Understanding Stress

Stress is your body's way of responding to pressures. When your body reacts to stress, your heart races, your muscles tighten and you become pumped up. Putting your body in a constant state of "fight or flight" can leave you feeling burned out. You can only push yourself so hard, for so long.

When managed successfully, stress can help you be your best. But unresolved stress can lead to emotional and physical problems. Take stock: how do you handle your stress?

Stress symptoms are your body's cry for help. Even minor signs of stress are an early warning signal that calls for your attention. Don't ignore them. Left unchecked, they can contribute to problems with your family, health, and job performance.

Stress is caused not only by "bad" events, but "good" events as well. Some examples of happy events that can cause stress are: a wedding, the birth of a child, a promotion, buying a house, public speaking, moving, graduation, and physical exercise. Some examples of 'bad" stress can be the loss of a loved one, financial hardships, divorce, illness/injury, and unemployment.

Everyone copes with stress differently. What works to relieve stress for others may not work for you. Keep trying different methods until you find one that fits your lifestyle. You can't eliminate stress, but you can try to plan your day so that stress doesn't overwhelm you. Identify events that cause you stress, avoid what you can, and use your energy, optimism, and support system to tackle the rest.

Nowadays, with the new coronavirus outbreak, we are all faced with a host of unknown stressors. Some examples may be a shift in family dynamics, spending a longer period of time with one another, navigating a new work-home life balance, focusing on self-care during uncertain times, being sick/quarantined, feelings of hopelessness and anxiety, and feeling out of control. Staying connected is very important. MAP is here to support you. Please reach out to speak to a counselor at 212-701-9620 or email *mapinfo@uft.org*.