Frontline Wellness Program – The Coping Club - Handout

Topic: Introduction – Stress

The Stress Bucket - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1KYC5SsJjx8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1KYC5SsJjx8)

**Stress**
Stress can be defined as a state of worry or mental tension caused by a difficult situation. Stress is a natural human response that prompts us to address challenges and threats in our lives. Everyone experiences stress to some degree. The way we respond to stress, however, makes a big difference to our overall well-being.

**Coping with stress**
- Deep breathing, mindfulness, grounding
- Positive self-talk, good sleep hygiene
- Setting boundaries, assertiveness, communication
- Prioritizing/Scheduling, work/life balance

**Stress in the workplace**
A stressful work environment can contribute to problems such as headache, stomachache, sleep disturbances, short temper, and difficulty concentrating.

**Common workplace stressors:**
- Low wages
- Excessive workloads
- Few opportunities for growth or advancement
- Work that isn’t engaging or challenging
- Lack of social support
- Not having enough control over job-related decisions
- Conflicting demands or unclear performance expectations

**Coping with stress in the workplace**
- Don’t lead with emotion
  - Normalize, validate the emotion
  - Allow time to collect your thoughts, rather than doing or saying something impulsively
  - Eg. Write a draft email and then leave it until the next day
  - Eg. ask to revisit the discussion at a later date

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**The STOP Skill**
- **S** Stop
- **T** Take a step back
- **O** Observe
- **P** Proceed mindfully

[Image: STOP Skill diagram]
Rediscover joy and meaning in the work that you are doing
Changing your attitude towards your job can help you regain a sense of purpose and control.
- Rediscover your passion – Why did you get into this work in the first place?
  - Look for highlights in your day
  - Savor small successes
  - Think about your strengths
  - Teach or mentor someone else

Set boundaries. AND STICK TO THEM
"I am not going to check my work email/phone after 5pm"
"I am not going to take on any overtime next month"
"I am at capacity"
"If I take on___________, then __________ will have to be put aside. Please let me know what the priority is".

Take time to rest and recharge
Take your daily scheduled breaks, take your lunch break
Use your vacation days
Don't over-commit (eg. accepting overtime)
Create a calming and peaceful space at home
Take a technology break
Nourish your creative side

Stress vs. Anxiety
If you are struggling to cope, or the symptoms of your stress or anxiety won’t go away, it may be time to talk to someone.

Contact Us
Interested in 1:1 counselling? Self-refer at
https://www.waypointcentre.ca/programs_and_services/frontline_wellness_program
To connect with the group facilitators email: frontlinewellness@waypointcentre.ca

Resources and References:
https://psychotherapyacademy.org/section/distress-tolerance-skills/