

Stress Management



A hundred years ago life moved more slowly and was much more predictable. However, over the last century there have been tremendous changes. While most of these changes have been exciting, they have meant increased demands on everybody. As people get busier they also feel more stressed.

What exactly is stress? What does it feel like?

Stress is your body's reaction to any demand upon it, and the greater the demand, the greater the stress. So what can you do to cope?

You can take notice of your body's stress warning system and take action. It's as simple as ABC!

$$A + B = C$$

A is for awareness – knowing what it is that causes you to stress

B is for balance – learning positive ways of balancing the stress in your life, thus enabling you to work *with* stress, rather than letting it over power you.

C is for control

$$\text{Awareness} + \text{Balance} = \text{Control}$$

So if you're aware of the situation that you find stressful and you've the tools for positively handling this stress, then you're on the way to getting control of your stress and your life.

Let's take a closer look:

What are some situations that make you feel stressed?

What are some of the activities you involve yourself in that help you to relax?

How many of these activities include some kind of physical activity?

Think of one new activity that you can do that will help you to relax when you feel stressed. What is it and when will you do it? (Eg Play tennis Tuesday afternoon; go to youth group on Monday)

FACT 1: Experts now believe that the increased flow of blood around the body and to the brain that occurs during physical activity can alleviate feelings of stress and tension.

FACT 2: When you can recognise the situations that cause you stress and then act positively to counteract these feelings, *you* take control of how you feel

