

CHAPTER 15 – STRESS MANAGEMENT

Knowledge review answers

1. Stress is the pressure we experience in situations that threaten our well being or tax our resources.
2. Environmental stress concerns our every day activities. Examples include: travel, moving house, a new job, moving schools, going on holiday.
3. Chemical and nutritional stress is when the body receives a continued intake of harmful substances (chemicals) and/or deficient quantities of beneficial substances (nutrients from food).
4. Examples of chemical stressors are alcohol, caffeine, nicotine and chemicals like PCBs.
5. PCBs (polychlorinated biphenols) are a group of chemicals that have crept into our food chain with devastating results. They can be described as ‘hormone mimics’ as they disrupt the endocrine system.
6. The four main categories that cause stress are environmental, emotional, chemical and nutritional stress.
7. The four main categories for the symptoms of stress are feelings, thoughts, behaviour and physiological.
8. During the stress response, stress hormones flood the system, the heart pumps faster, muscles tense ready for action and breathing rate increases.
9. Anxiety is the mind’s natural response to an unknown but anticipated danger.
10. Examples of how to reduce stress include: take regular exercise, set realistic goals, eat a balanced diet, take up hobbies, recognize and accept your limits, develop assertive behaviour, avoid unnecessary competition, reinforce positive self-statements, become aware to your own reactions to stress, and practice relaxation techniques.
11. Benefits of exercise include: improved mood, lifted depression, boosted self-esteem, lessened anxiety, it enables us to cope better with stress, encourages sleep and improves immune function.
12. When stress triggers the fight or flight response, breathing becomes quick and shallow, reinforcing the messages of alarm being sent to the brain. If this ‘over breathing’ continues, too much carbon dioxide is removed from the blood, which then loses its proper acidity. This directly affects the nerves and muscles, prompting symptoms such as faintness, palpitations and panic attacks.
13. The difference between relaxation and meditation is that during relaxation the mind can wander but during meditation the mind is focused, either on the breath or on an object.
14. The two main techniques used in meditation are known as the inner and outer focus.
15. Meditation helps to restore balance between the left and the right sides of the brain.
16. The brain emits faster electrical patterns called beta waves when we are awake, active and busy. When we are relaxing, listening to music, or during meditation, the brain emits slower electrical patterns called alpha waves.

17. Visualization is an extremely powerful technique that uses the imagination to create particular states of mind and being.
18. Five examples of the benefits of yoga include: combats stress and fatigue; reduces headaches and migraines; alleviates depression; improves circulatory disorders, asthma and bronchitis, rheumatoid arthritis and digestive disorders; relieves back pain; reduces menstrual problems including PMS; and improves mobility.
19. The relaxation response is a quick and easy exercise and is the physiological opposite of the fight or flight response. It decreases metabolism, heart rate, the rate of breathing, blood flow to the muscles, and blood lactate levels and increases the alpha brain waves.
20. A mental device is equivalent to using a mantra while meditating. It is a single-syllable sound or one word that you repeat silently or in a quiet tone. It helps you to remove yourself from logical thought and distractions. The word 'ONE' is often used in exercises of this kind.