



NATIONAL REGISTER
OF HEALTH SERVICE PSYCHOLOGISTS

General Stress

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Life Is Stressful!

- **Presentations:** Often complaint is somatic
- Pts report **variety of life problems** when asked
- **When high levels of stress continue over long periods of time**, negative impact on sleep, relationships, mental and physical health

Stress Assessment

- Identify sources of stress—amenable to problem solving, or in the “accept” category
- Assess magnitude of stress (How big of a problem is X, 1 “not a problem”, 10 “a very big problem?”)
- Assess attempts to reduce or resolve stress. Is strategy avoidant or approach-based? Does strategy move the patient forward in life?
- Identify the skill deficits
- Clarify past experience of traumatizing events
- Clarify patient interest in learning new skills
- Identify learning methods most engaging for patient

Stress Interventions

- **Teach to skill deficits** (e.g., relaxation, personal assertion, mindfulness)
 - Refer to PC classes
 - Stress Management Class
 - Mindfulness and Brain Training Class
 - Life Path Class
 - Relaxation Workshop
- **Use handouts or recommend self-help books or apps**
- Assistant with problem **solving identified triggering situation**
- Teach **self-compassion exercises**
- Introduce idea of **positive emotion lifestyle** (ways to create positive emotion spirals throughout the day)

Promote Calm and Ease

- **Among Patients**

- Invite self-referral through **exam room posters** (Want to “*train your brain to be calm in a busy world?*”)
- Provide **patient pamphlets** in waiting areas—1-page guides to peaceful moments, restoring breath, etc.

- **Among Providers**

- Provide brief half-page summaries of the **evidence of brief mindfulness and self-compassion exercises on the brain**
- Offer trainings for the PCMH team informed by ACT (see Life Effectiveness Training, Spirited Primary Care) to enhance resilience to work stress

Family Health Interventions

- **Build skills**—one same-day visit at a time or in a series
- **Couples**—communication, Caring Days, problem-solving
- **Families**—family meetings, family outings, mindful meals
- **Parents**—Positive parenting skills, 1:1, workshops
- **Parents of children with special needs**—ACT, adapted parenting interventions

Family Health Promotion

- Make family health a target by offering **on-going classes that promote family health**
- **Co-teach workshops** with other members of the PCMH team
- Clinic health fair **focus on families**
- **Routine BH involvement with most vulnerable**



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