

Targeting Stress Workbook



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TARGETING STRESS WORKBOOK



Introduction

Military life can be rewarding, challenging, exciting, full of adventure, and some may even call it “fun”. However, military service members face some unique stressors, as well as those shared by their civilian counterparts. At times, military life and stress may go together like clouds and rain. However, there are some common sense steps military service members, DOD civilians, retirees, and family members can take to better manage the stress of military life.

This workbook to managing stress in the military is for all those touched by military life--service member, family member, retiree, or civilian employee — to better cope with both those military unique and everyday stressors of life. The workbook contains four, hour-long lessons. It is designed as an action-oriented approach to dealing with stress. As you work through each of these lessons, you will find help in managing your stress--and you may even have some fun along the way!

Organization

The four lessons that make up this workbook are —

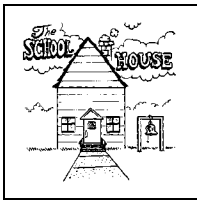
Targeting Stress--An Introduction
Personal Stress Management
Work-Place Stress
Stress on the Home Front

These lessons are followed by Part B which presents the following articles, “The Nutrition and Stress Connection”, “Exercise and Stress”, “Stress Management: A Guide for Senior Leaders”, and “Stress and Combat Performance”.

Each lesson follows the following format —



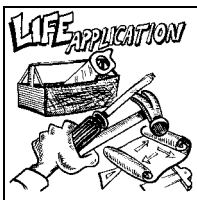
Getting Started. Includes an activity related to each topic to spark interest and highlight the relevance of this material to you. The objective is to recognize stress is a problem that affects each of us at many levels.



School House. Is designed to help you develop an appreciation for the effects of stress in your life by providing background information and looking at the mechanism behind stress. The objective is to learn more about stress and how it affects your life, whether as an individual, at home, or at work.



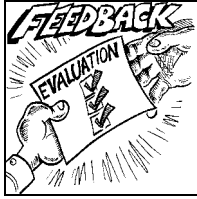
Skill-Building. Presents an opportunity to try out some of the tips on how to manage stress discussed in the School House section. The objective is to help you start to improve your skills in the classroom and troubleshoot problems before heading out into the real world.



Life Application. Seeks to bring the information and skills together into something you can take with you. The objective is to leave this session with a plan of action for coping with stress at home, back at the office, in the motor pool, or out in the field.



Stay Tuned. Highlights the contents of the next lesson on managing stress effectively.



Feedback. Provides an opportunity for you to give your instructor and the writers of this course feedback on how we are doing at helping you manage your stress.

Goals/Objectives

The goal of the *Targeting Stress Workbook* is to help individuals reduce the negative effects of stress. This is accomplished by providing individuals, health promotion instructors, and organizations a series of lessons designed to help individuals manage stress better as a person, a member of a family, and a member of a team at work.

The objectives for this workbook fall into three evaluation areas: process evaluation, impact evaluation, and outcome evaluation (Pelletier, 1995)

1. **Process evaluation** measures the quality of the program and effectiveness of its delivery. It looks at how the program operates and seeks ways of improving the course presentation. Process evaluation has two general elements.
 - a) Participation rates. These are the number of people attending all four lessons. At least 80 percent of those who attend the first class should be there for the final class. Rationale: Some loss in attendance overtime is to be expected. Military life is a very fluid one. Participation rates remain an important indirect measurement of satisfaction with the course. The method of measurement is an attendance roster. A sample form for use in maintaining an attendance roster is included with each lesson.
 - b) Presentation quality. At least 90 percent of participants should rate each lesson good or very good. Participants will complete questionnaires at the end of each lesson to help assess the quality of the presentation, questionnaire materials, and handouts.
2. **Impact evaluation** measures change in behavior or attitudes relevant to the target behavior(s). The following are three impact targets to be reached by the end of this course. All three targets will be evaluated on a questionnaire (*Hitting the Target*) to be given at the end of the four-lesson course. Participants will —
 - a) Show an increased awareness of the role stress plays in their lives.
 - b) Identify five ways to reduce stress in each of these areas: personal, work, and home life.
 - c) Report using at least one new stress reduction technique in each area of their life.

- 3. Outcome evaluation** measures the program's results that translate into benefits for the individual or organization. Assessing these results is often beyond the resources (time and money) and expertise available to Health Promotion Coordinators. Additionally, changes in healthy behaviors may not produce positive results for several years. Examples of outcome measures indicating reductions in stress levels are decreased blood pressure, decreased health care use, reduced divorce rates, decreased absenteeism, and reduced employee turnover. These measurements generally require the use of pre- and post-tests and control groups.

We can look at more subjective measures of outcomes by asking people to rate their current level of stress at the beginning of a course and then to rate their stress level at the end of the course. Even if a control group is used this method is subject to biases from using a self-reporting measure. However, it does provide one measure of outcome. The *Hitting the Target* questionnaire is one tool for evaluating outcome results. The Army's Health Risk Appraisal (HRA), may also be used as a pre- and post-test to assess outcome results.

References

- Pelletier, K. R. (1995). Health promotion in business and industry: An overview and status report. In D. M. DeJoy and M. G. Wilson (Eds.) *Critical Issues in Worksite Health Promotion*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, pp. 19-20.