

Fact Sheet 3

Stress

This fact sheet provides a definition of stress, the associated symptoms and how counselling can help to manage stress.

What is stress?

Stress is common and is something that is experienced by everyone from time-to-time. In general, stress is experienced when a person has difficulty coping with 'stressors' in life.

Stressors in a person's life can include work, study, relationships, life changes (such as divorce, having children, or retirement), daily tasks, events (such as organising a birthday party), illness, and so on.

Symptoms of stress can significantly interfere with a person's everyday life.

Symptoms can include but are not limited to:

- Feelings of anxiety
- Chest pains
- Upset stomach
- Increased blood pressure
- Sleep problems
- Increase/decrease in appetite
- Difficulty concentrating
- Irritability
- Major health problems, if stress is on-going

How we cope with stress

Stress can also be a positive experience. Some people thrive in stressful situations which assist to motivate them into action. Others, however, experience discomfort and distress because of the stress experienced, and if not managed properly, this can lead to other problems such as anxiety and depression.

Influences affecting one's ability to cope with stress include:

- How the person thinks about the situation. For example, a person may see a situation as a potential threat/problem rather than a challenge that can be resolved.
- A person's capacity to utilise their own coping strategies and resources
- Frequency and severity of current and past stressors
- The level of support a person has (e.g., family, friends, professional, community)
- Personality variables (eg. calm vs. anxious styles of responding)

- Psychological traits, including self esteem and resilience
- Mental health factors, such as anxiety and depression

Managing Stress

There are a number of strategies to assist in managing stress. Some people may find that they require assistance to manage their stress. Life Resolutions psychologists can assist with this.

Through counselling, the psychologist can provide support and develop strategies to manage stress. These may include:

- Understanding what situations trigger stress, and what reactions occur when responding to this stress
- Developing effective strategies to cope and manage the stressful situation and reactions
- Recognising and understanding how to avoid ineffective coping strategies
- Learning techniques to manage associated symptoms. These may include anxiety management techniques, such as breathing exercises, relaxation methods, problem solving approaches, time management, and so on
- Resolving any personal conflicts
- Learning to develop a life balance that includes rest, relaxation and exercise.

About Life Resolutions

Life Resolutions offers a professional psychological service, specialising in providing counselling to individuals, couples, families and organisations seeking assistance with life or work issues.

Our fully registered and highly qualified psychologists will support you in a warm and caring environment to overcome difficulties and barriers that hold you back in life. Counselling will enable you to feel happier and more satisfied in yourself and in your relationships.

Our psychologists are registered with all major private health providers.

For inquiries and bookings, visit the Contact Us page at www.liferesolutions.com.au