

АУДИОВАНИЯ

STRESS – ITS CAUSES AND EFFECTS

WHAT is stress? According to one expert, stress may be defined as any physical, chemical, or emotional factor that causes bodily or mental tension. Does this mean that stress is inherently harmful? No. As it has been observed, a mild degree of stress and tension can sometimes be beneficial. Feeling mildly stressed when carrying out a project or assignment often compels us to do a good job and to work energetically. So when is stress a problem? It is only when stress is overwhelming, or poorly managed, that its negative effects appear.

Let us now consider some common sources of stress. A report from the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work stated that workers are often stressed on their jobs because, among other things, there is poor communication between management and employees, management gives workers little say in decisions that affect them, there are conflicts with fellow workers, or there is job insecurity or inadequate pay.

Whatever the reasons, coping with the strains of the workplace may leave working parents with little energy to deal with the demands of their families. And those demands can be enormous. In the United States, for example, during a one-year period, some 50 million people provided care for an ill or elderly family member. Financial problems can also be a potent source of family stress: when you do not have the money to cover all the expenses in the home, it affects your mood.

Single parents likewise face high levels of stress as they try to meet the needs of their families. Getting up early to prepare breakfast, dressing children and dropping them off at school, rushing to be at work on time, and then dealing with the demands of a job may leave a single parent physically and emotionally exhausted. And when a mother's workday is done, another cycle of stress is set in motion as she hurries off to pick up her children from school, fix dinner, and care for household chores.

Many young people also experience high levels of stress. They must deal with the physical and emotional changes of puberty. There are also the pressures of school. The typical school day is **fraught with** problems and pressures creating stress – in studies, sports, in peer relationships and in interchanges with teachers.

In some areas the threat of school violence adds to feelings of anxiety – not to mention the fears many youths now have of terrorist attacks and other disasters. "If parents are constantly talking about how scary the world is right now," writes one teenage girl, "it's going to make us scared."

Parents should be a source of strength for their children. But all too often, efforts by children and teens to communicate intense feelings are minimized, denied, rationalized, or ignored by parents. In some cases parents are immobilized by their own marital tensions. Physical fights and verbal altercations are not the only causes for trauma. Suppressed resentment that transmits itself even when masked by nice words unsettles children as well.

Whether you are young or old or the stress in your life comes from work or school, chronic stress can take a heavy toll on your health. The stress response of the body is somewhat like an airplane readying for take-off. When you feel stress, your heart rate and blood pressure **soar**. Your levels of blood sugar rise. Hormones are released. If stress becomes persistent, all parts of the body's stress apparatus (the brain, heart, lungs, vessels, and muscles) become chronically over- or under-activated. This may produce physical or psychological damage over time.

Of particular concern is the unhealthy way in which many – especially young ones – try to cope with stress. In their desire to escape from pain, some teenagers take routes such as alcohol and drug abuse, truancy, delinquency, sexual promiscuity, aggression and violence, and running away from home – routes that lead them into problems more overwhelming than those they were trying to escape.

Stress is a fact of modern living; it cannot be avoided entirely. You can, however, learn to cope with it. If you are under stress, suffering in silence may only make you feel more pressured. Confide your feelings and worry to some level-headed person who is likely to understand and care. It takes effort to practice healthy communication. But doing so can help you minimize stress.

***fraught with smth** – full of problems, difficulties or things that are confusing*
***soar** – increase quickly*

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Перевірка аудіювання

Task 1.

Mark these sentences True (T) or False (F)

1. Any degree of stress threatens our physical or emotional well-being.
2. Workers can be stressed when their employers do not invite them to discuss important matters.
3. Coming home after the working day does not give parents a break from stress.
4. The single parents who experience more stress at work are better prepared to cope with stress at home.
5. Growing up is a stress factor for young people.

Task 2.

Choose the correct answer A, B or C

6. What statement best expresses the main idea of the text?
A Some people suffer from stress more than others.
B Stress is an inevitable part of our lives.
C Teachers should help children to cope with stress.
7. Stress can be defined as
A Any factor that causes physical or psychological tension.
B A harmful influence of problems at work or school.
C A condition when the body's stress apparatus becomes chronically over-activated.

8. Among the sources of stress at work, the author mentions
- A Too short lunch breaks.
 - B The fear to lose the job.
 - C Irregular payments.
9. The author is worried about the fact that
- A the risk of terrorist attacks has increased over the recent years.
 - B when people feel stress, their heart rate and blood pressure soar.
 - C young people can choose wrong ways to deal with stress.
10. To cope with stress, the author recommends:
- A talking things over with a mature friend.
 - B checking your heart rate and blood pressure.
 - C delinquency, truancy and verbal altercations.