



DECREASE STRESS AND FIND Joy

Break through Barriers and Make a Plan to Increase Your Own Personal Joy Factor at Home and at Work Starting *Today*.



Course Objectives:

- Identify several methods to ensure emotional well-being, mental health, and avoid burnout
- Label ways to set boundaries with families that will build the relationship and help them follow the program's rules and regulations

“Busy is a choice. Stress is a choice. Joy is a choice. Choose well.”
-Ann Voskamp



Main Points for Decreasing Stress

- We can increase joy and decrease stress no matter what our situation.
- Caring for and educating young children is difficult work with high emotional labor. You must take care of you!
- Your stressors are not going anywhere. So take steps to reduce the strain you feel starting today.
- There are evidence-based strategies you can use to reduce your negative stress so you thrive *and* survive.
- Humans have a finite amount of time and energy. So, we must use it wisely.
- Our energy is best spent and most effective in the present moment.
- We can intentionally train our brains and modify our thinking to decrease stress and make more time for joy.
- Our brain's default network can lead us astray. You will reduce stress if you
 - Recognize which “mode” of thinking you are in
 - If in the default, evaluate if it is helpful in that moment
 - If it is not helpful, switch the mode to the focused mode
 - Build neural pathways to fortify your focused mode
- When we take steps to improve our relationships, the connections made can help us reduce stress and bring more joy.

You change lives! Highlight and celebrate that each day. Speak to the critical impact you have on children and families. What you do makes difference!

What is Stress?

“Stress is when the demands on your body, or your expectations of those demands, exceed your ability to handle them.” Megan Gunner, U of M



What is stressful about doing this work?

Stress can be good or bad.



Stress is negative when there is an imbalance of demands and resources

Resource: Dr. Amit Sood, The Mayo Guide to Stress-Free Living

Check mark your current stressors

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Financial worries | <input type="radio"/> What parents do or do not do | <input type="radio"/> Conflicts with others |
| <input type="radio"/> Paperwork | <input type="radio"/> Too many boring/mundane tasks to do | <input type="radio"/> Changes that have or will occur |
| <input type="radio"/> Licensing requirements | <input type="radio"/> Driving in traffic | <input type="radio"/> Not having enough time |
| <input type="radio"/> Health and safety | <input type="radio"/> Running late | <input type="radio"/> Too much to do |
| <input type="radio"/> Challenging behaviors | | |

How many were stressors 5 years ago?



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Decrease Negative Stress Starting Today



Accept that your stressors are not likely to change much. Reduce stress *today*. Do not postpone joy!



Intentionally keep demands and resources in balance.



Take time to decompress:

“Almost everything will work again if you unplug it for a few minutes. Including you. -Anne Lamott”



Reflect: What actually helps you calm and relax?



Stress is negative when you feel a lack of control



Focus on what you can control

“If it is out of your hands, it deserves freedom from your mind too.”
-Ivan Nuru”

WHAT DO YOU HAVE CONTROL OVER?

THE OTHER PERSON?



Stress is negative when the experience lacks meaning



Get to know, focus on, and speak to the amazing work you are doing

“You are very powerful, provided you know how powerful you are.”
-Yogi Bhajan”

YOU ARE A BRAIN BUILDER!

Improved Emotional Development

Improved Cognitive Development

Choose Supportive Friends and Partners

Fewer Peer Difficulties

Enhanced Social Skills

More likely to get College Degree



Decrease Negative Stress Starting Today



Your stress level is impacted by:



Genetics and Temperament

I experience stress when:

- I am around people for long periods of time
- I am alone for many hours in a day
- I sit for long periods of time
- There are too few activities in a day
- I experience surprises
- I am being rushed, pushed, or hurried
- I am forced to make quick decisions
- I am given too many directions at once
- Directions given are unclear
- My expectations are not met
- I do too many activities in a day
- I get interrupted several times
- I do not get enough quiet time
- I am told "no"
- Rules are inconsistent or keep changing
- I am not given a choice
- I do not get enough adult contact
- I have a long list of things to do
- I am forced to quit before I am finished
- Those around me experience intense emotions
- I do not get enough down time
- There is a lack of routine
- Things get off schedule
- When I am uncomfortable physically
- There is a change of plans
- Other people get angry or yell



How we think.



Default Mode: "Wandering Mind", internal focus, planning, problem-solving, worrying, evaluating

Focused Mode: *External focus on novel, pleasurable, and meaningful things in the present moment

- You can only be in one mode or the other, never both at the same time.
- When you are thinking in a mode, your brain gives it more energy and grows that pathway.
- It is not situation dependent. You can be in your default *anywhere* and at any time.



Intentionally train your brain to reduce negative thoughts and focus more time on pleasurable and helpful things. Your ability to enjoy the present, will grow, over time.



Relationship quality



"Catch" negative thoughts and reframe

First Thought		New Thought
I did something wrong.	→	That person is asking for help and understanding.
I wish I did not have so much do.	→	I am so thankful I get to work.
This child is so stubborn!	→	
That parent is so rude!	→	



Assume positive intent

***Focus on the reason/s that give them the benefit of the doubt and assume positive intent.**



Give kind attention = Better Relationships



- "Take 10" - Build in a routine of taking time to connect with loved ones when you reunite (let go and just love.) Focus. Appreciate. Breathe. Remind yourself, "For this next 10 minutes, all I need to do is focus on this person, this moment. There is no problem that needs to be solved and no other work that will be done."
- Practice acceptance. Enjoy your family and colleagues. Celebrate what you *do like* about each one.
- Express gratitude (from the heart, be specific, send in multiple ways, do not wait.)



Find Joy Starting Today



Main Points for Finding Joy

- Focus on bringing more joy into your life. You deserve it!
- Your past does not define you.
- The more you “lean into” your unique spark, you will increase your inner contentment.
- Learn to recognize and question your inner critic. Say, “No more!!” to the mean talk. You deserve better.
- You are amazing! Celebrate your strengths. After all, there is only one YOU!
- Give the gift of boundaries to yourself and others. Remember, “Clear is kind.”
- Increase your enjoyment of life by paying attention to what brings you authentic joy.
- Take time to build joyful moments into your life. You are worth it.
- Avoid spending your precious energy on activities that take away from your “joy” time.
- Work to see the positive in your work life. You shape your environment which creates your experience – it starts with *you!*
- Regularly document what you are grateful for. It will shape your heart and mind over time and result in more joy, less stress, and increased positive health outcomes.

“Self-care is never a selfish act—it is simply good stewardship of the only gift I have, the gift I was put on earth to offer to others.” – Parker Palmer



Focus on bringing more **JOY** into your life!

Happiness	V/S	Joy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Neocortex (Thinking brain) •State of mind •Dependent on external circumstances •Conscious thought •Temporary, a place to visit 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Limbic system (Emotional center) •Sustainable inner peace and contentment •Internal, irrespective of outward situation •Subconscious •Long-term, a place to live



Barrier: Our mind

“We are each gifted in a unique and important way. It is our privilege and our adventure to discover our own special light.”
– Mary Dunbar

The Problem:

- We formed our sense of self and beliefs through interaction with others.
- Each of us experienced rejection at some point. The erroneous associations, generalizations or conclusions we then made hinder us from performing as we should.
- Those repeated thoughts formed a pattern that shaped our future thoughts and actions.
- Our actions influenced which results we experienced.



“Lean in” to your unique spark.



Learn to recognize and question your inner critic (which blocks our path to joy).

Activity: Write down your recurrent negative thoughts you send yourself



Say “NO MORE!” to the mean. Recognize chatter and let it pass by.

“You have been criticizing yourself for years, and it hasn't worked. Try approving of yourself and see what happens.” – Louise L. Hay



“Set the table for gratitude, optimism, and joy and welcome *them* to come in and stay for tea.”
– Kaia Roman



Find Joy Starting Today



Celebrate your strengths!

***I have gifts and strengths! They are...**

- | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Patient | <input type="radio"/> Confident | <input type="radio"/> Caring | <input type="radio"/> Genuine | <input type="radio"/> Others? |
| <input type="radio"/> Flexible | <input type="radio"/> Adaptable | <input type="radio"/> Empowering | <input type="radio"/> Self-aware | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> Organized | <input type="radio"/> Problem-Solver | <input type="radio"/> Dedicated | <input type="radio"/> Humble | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> Creative | <input type="radio"/> Enthusiastic | <input type="radio"/> Resourceful | <input type="radio"/> Optimistic | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> Listener | <input type="radio"/> Sense of humor | <input type="radio"/> Empathetic | <input type="radio"/> Peaceful | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> Open-minded | <input type="radio"/> High energy | <input type="radio"/> Consistent | <input type="radio"/> Courage | <input type="radio"/> |



Barrier: Other people



When you are kind to you....Then you can share it with others.



Set boundaries for others

"Love yourself enough to set boundaries. Your time and energy are precious. You get to choose how you use it. You teach people how to treat you by deciding what you will and won't accept." – Anna Taylor

- 1) What are some boundaries you have with parents?
- 2) When have you experienced an issue with others over-stepping boundaries or pushing limits?



3) Ask yourself: Why is this person acting this way?

*Choose which story gives them positive intent (and you less stress).

- 4) Choose an approach
 - o Resist what the other person is suggesting
 - o Go along with it today and set a boundary for future interaction
 - o Negotiate a middle ground

If you are going to resist and stick to your boundary...

- 5) Identify what you need. What are you feeling, thinking, experiencing around this issue?
- 6) What would work for you? Teach others about what you need. What might you say?

“ Clear is Kind
– Brene Brown ”

- 7) Be ready to follow through
 - Attempt to reflect what is going on with the other person
 - Acknowledge the resistance
 - Directly assert what you need

Other Tips

- Make a mantra. "Choose discomfort over resentment."
- Keep a resentment journal. Write down what's going on.
- Rehearse. "I can't take that on." or "My plate is full."
- Focus on what you can control, that is where your power lies

★ **PRACTICE**



What can you do to set boundaries and follow through when you need to?



Find Joy Starting Today



Barrier: Not knowing what will truly increase the joy you experience



Get to your joy boosters!



- Identify where you are on the emotional tone scale and consider what will move you 1-2 notches up.
- Put on your joy goggles to pinpoint what brings joy and do more of that.
- Pay attention to what does not and do less of that.
- Commit to do the things that bring you up the scale.

“When you recover or discover something that nourishes your soul and brings joy, care enough about yourself to make room for it in your life.” -Jean Shinoda Bolen

What will boost your “joy factor”? How can you get one notch up on the emotional-tone scale?



Barrier: No time for joy



Set boundaries for you!

- Compartmentalize, putting areas of your life into “boxes”
- Only open one “box” at a time (focusing on the task at hand)
- Build effective transitions between your work and personal life
 - Close the work box
 - Take a few minutes to “regroup”
 - Build in a “return home” routine
 - Visualize your positive entrance and greeting
 - Create no-multitask zones
- Reduce complaining
- Make space for what you want
- Commit to spread joy at work

What can you do to set helpful boundaries to make room for joy?



Create positive joy-inducing routines

- Make a “box” for joy and *open that box!*
- “Savor” the moment
- Do things that give you a “joyful body”
- Take time to laugh

When will you open your “joy box”?



Practice gratitude (A state of being thankful or grateful)

Why? = *Happier you *Fitter you *Better you

Practice
GRATITUDE

“Gratitude can transform common days into thanksgiving, turn routine jobs into joy, and change ordinary opportunities into blessings.” - Proverb

What are you grateful for at work?

- Children?
- Families?



Increase positive thoughts

- What did you do well today? Celebrate it.
- Ask yourself, “Will it matter 5 years from now?” If the answer is “no”, let it go.
- Avoid negative perspectives
- Spend time with positive thinkers

“Every day may not be good. But, there is something good in every day.”
-Alice Morse Earle

