Learning to deal with such pressure can stave off serious health problems

M

Fifty-five per cent of senior managers and work stress.

She is clearly not alone.

Studies have shown that chronic stress can significantly affect mental health.

At Tan Tock Seng Hospital, work stress is usually a contributing factor in psychological problems, such as depression or anxiety disorders, said its senior psychologist, Dr Jaswyn Chin.

Commonly reported work problems include being overwhelmed last-minute changes to meetings

A short-term burst of stress, say for three

If you know your job requires you to work during

Being happy at work means not going home

The first step to combating work stress is to practise

The search for meaning

Institute of Mental Health's mood

Ms Chermain Wong, a senior

The second step is to change the way you

What is important is that you believe in

If I do not feel the stress is from, what is important to

For instance, if you have too many responsibilities

Being optimistic helps you to be more

For instance, do not fret about the economy

PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS

Physical stress can make people suffer from

He suffered from frequent headaches and found it

Peer reviewed, says they are under

When you are stressed at work, think about where

So ask yourself this question: Is this your job

I have to stop and think, how do I

The secret to combating stress is to be prepared

The first step to combating work stress is to practise

The second step is to change the way you

You can start by identifying what is important to

PRIORITY AND ORGANISE

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Work-life balance

In both cases the kind of stress that people make

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I am going to do this job for the rest

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Surviving work stress

Joyce Teo

I just have enough time and other job anxieties

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Tips to overcome work stress

MANAGE YOUR WORK
Strategise and prioritise. Be proactive in understanding what your organisation’s priorities are and clarify your performance expectations. Prioritise by focusing on tasks that are important, rather than reacting to what is urgent. For example, set aside time to reply to e-mail messages rather than respond to them as they come in throughout the day.

Draw boundaries. Be realistic about what it takes to complete projects and avoid over-committing yourself by learning to say “no”.

Use resources. Find out what the available resources are and learn to use them effectively. Delegate, ask for advice from supervisors, get support from colleagues and so on.

Avoid perfectionism. Beware of unrelenting standards you may have set for yourself. Give recognition to your efforts and achievements.

MANAGE YOURSELF
Keep a healthy routine. Eat well and ensure that your daily routine allows for sufficient sleep, regular exercise, meaningful interaction with loved ones and time for reflection and spirituality.

Take time to recharge. Take time off from work, work-related activities and thinking about work. Fill your vacation time with activities that are inspiring, enjoyable and rejuvenating. For instance, you can travel, go hiking or engage in meditation, yoga lessons or volunteer activities.

Meaning and significance. Acknowledge what you appreciate about your job, colleagues or work culture. Assess your interests, skills and passions, and reflect on how your work aligns with them.

Recognise when it may be time to move on to an alternative job or position that better matches your strengths and values.

Source: Ms Chermain Wong, senior clinical psychologist at the mood disorders unit at the Institute of Mental Health

Fans on dealing with stress

I used to have a very tough job. I became very moody and would fall sick easily. While I was happy to see my two kids when I came home, I had no energy to play with them.

Their teachers told me they were not coping well in school. My parents kept asking me why they were so weak in their studies.

After years of stressing over all these, I have switched to part-time work so that I have time to supervise their schoolwork. I get less pay but it’s better than getting stressed out and sick easily.

Julia Tan

Before starting work, I will close my eyes, do some deep breathing and listen to about five minutes of soothing music. I tell myself “I am capable”. “Today will be good” and so on.

This routine gives me miraculous strength to get through any difficult day.

Fu Shiyan

Every time I am caught in a stressful situation, I tell myself that I have a lovely daughter to go home to, and to be the daddy she can be proud of when she grows up.

It spurs me to work hard.

Peter Ching

I am a customer service officer. Sometimes, I get scolded by angry customers, but I try to stay cool.

I take a quick break to eat some nuts, which I love, and to talk to my colleagues.

I also take a very deep breath before returning to the counter.

Cass Chew

I am from a religious school and I have to cope with more than 15 subjects at school, which can be stressful. There are lots of things to memorise and tons of homework to be completed on time.

I have learnt to cope by following some tips, for instance, closing my eyes for a few seconds and focusing on my breathing.

Nur Zahidah Zaidi

WINNER
Julia Tan wins a $50 shopping voucher for the best post. The winner should e-mail her full name, username, address, identity card number and contact number to sthealth@sph.com.sg by Wednesday. Specify STMYB Facebook as the subject.

www.facebook.com/STMindYourBody

Fill vacation time with activities that are enjoyable and rejuvenating.

PHOTO: THE NAKA ISLAND