Managing Stress in Graduate School

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What is Stress?

There is no definition of stress that everyone agrees on, what is stressful for one person may be pleasurable or have little effect on others. We all react to stress differently.
Some Current Stressors?

- Doing well in school
- LfA Remote and/or In Person Classes
- Moving to a new City
- Being away from friends and family
- Making friends
- Fears of COVID contagion: How much is too much?
- Black Lives Matter and Racism
- Financial Concerns
- Family Challenges
- Lack of Exercise
- Sleep Deprivation
- Food, Drink /Other Substances
COVID-19 (coronavirus)

6 Tips for Coping with the Stress

It’s normal to feel sad, stressed, confused, scared or angry during a crisis. Talking to people you trust can help. Get in touch with your loved ones and connect with them.

Be aware that not everything being said about COVID-19 is accurate. Go to trusted sources like your state or local health department, the CDC or the World Health Organization.

Limit your stress and fear by reducing how much time you spend watching or reading the news or scrolling through social media, especially when you feel it’s upsetting information.

Do things you’ve done in the past to help manage challenges and stress. Know that you’ve developed skills to manage your emotions and use them during this time, too.

If you’re staying home, stay healthy by eating well, getting plenty of sleep, exercising regularly and having good social contact with loved ones by phone or video chat.

Deal with your emotions in a healthy way. Have a plan ready in case you do start to feel overwhelmed, and don’t hesitate to talk to a counselor or therapist if you need to.

*Created for Mission Health by Jarrard Phillips Cate & Hancock, Inc.
**Adapted from the International Federation of Red Cross; data from the World Health Organization
### Warning Signs for Burnout

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stress</th>
<th>Burnout</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hyper-engagement</td>
<td>Disengagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotions are Overreactive</td>
<td>Emotions are Blunted</td>
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<tr>
<td>Urgency and Hyperactivity</td>
<td>Helplessness and Hopelessness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Loss of Energy</td>
<td>Loss of Motivation, Ideals, and Hope</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anxiety and Anger</td>
<td>Leads to Detachment and Depression</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical Damage</td>
<td>Emotional Damage</td>
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The Impact of Burnout

Physical

Behavioral

Emotional
Feeling fatigued and drained most of the time

Lowered immunity

Frequent headaches, back pain, muscle aches

Changes in sleep habits and appetite

Sense of Failure and Self-Doubt

Feeling helpless, trapped, and defeated

Detachment

Cynicism, negativity, and irritability

Loss of motivation

Decreased satisfaction and accomplishment
Behavioral Problems & Burnout

- Withdrawing from responsibilities and interpersonal relationships
- Isolation
- Procrastination
- Using food, nicotine, alcohol, and prescribed and non-prescribed drugs
- Missing Work
Dealing with Burnout - The “Three R” Approach

- **Recognize** – Watch for the warning signs of burnout
- **Reverse** – Undo the damage by managing stress and seeking support
- **Resilience** – Build your resilience to stress by taking care of your physical and emotional health
Wellness Strategies

- Develop Effective Study and Test taking Skills
- Seeking Solace thru Spiritual and religious practices
- Focus on social justice and mobilization re Black Lives Matter virtual and other protests
- Volunteer
- Meditation and Mindfulness
- Moving toward rather than away or against people
- Friends and Family Support
- Consider Counseling/medication as needed
Wellness Strategies

- Regular cardiovascular exercise
- Mindfulness Eating
- Practicing Sleep Hygiene
- Managing work schedule
- Doing Pleasurable hobbies
• Create and Maintain pre-routines
• Take breaks – even when you think you shouldn’t!
• Stress Management Tools
• Unplug from media and news outlets
• Lean on others and accept support
• Use Apps to stay connected

• Stay connected with loved ones – “Family toolkit” keep small photos, cards, symbols of home
• Hug/Affirmation Jars
• Journal
• Utilize Creative outlets
• Aromatherapy
• Celebrate joyous occasions and successes!

https://www.bucme.org/node/1219
Seeking Balance