shows an outline of the different steps in this module.

- As with other modules in this program, we wanted to give different options or different tools for delivering this module.

- Steps 2 and 4 are optional and may depend on whether you have conveyed this information in other modules. For example, Module 1 (Relevance) includes a brief component on stress, entitled "Stress and Blocks to Service" (Step 4 in Module 1, located on page 21 of the Module 1 trainer manual). You may substitute this for Steps 2 and 4 or review here for a more in depth look at stress.

Note. This module was delivered differently in the two experimental trials in two different worksites. Portions of all 4 steps were delivered in Site 1. Only Step 1 and—when time allowed—Step 2 were used in Site 2. This was because Site 2 placed more emphasis on Module 5. See Instructors Manual for full explanation.

Outline

Following an introduction, this "Stress" module has four core steps. You also have four basic **TOOLS [⚒]** to help involve participants.

*We suggest that you begin with **Step 1** (mini-lecture) and use Steps 2, 3, and 4 according to the interest and needs of the group.*

***Step 2** may be especially helpful to workers whose lifestyle or coping habits are causing more stress.*

***Step 3** may be helpful when it is known that workers use alcohol together to cope with stress.*

***Step 4** may be useful when workers' ideas about how to solve problems can be realistically implemented.*

1. Mini-lecture on stress *(Overheads 1 through 10; Handout 1)*

[⚒ Tool 1]

   a. Types of stress at work
      i. Includes "Stress at Work" pamphlet from NIOSH* (National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health)
   b. Signs and Symptoms of failing to deal with stress
      i. Impact on job performance
   c. The "Stress > Evaluate > Cope" cycle
      i. Healthy cycle
      ii. Unhealthy cycle and substance use
   d. Signs of not coping well

2. Self-assessment of personal coping style *(Overhead 11, Handout 2)*

   a. Healthy Life-style
   b. Four Coping Styles
      i. Problem Solving
      ii. Social Support
      iii. Avoidance
      iv. Hardiness (Self-statements)

[⚒ Tool 2]

   c. Administration of assessment
   d. Discussion

3. Stress management and coworker drinking [VIDEO*/DISCUSSION]

[⚒ Tool 3]

   a. Show video of coworkers going out for beers as a way of avoiding doing work
   b. Discussion

4. Group Problem Solving Activity *(Handout 3)*

   a. Group Break-out Activity

[⚒ Tool 4]

      i. Group identifies a problem that requires solution
      ii. Solution generation
      iii. Identify costs and benefits of each solution
      iv. Choose best solution or develop a strategy
   b. Discussion

Module 4

## *Work Stress, Problem Solving, and Substance Use*

- **Identify the effects of stress and signs of not coping well.**

- **Identify personal coping style and whether stress is a risk factor for alcohol or drug use.**

- **Recognize healthy alternatives for dealing with stress.**

Objectives

	Step	Segment Name	Time*
	1	**Mini-lecture on stress**	10 minutes
OPTION	2	**Self-assess Coping Style**	20 minutes
OPTION	3	**Video Segment: Stress Connection**	20 minutes
OPTION	4	**Group Problem Solving Activity**	20 minutes
Module Length			**30 to 70 min.**

Session Structure
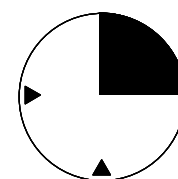
*Note. In the field tests of this module, we used different steps at different times. You may only have enough time for Step 1 and another Step. We recommend using at least 2 steps but you may use all 4 if you have time. (See sidebar on page 2 opposite)

❖ **Materials**

- Flip Chart or chalkboard
- Overhead or LCD projector and screen
- Video Monitor and VCR (for Step 3) ⟶
- Markers or chalk
- Pens or Pencils for participants
- Slides or handout of slides for participants to follow
- A water soluble or erasable pen for overheads
- Handout materials (see below)

❖ **Prepare before class**

- Review all overheads and/or flipchart statements.
- Handouts - Have available or make copies for each participant:

  1. "Stress at Work" pamphlet available in PDF and HTML format from http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/99-101pd.html.

  2. "Stress, Problem Solving, and You" self-assessment booklet. **Note.** You can assemble as a 8.5" x 17" booklet (back-to-back copies) or staple the three pages together.

  3. "Group Problem Solving = Solution Creation"

  4. ◈◈ **Option**: Create a handout from Overhead #10.

  5. ◈◈ **Option**: Create an overhead of handout # 3 for Group Problem Solving Activity (See page 19).

Do self-assessment before class; it is the best way to prepare.

❖ **Slides/Overheads**

All slides and overheads are available on the PDF companion version of this manual, which is "Module4(stress)ho.pdf".

There are a total of 11 slides. This does not include the 4 pages for Stress, Problem Solving, and You (Step 2) and the handout for Group Problem Solving (Step 4).

Step 1

Mini-lecture on stress

Includes the following components:

    a. Types of stress at work
        i. Includes "Stress at Work" pamphlet
    b. Signs and Symptoms of failing to deal with stress
    c. Impact on job performance
    d. The "Stress > Evaluate > Cope" cycle
        i. Healthy cycle
        ii. Unhealthy cycle and substance use
    e. Signs of not coping well

>> Show Overhead 2: Introduce the overall topic and purpose. (You may use your own words, but cover the three main in the overhead).

>>> Explain: "There are many different dimensions and aspects of stress. This brief class will focus on effects of stress, how you respond to stress, and healthy ways of coping. We all face stress, the key is in recognizing it and how we respond to it."

10

> **STRESS and COPING**
>
> **PURPOSE OF MODULE 4**
>
> - **Identify the effects of stress and signs of not coping well.**
> - **Identify their own personal coping style and whether stress is a risk factor for alcohol or drug use.**
> - **Recognize healthy alternatives for dealing with stress.**
>
> 2

Overhead 2
Overall Purpose
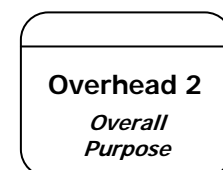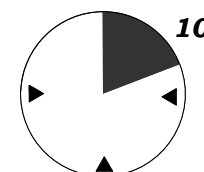
A. Types of stress at work

>> Show Overhead 3: *Point to the left part* of the overhead and explain: Stress can occur with one single stressful event or many events piled on top of each other. We know there are many different ways that the workplace can be stressful. These include the following:

> **Stress**
>
> Single events
> Cumulative or Multiple events
>
> Ambiguity at work
> Work Overload
> Change
> Conflict
>
> The key is in HOW you respond, and the resources you all bring to the problem
>
> - **Life-Style** (e.g., health, support)
> - **Coping Style**
>   - Problem Solving Skills
>   - Social Support
>   - Hardiness
>   - Avoidance
>
> 3

Overhead 3
Stress
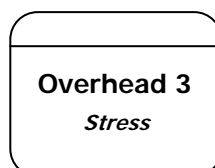
STEP 1 Continued...

- **<u>Ambiguity</u>**: not knowing what is required of you; getting mixed messages
- **<u>Work Overload:</u>** Having too much to do and not enough time to do it.
- **<u>Change:</u>** Having sudden or marked changes in how work is done, turnover, or changes in supervision, administration, and policies.
- **<u>Conflict:</u>** Conflict can cause stress when we don't handle conflict well or resist it.

>> ASK: Is there any other source of stress at work not covered here?

> <u>NOTE</u>. Ask the group to recall Module 1 (Relevance) and the flipchart activity "Stress and Blocks to Service" (Step 4 in Module 1, located on page 21 of the Module 1 trainer manual). The group may have listed other types of stress in the first column of that activity.

Explain:

>> **EXPLAIN:** *Point to the right side of the overhead and explain:* The key is in how you respond and the resources you bring to the problem. For example, what can you do in the face of any of these (ambiguity, overload, change, conflict)?

It is important to recognize that there are always two major factors behind our experience of stress: the **individual** and the **environment or working conditions.** There is increasing recognition that the workplace can put employees at risk for increased stress.

Distribute Handout 1

See NIOSH Website

>>> **Distribute the "Stress at Work" pamphlet,** and add:

"NIOSH (The National Institute of Occupational Safety & Health") suggests that working conditions play a primary role in causing job stress. This booklet makes suggestions for how to change working conditions to be less stressful. Today we will focus on your role in dealing with stress"

Pamphlet available from http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/99-101pd.html.

Tool 1

>> **EXPLAIN:** *Point to the right side of the overhead again* and say: "Two major individual factors that help you to deal with stress are your lifestyle and your coping style"
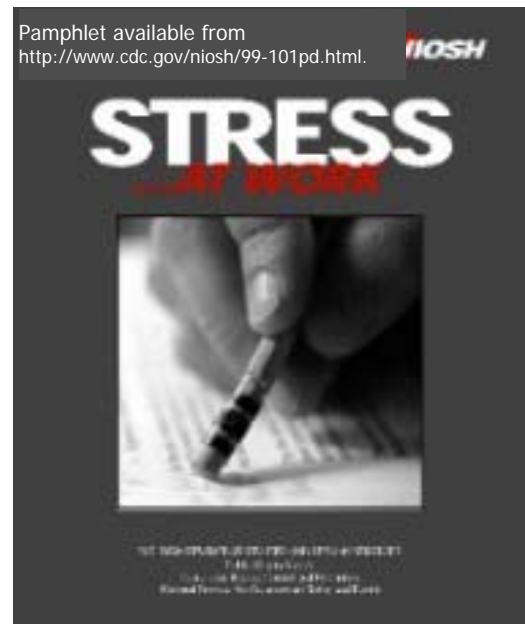
>> **ADD** (*Depending on what you plan to do for the session*): "You will have a chance to assess your own coping style in a few minutes and to take a closer look at the life-style habit of alcohol use as a particular way of coping with stress"

STEP 1 Continued...

B.   Signs and Symptoms of failing to deal with stress
             i.   Impact on job performance

>> Show Overhead 4: If we fail to deal with stress adequately it can hurt performance at work in many different ways. *Point to the circles on the slide:* Every part of our body and mind can be affected. Our **physical** body, our **emotional** state, our thinking (**cognitive** ability), and how we are with others in **social** situations. When these are affected, so is our work. *Point to the bottom of the slide.* We can become less involved in our jobs, more withdrawn, more easily fatigued, less conscientious, and less cooperative.
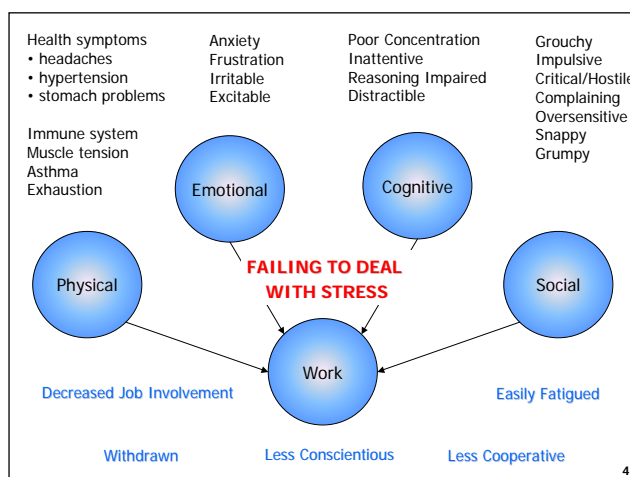
Overhead 4
Stress Signs

C.   The "Stress > Evaluate > Cope" cycle
   **i.   Healthy cycle**
             ii. Unhealthy cycle and substance use

>> Show Overhead 5: One of the best ways to deal with stress is changing how we evaluate the stressful event or situation. Our thinking has a lot to do with it. You have heard some sayings like...

"When all you have is lemons make lemonade" or

"In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity." -- Albert Einsten*, or*

"When I hear somebody sigh, 'Life is hard,' I am always tempted to ask, "compared to what?" -- Sydney Harris
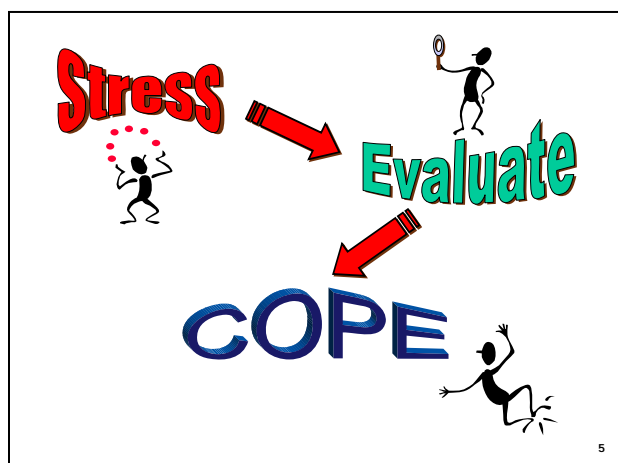
Overhead 5
Stress Cycle

There is a general sequence of (1) **Stressful** event, >>> (2) **Evaluating** the situation, >>> and (3) **Coping** (which depends on how you evaluate the situation).

Overheads 6
to 8
Positive Cycle

Overhead 9

*Negative
Cycle*

STEP 1 Continued…

i.   Healthy cycle
Explain there is a healthy and unhealthy cycle to coping with stress.
>> Show Overheads 6, 7, and 8:

Explain: Let's look at these one at a time.

>> Overhead 6: First, we have stress. Importantly, this stress often and initially produces thoughts, ideas, feelings, internal reactions, body contractions, and a variety of other mental and physical effects.

>> Overhead 7: At the next step, we can STOP, PAUSE, SLOW DOWN, TAKE A BREATH and EVALUATE the situation or **external problem** and our own **internal reactions.**

>> Overhead 8: On the basis of this evaluation, we choose a method or way of coping with the situation. There are many ways of coping. (Refer back to Module 1). **Ask:** What are some healthy ways?

ii.   Unhealthy cycle

>> Overhead 9: The healthy cycle requires that we are aware of the choices we make in our thinking and that we have the intention of coping in healthy ways.

The unhealthy cycle avoids evaluation or confronting the situation. We feel so much tension along with stress that all we want to do is relieve the tension in unhealthy ways. We never deal with the stress itself. Instead of evaluating and taking the time to evaluate we look for instant gratification, which sometimes develops into an addictive habit.
In the unhealthy cycle, we don't have a plan for relief; we can keep setting up crisis after crisis this way.
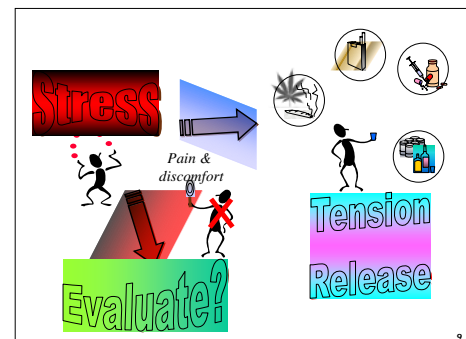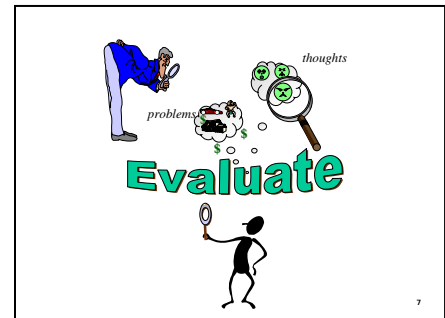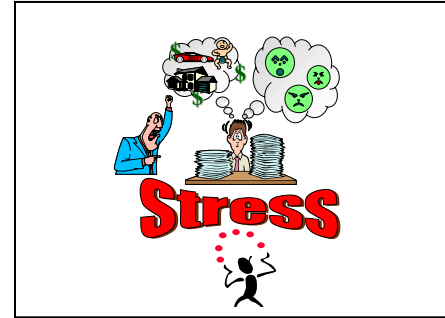
STEP 1 Continued...

>> Review/Compare the Healthy and Unhealthy Coping Cycle:

We are interested in giving you tools to help you improve your **internal evaluation** and **coping skills** and to reduce any addictive tendency you have toward unhealthy coping. We have to make the choice; either we intend healthy coping (as in Overhead 5) or we go back to old and addictive habits (as in Overhead 8). The choice is not always easy, especially if we have a lifetime of an old habit.
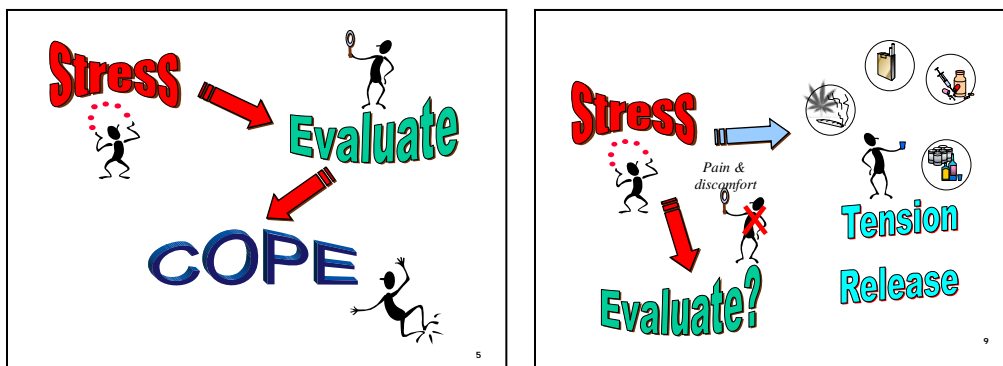
D. Signs of not coping well

>> Ask: So, how do you know whether you are using the unhealthy coping style?

>> Explain: One way to know is if you have compulsive need for something—such as alcohol or drugs—and cannot control this habit. However, some people are either **not aware** or **in denial** about their addiction. Often, the only way to increase awareness is when you can see actual signs of not coping well.

>> Overhead 10: Ask volunteers to read the overhead out loud.

Make sure to indicate that if participants are experiencing but a few of these symptoms, they may want to get help or look into changing their habits or coping styles.

◈◈ **Option**: Make handouts of this slide and suggest that participants leave it up on their refrigerator.

Explain:

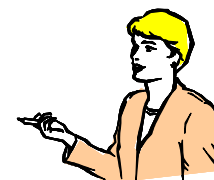Overhead 10
Not Coping Well

Signs of NOT Coping Well

❑ Changes in sleep habits (too much or too little)
❑ Changes in eating habits (losing/gaining weight)
❑ Unable to shake off feeling blue or down in the dumps
❑ Increased use of alcohol or other drugs
❑ Feeling like "It's just not worth it"
❑ Feeling like "everything is hopeless"
❑ Difficulty concentrating; distracted; "in a fog"
❑ Unable to control anger; irritable over "little things"
❑ Crying a lot or "shutting down" your feelings
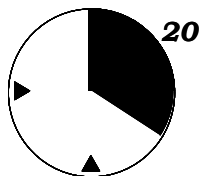❑ Fighting with family, friends, coworkers

How many of the above 10 have you had in past month? 10

Step 2

Self-assessment of personal coping style (optional)

Uses a questionnaire and includes the following components:

a. Healthy Life-style (Stress Buffering Scale—see below)
b. Four Coping Styles (Coping Styles—see next page)
   i. Problem Solving
   ii. Social Support
   iii. Avoidance
   iv. Hardiness (Self-statements)
c. Administration of assessment
d. Discussion

>>> Distribute the "Stress: Problem Solving and You" questionnaire.
>>> Ask participants to complete the two sections of the questionnaire: **(1) STRESS BUFFERING (STRENGTHS) SCALE; and (2) STRESS COPING STYLES SCALE.** Indicate that these booklets are for them to keep, that all information is confidential, and they will not be asked to share this information in front of the group. Give participants 10 minutes to complete.

Distribute Questionnaire Handout 2

Tool 2

Note that the Stress Buffering questionnaire has 13 items that assess habits in 5 areas: physical health, proper rest, avoiding drug use, social support, and mindfulness or spirituality. (see figure to right).

STRESS PROBLEM SOLVING, AND YOU

A self-assessment booklet

_____
This booklet contains some short questionnaires that may help you better understand how you react to and deal with stress in your life.

Explore → Life-style

Stressful Events or Situations → Evaluate Event → Ways of Coping

Explore → Beliefs About Yourself

STRESS BUFFERING (STRENGTHS) SCALE

The following items ask about your life-style or your daily or typical habits regarding health. Please indicate how much each of the statement below are like you.

1. I exercise regularly (at least three times a week).
2. I eat nutritious, balanced meals (high in vegetables, fruits, and grains, low in fat cholesterol)
3. I maintain a proper weight for my height and a | **1-3. Physical Health**
4. I sleep 7 to 8 hours nightly.
5. I get the proper amount of rest and relaxation | **4-5. Proper Rest**
6. I do not smoke cigarettes or use tobacco.
7. I use alcohol in moderation, if at all. | **6-8. Drug Use**
8. I do not use drugs just to get high or feel good about myself
9. I give and receive affection with others. | **9,13. Social Support**
10. I practice some form of intentional relaxation (deep breathing, etc.) on a regular basis. | **10-12. Mindfulness**
11. Spirituality or religious faith is an important part of my life.
12. I know how to recognize when I am getting too stressed by a problem or situat
13. I have friends or family that I feel I can count on in times of need.

What do your scores mean?

Low = 13 - 21	Average = 22 - 39	High = 40 - 52

This scale assesses personal habits and lifestyle conditions towards health and wellness.

High Score indicates that you are using strategies or have life conditions that will protect you from developing health problems if and when situations of stress or problems develop. These strategies and conditions also help prevent stress from developing.

Low Score indicates that there is room for development in terms of developing a healthy life-style. If you scored low please pay attention to any particular item where you rated a "1" or a "2" and see if you can change something about the situation. If not, call on other strengths that you have (ratings of "3" or "4") and coping strategies (see next page).
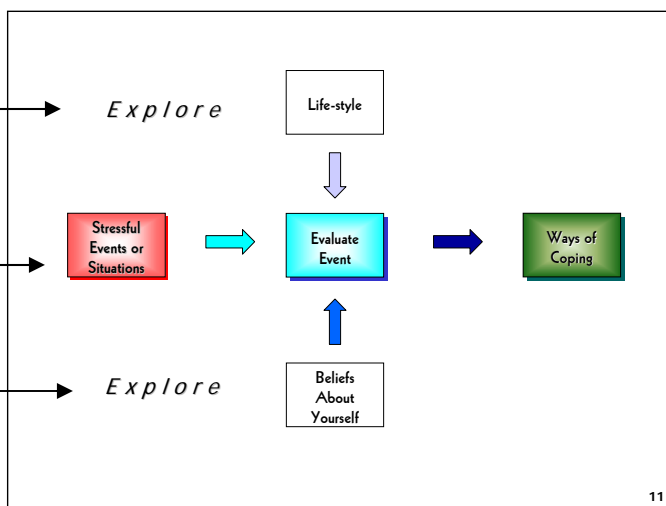
STEP 2 Continued...

>> Overhead 11: After participants have completed the questionnaire, *and tabulated their scores*, put up overhead 11 and **explain**:

"As we discussed earlier, how we evaluate events is an important part of how much stress we feel and how well we cope with stress. This diagram—also on the cover of your questionnaire—shows 3 factors which determine how we evaluate the stressful event:

1. Our Personal **Lifestyle,**

2. The stressful **Event** or **Situation** itself (what happened)

3. **Beliefs** we have about ourselves

Overhead 11
Survey Outline

Diagram labels: Explore — Life-style; Stressful Events or Situations → Evaluate Event → Ways of Coping; Explore — Beliefs About Yourself

>> **Ask:** Which of these three can you do anything about? (Some may answer that only 2 (lifestyle) and 3 (beliefs). But we can also avoid or try to change (1) situations that cause us stress;

>> **Explain:** You have the most direct control over your beliefs and your lifestyle. So let's take a look at each of these.

>> **Review the Lifestyle questionnaire** and ask if the items on the survey could be grouped into different categories. Acknowledge their answers and/or explain that lifestyle covers the following areas or domains of our lives— (*you may write on a flipchart*)

1. Physical health: exercise, diet, nutrition, weight management
2. Proper rest: sufficient sleep, pacing oneself, taking breaks
3. Avoiding drug use: tobacco, alcohol, and drugs
4. Social support: giving/receiving affection, family bonding, friends
5. Mindfulness/Spirituality: time for prayer, self monitoring

>> **Discussion**: You can ask questions to stimulate some discussion:
- *How can lifestyle habits affect how you evaluate?*
- *Of the five areas we just discussed, which do you think is most important? Why?*
- *If you are weak in one area, do you think you can make up for it in another area?*
- *Look at the 13 items, would someone pick one that is a particular strength and tell us what they do and how they practice the habit?*

Do not collect, participants keep their surveys:

STEP 2 Continued...

◈◈ **Option. RELAXATION/DEEP BREATHING.** *A healthy lifestyle and coping technique exercise.* Either the lifestyle questionnaire or the ensuing discussion may lead participants to talk about the importance of rest/relaxation (item 5) or meditation/taking a breath (item 10). You can use this as a springboard for the following 3 minute demonstration.

>> SAY: Before we talk about coping strategies, let me show you a particular coping technique that is really part of a healthy lifestyle. It is a simple relaxation/deep breathing technique.

>> SAY: This technique may be useful to those of you who have a habit or tendency toward smoking, alcohol, or drugs. This can be especially helpful when you feel the tension or desire or need for release or need for instant gratification. Many people have said that deep breathing has helped them to quit smoking. Going back to the earlier lecture (Overhead #9), you can use this to break the unhealthy cycle of stress coping.

>> SAY: Natural breathing is made up of (1) a relaxed and flowing inhalation, (2) a relaxed and flowing exhalation and then (3) an effortless pause before the next inhalation begins. Follow along with me for the following steps. *(Read slowly and in a relaxed but firm tone)*

- *Place* your feet flat on the floor so you feel the weight of your legs and contact with the floor.
- *Allow* your eyes to close for just a minute or two.
- *Inhale slowly* and deeply through your nose, while quietly counting to five. Feel your abdomen or belly gently push outward as you breath in new, refreshing air.
- *Inhale slowly…1…2…3…4….5*
- *Now exhale slowly* and deeply through your mouth, while quietly counting to five. Feel your abdomen or belly gently relax as you breath out.
- *Exhale slowly…1…2…3…4….5*
- *Now take a pause……1…2…3…4….5*
- And *inhale* slowly again
- *Now find your own rhythm.*
- {Maintain quiet for about 30 seconds}
- If any thoughts or feelings distract you, *gently come back* to the breath.
- Breathe as deeply as you can, feeling the abdomen extend and relax, and pause; extend and relax and pause
- {Maintain quiet for about 30 seconds}
- OK… you can open your eyes

>> SAY: This technique can be used anytime and anywhere to help you interrupt habits and start a cycle of healthy coping.
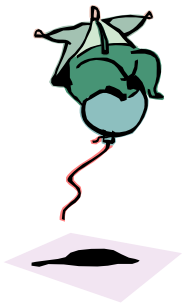
Maintain a relaxed attitude as you guide participants

STEP 2 Continued...

>> **Review the Coping Styles questionnaire** and write on the flipchart *the four coping styles*

- Problem solving
- Seeking social support
- Avoidance
- Hardiness (self-statements)

>> **Ask:** Of these four styles, which do you think is the LEAST effective? (The correct answer is **avoidance;** usually wishing the problem to go away doesn't work).

STRESS COPING STYLES SCALE

Think about how you handle or cope with stressful events or ongoing problems that you encounter. Using the following scale, place the number to the right of each of the statements to indicate how much it is like you.

Very Unlike Me	Unlike Me	Like Me	Very Like Me
1	2	3	4

When encountering stress or problems, I

1. try to solve the problem ……………………………………

2. try to carefully plan a course of action rather than acting on impulse. ……………………………………………

3. brainstorm all possible solutions before deciding what to do

4. confide my fears and worries to a friend or relative.………

5. seek reassurance from those who know best.……………

6. talk to people about the situation because talking about it helps me to feel better…………………………………

7. withdraw from the situation and/or avoid being with ….. people in general. …………………………………………

8. daydream about better times. …………………………

9. watch more television or read more than usual.…………

10. tell myself that I don't have to let the problem over-whelm me and I look for ways to take control of it. ……

11. try to look at the situation as a challenge and seek to meet it as something I can overcome……………………

12. set out to deal with the problem and generally persevere or persist until the problem goes away. ………

Totals

TIP! Become familiar with these scales and identify your own tendencies.

Problem Solving

- Work through
- Plan
- Creative

Social Support

- Talk
- Confide/trust
- Friends/relative

Avoidance

- Withdraw
- Daydream
- Isolate

Hardiness

- Control
- Commitment
- Challenge

Affirm positive qualities, and describe your own successes at coping:

STEP 2 Continued...

>> Ask: Of these four styles, which do you think is the MOST effective? (The correct answer is that, except for avoidance, **they are all effective in their own ways**).

>> Affirm: Tell participants to keep using whatever positive coping strategy is working. They may also look to improve in those areas that they scored lower or only average in (e.g., less than 7).

>> Clarify: Hardiness* refers to a certain resilience or strength in the face of difficulties. Even in the face of all kinds of hardship, some people just "keep going" and thrive. Hardiness has three components that all have to do with our own internal dialogue, self-talk, or things we tell ourselves. In some ways, these three components are about knowing deep inside to not take things personally. The three components are:

- **Control**: Sense of being able to have an effect on things, rather than being at the effect of things; the tendency to believe and act as if one can influence the course of events within.

- **Commitment**: The tendency to involve oneself fully in one's total life space (work, hobbies, home, family, friendships, etc.).

- **Challenge**: The belief that change rather than stability is the normative mode of life; difficulty and obstacles are anticipated as an opportunity for personal growth.

>> Discussion: You can ask questions to stimulate some discussion:
- *How have any of you used these coping skills lately?*
- *What is the difference between healthy coping and avoidance?*
- *Which of these is your favorite?*
- *What are different ways that we get social support?*

For "***Ideas about the survey***" see references

*For readings on Hardiness see:

Kobasa,S.C.(1979) Stressful life events, personality, and health: An inquiry into hardiness. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 37,1-11.

Kobasa, S. C. (1982). The hardy personality: Toward a social psychology of stress and health. In G. S. Sanders & J. Suls (Eds.) Social Psychology of Health and Illness. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Mawinski-Jennings, M., & Staggers, A. (1994). A critical analysis of hardiness. Nursing Research, 43(5), 274-281.

Step 3

Stress Management and Coworker Drinking (optional)

Uses a Video Segment from "The Stress Management Connection"*

> a. Show video of coworkers going out for beers as a way of avoiding doing work
> b. Discussion

Materials Needed: This step requires purchasing the 28 minute video "The Stress Management Connection" from ISA Associates; ISA Associates, a private research firm in Alexandria, VA. The video is available from www.centerforworkforcehealth.com or The ISA Group / 201 North Union Street, Suite 330 / Alexandria, Virginia 22314 / Tel: 703-739-0880 / Fax: 703-739-0462 rcook@isagroup.com.

>>> Cue up and play the video "The Stress Management Connection"**.**

ⓘ **Description of Video.** This 28-minute video profiles individuals who talk about how they manage stress in healthy and unhealthy ways. The video shows three vignettes where individuals use, or think about using, alcohol or drugs as a way of dealing with stress. You have the option of showing the entire video. We recommend the entire first segment (Part 1) for the Team Awareness Training. You can start the tape at the beginning or you can cue it up to the suggested starting point below.

Suggested Segment: "Stress: That's Life". The segment begins about 2:00 to 2:15 minutes from the start of the tape and runs for about 7:30 minutes. This segment describes two office workers who are faced with a deadline to get work done. One of the workers suggests that they take a break before working all night and go "out for a brewskie" (beer). Instead of returning to work, they stay until the bar closes. Negative consequences are depicted "the morning after". Immediately following this the situation is shown again with a positive outcome. Instead of going for a beer, the coworkers take a break to play basketball and then return to work. Positive outcomes are depicted "the morning after."
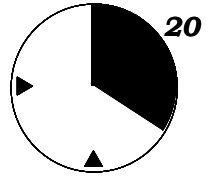
Tool 3

STEP 3 Continued...

Following the two scenarios, this information is displayed as points to remember for managing stress:

1. Having a plan for relief is smart strategy for managing stress.

2. Vigorous exercise and active recreation are helpful.

3. Get a friend to go with you.

4. Avoid quick relief solutions that alcohol and drugs **seem** to offer.

Note. You may prepare a flipchart or overhead with these pointers beforehand and review at the end of the tape.

◆◇ **Option**: Play the end of the Part 1 segment.

>>> Discussion:

There are a number of points for discussion that you may wish to address. Start by asking what participants thought and whether the situations depicted were realistic. Here are some additional questions for discussion:

-   *What were these guys thinking? (Literally, what do participants think was going on in the minds of the coworkers)*
-   *Was peer pressure involved?*
-   *What can happen to your judgment once you start drinking alcohol?*
-   *If you used Step 1, ask "Explain how the unhealthy coping cycle was involved in the first part and...*
-   *Explain how the healthy coping cycle was involved in the second part.*
-   *If you used Step 2, ask "Explain which coping strategy these coworkers used."*
-   *How does this video remind you of ideas we discussed earlier? (remind participants of the notion of "drinking climates"— as discussed in Module 3, Overhead 7, page 14 of the Tolerance module)*

Encourage Engagement & Interaction

◆◇ **Option**: Display Overhead 7 (Drinking Climates) from Module 3 and ask participants how *tolerance* may be a risk factor in the video.

Step 4

Group Problem Solving Activity (optional)

20

Group Problem Solving Activity:

    a.   Group Break-out Activity
         i. Group identifies a problem that requires solution
        ii. Solution generation
      iii. Identify costs and benefits of each solution
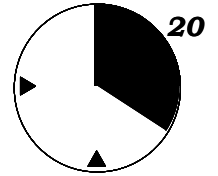   iv. Choose best solution or develop a strategy
    b.   Discussion

>> **Explain:** One way that we also cope with stress—especially at work—is when we put our heads together and try and solve problems with others. Each member of a team or work group has something to contribute to solving a problem. In fact, group problem solving can combine many aspects of the healthy coping cycle and healthy coping strategies.

Prepare for a Group activity; think about who might work well together in this exercise.

>> **Ask (***if completed previous steps)*: How do you think stress management and group problem solving go together?

Possible Answers: (1) Working together is a form of social support; (2) When more people are involved, different perspectives allow you to look at problems from different angles; (3) When you have different angles, you can STOP and get perspective, instead of looking for instant gratification; [4] Problem solving is itself a coping strategy; [5] It is harder to isolate and avoid the problem when others are working together; [6] Group interaction can build a sense of team spirit, team ownership for the problem, and team hardiness.

>> **Introduce Activity:** The next activity is an exercise in group problem solving. In a minute, I would like you to break into groups of 5 to 7. You may want to be in the same group with those you work with. The purpose of this exercise is to learn a specific problem solving technique that can be useful in dealing with stress at work.

Distribute Handout 3

Group Problem Solving

>> **Distribute Handout 3:** Each participant receives Handout 3.

STEP 4 Continued…

>> **Divide Participants into Groups of 5 to 7.**

>> Explain exercise in four steps.

Step 1-Problem Description. This exercise first requires you to share a problem you are facing at work. This will be a concern that most of the people in your group are aware of. A good problem to choose would be causing stress or hurting productivity.

Try to choose a problem that—if workers sat down and talked about it—they may begin to address *at least* part of the problem.

Once you identify a problem, one group member should write it down in the top box of the handout that reads "Description of Problem". Identify now who will write.

Tool 4

Encourage Engagement & Interaction

Group Problem Solving = Solution Creation

Description of Problem

Solution 1/Options — Positives — Negatives

Solution 2/Options — Positives — Negatives

Solution 3/Options — Positives — Negatives

Final Choice

Step 2-Brainstorming solutions. After you identify the problem, have different members give ideas, opinions, and perspectives on possible solutions. **It is important that all ideas are welcome**. **No idea is stupid. Give everyone a chance to speak.** Write ideas in the boxes to the left, which read "Solution 1/Options" etc. Generate at least three solutions. Someone volunteer to facilitate, who will encourage others to talk. Please identify that person now.

Step 3-List positives and negatives. After you identify a solution, talk about and list its benefits and costs or positives and negatives. Have someone write those in the boxes in the right. You can either list the positives and negatives after you have generated three solutions. Someone volunteer to list positives and negatives. Identify that person now.

Step 4-Choose a final action. Take a minute to review all the positives and negatives of each solution and—as a team—decide on either (1) which solution is the best, or (2) whether you can create a solution that combines the positive aspects of all your choices. **Suggestion:** It works best to come up with a final plan that will require some specific action by at least one or two of your group members, who will then be required to communicate the results to the rest of you. So come up with a plan that will require you to actually DO SOMETHING.

STEP 4 Continued...

Note. The group interaction part of this exercise can be delivered as a long (20 minute) or short (10 minute) version. We have used the short version in the interest of saving time to deliver other modules. However, this exercise can be very helpful as a team-building opportunity for groups that do not have time to get together and work on problems. Instructions for timing the short (and long version) follow. Note that some groups will be able to do this without further instruction, while others will require the structure and prodding provided below. Some groups may also solve two different problems in the time given.

- **Overview.** "You will have about 10 minutes (20 minutes) to use the handout and work on the problem. This may or may not be enough time. Do the best you can. I encourage you to take this tool back with you to work and use it when you can. I will pace you along."

- **Step 1 — Problem Description.** "OK. Start working. Take about 2 minutes (5 minutes) to identify a common problem, something you can identify with.

- **Step 2 — Brainstorm.** *After 2 (or 5 minutes)* "OK. Your team should start to identify possible solutions. Remember all ideas are welcome. You have about 4 minutes (8 minutes)"

- **Step 3 — List Positive and Negatives.** *After 4 (or 7 minutes).* "OK. You should have at least two possible solutions. Now list the positives and negatives, if you have not already done so. You have another 2 minute (5 minutes)"

- **Step 4 – Choose a Final Action.** *After 2 (or 4 minutes).* "OK. You should now be ready to look at creating a solution based on the information you generated so far. Remember to create a solution that requires some action. If you have time, assign roles as to who will carry it out, who will communicate it, and time frame. You have another 2 minutes (or 4 minutes)"

- **End of Exercise –** Ask for a volunteer from each group to discuss the problem and solution that the group discussed. This should take about 5 to 10 minutes.

- ◈◈ **Option**: Prepare an Overhead of the ***Group Problem Solving Handout*** and ask for one volunteer to write in the solutions to display for the other participants. Be encouraging and affirming of any steps taken to reach a solution

Ask for applause after each group reviews its solution.

OVERHEADS AND HANDOUTS

There are 11 slides or overheads. All of these are located in the accompanying PDF file, called "**Module4(stress)ho.pdf**". There are three handouts. These first (1) the "Stress at Work" NIOSH pamphlet is available from http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/99-101pd.html. The other 2 follow: (2) Stress, Problem Solving, And You, and (3) Group Problem Solving Handout.

◆ STEP 1: Mini-lecture on Stress	
OVERHEADS	**HANDOUT**
1. TITLE	
2. PURPOSE OF SESSION	1. NIOSH PAMPHLET
3. TYPES OF STRESS/COPING	
4. FAILING TO DEAL W/STRESS	
5. STRESS CYCLE (HEALTHY)	
6. PART 1 (STRESS)	
7. PART 2 (EVALUATE)	
8. PART 3 (COPE)	
9. STRESS CYCLE (UNHEALTHY)	
10. SIGNS OF NOT COPING	#10 MAY BE USED AS HANDOUT

◆ STEP 2: Self-assessment of personal coping style	
OVERHEADS	**HANDOUT**
11. EXPLORE STRESS MODEL	2. STRESS, PROBLEM SOLVING & YOU

◆ STEP 3. Stress management and coworker drinking	
NO OVERHEADS/HANDOUTS	
USE VIDEO	

◆ STEP 4. Group Problem Solving Activity	
NO OVERHEADS	**HANDOUT**
	3. GROUP PROBLEM SOLVING ACTIVITY

STRESS

PROBLEM SOLVING, AND YOU

A self-assessment booklet

This booklet contains some short questionnaires that may help you better understand how you react to and deal with stress in your life.

Life-style

Stressful Events or Situations	→	Evaluate Event	→	Ways of Coping

Beliefs About Yourself

"My efforts make a difference"

"I am committed to dealing with it"

"This problem challenges me to do better"
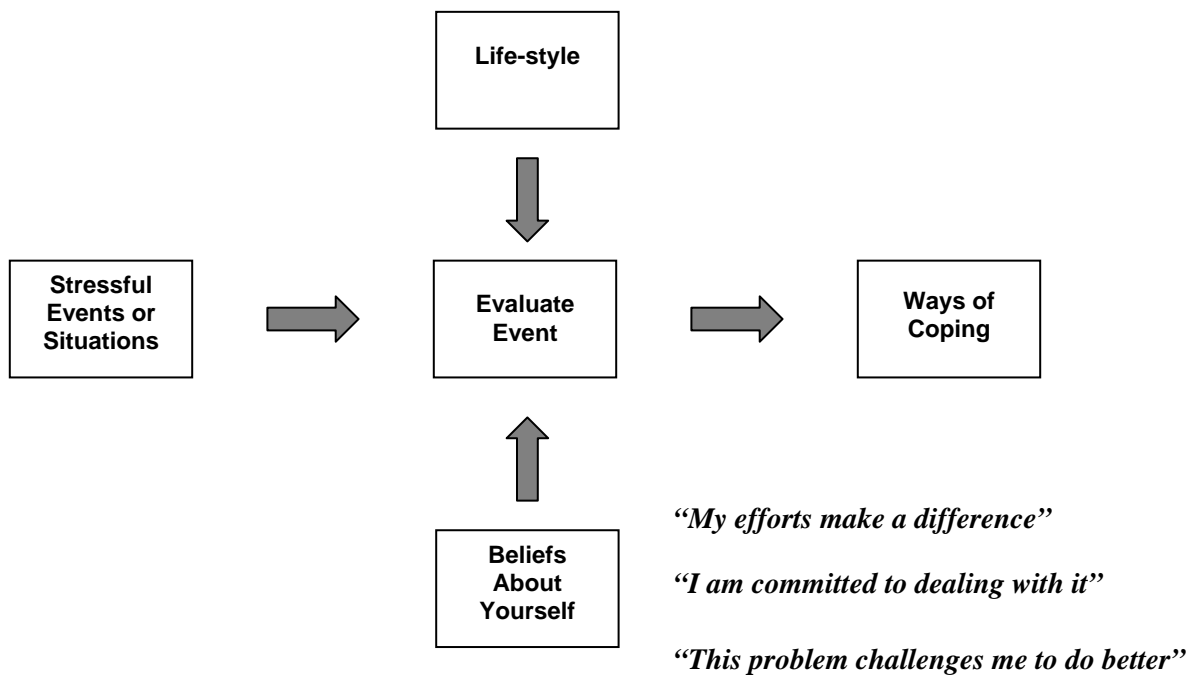
STRESS BUFFERING (STRENGTHS) SCALE

The following items ask about your life-style or your daily or typical habits regarding health. Please indicate how much each of the statements below is like you.

	Very Unlike Me	Unlike Me	Like Me	Very Like Me
1. I exercise regularly (at least three times a week). ..	1	2	3	4
2. I eat nutritious, balanced meals (high in veg-etables, fruits, grains, low in fat and cholesterol)....	1	2	3	4
3. I maintain a proper weight for my height and age.	1	2	3	4
4. I sleep 7 to 8 hours nightly.	1	2	3	4
5. I get the proper amount of rest and relaxation........	1	2	3	4
6. I do not smoke cigarettes or use tobacco................	1	2	3	4
7. I use alcohol in moderation, if at all......................	1	2	3	4
8. I do not use drugs just to get high or feel good about myself.	1	2	3	4
9. I give and receive affection with others.	1	2	3	4
10. I practice some form of intentional relaxation (deep breathing, stretching, meditation, prayer) on a regular basis..	1	2	3	4
11. Spirituality or religious faith is an important part of my life.	1	2	3	4
12. I know how to recognize when I am getting too stressed by a problem or situation.	1	2	3	4
13. I have friends or family that I feel I can count on in times of need.	1	2	3	4

What do your scores mean?

Low = 13 - 21	Average = 22 - 39	High = 40 - 52

This scale assesses personal habits and lifestyle conditions towards health and wellness.

High Score indicates that you are using strategies or have life conditions that will protect you from developing health problems if and when situations of stress or problems develop. These strategies and conditions also help prevent stress from developing.

Low score indicates that there is room for development in terms of developing a healthy life-style. If you scored low please pay attention to any particular item where you rated a "1" or a "2" and see if you can change something about the situation. If not, call on other strengths that you have (ratings of "3" or "4") and coping strategies (see next page).

STRESS COPING STYLES SCALE

Think about how you handle or cope with stressful events or ongoing problems that you encounter. Using the following scale, place the number to the right of each of the statements to indicate how much it is like you.

Very Unlike Me	**Unlike Me**	**Like Me**	**Very Like Me**
1	2	3	4

When encountering stress or problems, I　　　**PS**　**SS**　**AV**　**HS**

1. try to solve the problem... `[PS]`

2. try to carefully plan a course of action rather than
   acting on impulse. .... `[PS]`

3. brainstorm all possible solutions before deciding what to do `[PS]`

4. confide my fears and worries to a friend or relative......... `[SS]`

5. seek reassurance from those who know best. .... `[SS]`

6. talk to people about the situation because talking about
   it helps me to feel better .... `[SS]`

7. withdraw from the situation and/or avoid being with
   people in general. .... `[AV]`

8. daydream about better times... `[AV]`

9. watch more television or read more than usual. .... `[AV]`

10. tell myself that I don't have to let the problem
    overwhelm me and I look for ways to take control of it. `[HS]`

11. try to look at the situation as a challenge and seek to
    meet it as something I can overcome............................... `[HS]`

12. set out to deal with the problem and generally
    persevere or persist until the problem goes away........... `[HS]`

	PS	SS	AV	HS
Totals				

What do your scores mean?

Low = 3 - 5	Average = 6 - 9	High = 10 -12

This scale assesses tendencies to use one of four types of coping styles:

PS = Problem Solving: looking at stress as a problem to be solved, requiring a plan and some goal.

SS = Social Support: dealing with stress by getting support from others, talking it out and expressing feelings

AV = Avoidance: dealing with stress by distracting oneself or isolating oneself form the problem

HS = Hardiness Statements: telling oneself that one can control the problem, is committed to dealing with it, and can see it as a challenge.

Group Problem Solving = Solution Creation

Description of Problem

Solution 1/Options

Positives 👍

Negatives 👎

Solution 2/Options

Positives 👍

Negatives 👎

Solution 3/Options

Positives 👍

Negatives 👎

Final Choice