

When Stress is More Than a Season



Rate your stress





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Mental Health in Agriculture





Weathering the S.T.O.R.M



1. S - What is Stress?

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- Stress is a normal response to situational pressures or demands and is part of everyday life.
- Often referred to as “fight, flight, or freeze” stress causes our bodies to release hormones which make our blood pressure, heart rate and blood sugar levels rise.
- Stress is a feeling of emotional and physical tension
- Stress has a beginning, middle and end





Signs and Symptoms

- **Physical** – headaches, chest pain, beating heart, grinding/clenching teeth, fatigue
- **Emotional** - difficulty controlling emotions, increased irritability or angry blow-ups, frustration, depressed, impatient, low self esteem
- **Mental** - change in diet and sleeping habits, substance use increase, lack of concentration, forgetfulness, procrastination, withdrawing from others and activities, trouble adapting to changing situations

My dashboard

By Dr. Georges Sabongui © 2018

Balance is extremely important when dealing with stress. When you look at your internal dashboard, do you see all green lights? Are there any red lights tipping you toward overload and stress? Let's all take care of ourselves so we can continue to do what we enjoy most.

	Green Healthy Optimal	Yellow Reacting Stress	Orange Injured Burnout	Red Illness Depression Mental illness
 Physical	Good sleep Good appetite, want to eat healthy Want to take care of physical health Rarely or never sick	Mild insomnia Tired Attracted to junk food often Unmotivated to exercise Trouble relaxing without a drink	Moderate insomnia Exhausted Binge eating Drinking too much alcohol or using drugs to relax Various aches and pains	Constantly sleeping or periods of no sleep at all Constant aching in body Immune compromised: always sick Trouble getting off the couch or getting out of bed Only moments of relief come from excessive drinking or drugs, or over-the-counter medication
 Mental	Mentally clear Focused Good concentration Creative problem-solving Sees solutions	Easily distracted Excessive worry Procrastination Avoidance Sees obstacles	Chronically preoccupied Inability to concentrate Impaired decision-making Memory loss Constant focus on problems Always negative	Impaired judgment Paralyzed decision-making *Suicidal thoughts or actions <i>*If you're having suicidal thoughts, seek help immediately and call 911.</i>
 Emotional	Motivated Excited Good social network	Irritability Loss of sense of humour Discouraged Impulsive Seeing people is a chore	Anger Anxiety Low mood Overwhelmed Avoiding social situations	Apathy Hopelessness or helplessness Out of control: explosive-implosive, holding it all in Feeling like a burden Isolating yourself from friends, family, and your community
 Strategies	Self care: physical, mental and emotional Serotonin boost Take a work break or vacation	Reaching out to friends and family Doing something to relax Seeing your family doctor	Peer support, assistance programs, mental health first aid	Professional or clinical support: doctor, psychologist

Recognize the Warning Signs

- Intense
- Long lasting
- Negatively affecting responsibilities

2. Take Action



Your Stress is Different Than My Stress



3. Open Communication



Steps to Dealing with Stress Together

- Talking
- Listening
- Supporting



Starting the conversation

- Share the changes you see and ask them (or self):
 - How are you holding up? Is everything okay?
 - Would you like to talk about it? Want to go for a drive or walk?
 - I can tell this is a big deal to you. How can I help?
 - I've been thinking about you a lot. How are you doing?
 - What is on your mind (or worrying you) at the moment?
 - What are you struggling with most at the moment?

Supportive Statements

- I'm happy to listen if you want to talk
- That sounds really difficult
- I'm sorry you're going through this
- You have the right to be upset
- I'm proud of you
- I believe you
- What I admire about you in this moment is...
- How can I help?
- What can I do to support you right now?



Listening with Interest

- Listen with ears, eyes, mind and heart
- Strike a balance between listening, asking questions and sharing experiences
- Be curious
- Rephrase, summarize and ask for clarity
- Don't need to have, know the answers or even give advice
- Help that person feel hope and that they are not alone



Provide Support

- Emotional support
 - Most important support involving empathy, understanding, encouragement and reassurance
- Practical support
 - Advice, problem solving, providing more information, resources
- Check in depending on their preference/method of communication
- Stress rating exercise

4. Relationships

- Repair attempts
 - Express appreciation
 - Apologize
 - Find compromises, agreements
 - Humour
 - Ask for direction
 - Take responsibility
 - Make commitments
- Conflict will happen – dialogue is key
- Build culture of appreciation, respect, shared vision



5. M - Management





“If you want to be successful, it isn’t about how much land you have or the type of equipment you drive. It’s about how we work together and how we take care of each other and ourselves.”



-Garnet Martin (aka – My Dad)

Self Care



YouTube: Paul Rugg's Froynlaven

Fill Up Your Slip Tank

- Preventative, during, after
- Take breaks to recover and recharge
- Physical exercise
- Breathing exercises
- Positive connections
- Laughter and affection
- Creative expression
- Seek professional help if needed



When asked to share advice:

"Always think of one, two,
or three positive things out
of a negative situation and
you will move forward very
fast."

GARNET MARTIN

Image
courtesy of
Patti Durand

Resources

- Do More Ag & AgTalk: domore.ag
- Talk, Ask, Listen workshop: domore.ag/events
- Rural Mental Wellness Toolkit: ruralmentalwellness.com
- Mental Health Line: 988
- Mental Health First Aid: mentalhealthfirstaid.ca
- Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST): livingworks.net
- Online Therapy – Wellbeing Program: Onlinetherapyuser.ca
- Alcoholics Anonymous – aa.org
- Better Help, iBreathe and Calm App

Weather the S.T.O.R.M together

- S – Stress: Learn more about your stress
- T - Take action: Your stress is real and valid, and it may be different than someone else
- O – Open communication: Talk, listen and support each other through stress
- R – Relationships: Process conflict with empathy, curiosity and gentleness and repair attempts
- M – Management: Look for ways to fill up your slip tank



You are always stronger
than you know

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