

Stress: It Can't All be Bad...

Stress is not always a bad thing. Stress is simply the body's response to changes that create taxing demands. There are significant differences between eustress, which is a term for positive stress, and distress, which refers to negative stress.

Eustress, or positive stress:

- Motivates, focuses energy.
- Is short-term.
- Is perceived as within our coping abilities.
- Feels exciting.
- Improves performance.

Distress, or negative stress:

- Causes anxiety or concern.
- Can be short- or long-term.
- Is perceived as outside of our coping abilities.
- Feels unpleasant.
- Decreases performance.
- Can lead to mental and physical problems.

People will have different reactions to particular situations. Therefore, it is difficult to categorize stressors into objective lists of those that cause eustress and those that cause distress. However, by generalizing, we can compile a list of stressors that are typically experienced as negative or positive to most people, most of the time.

Examples of positive personal stressors:

- Receiving a promotion or raise at work.
- Starting a new job.
- Marriage.
- Buying a home.
- Having a child.
- Moving.
- Taking a vacation.
- Holiday seasons.
- Retiring.
- Taking classes or learning a new hobby.

Examples of negative personal stressors:

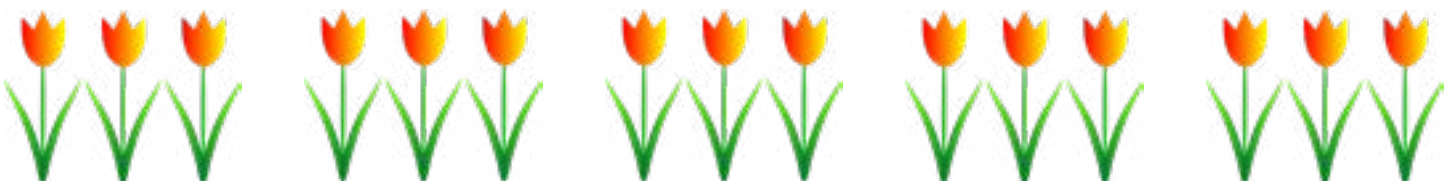
- The death of a spouse or family member.
- Losing contact with loved ones.
- Hospitalization (oneself or a family member).
- Injury or illness (oneself or a family member).
- Being abused or neglected.
- Separation or divorce.
- Conflict in interpersonal relationships.
- Unemployment.
- Sleep problems.
- Children's problems at school.

Stressors are not always limited to situations where some external situation is creating a problem. Internal events, such as feelings, thoughts, and habitual behaviors can also cause negative stress.

Common internally caused sources of distress include: fears (flying, heights, public speaking, etc.), worrying about future events (waiting for medical test results, job restructuring, etc.), and unrealistic, perfectionist, expectations.

Habitual patterns, such as over-scheduling, failing to be assertive, and procrastination can also lead do distress.

Source: mentalhelp.net



Family-Friendly Recipe

Bok Choy Soup with Garlic and Ginger



From pickledplum.com

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon peanut oil or vegetable oil
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 shallots, finely chopped
- 4 cups low sodium vegetable broth (or chicken broth)
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1 thumb sized piece of ginger, peeled and chopped into very thin strips
- 2 dried shiitake mushrooms
- 2 baby bok choy, chopped into bite-sized pieces
- 4 ounces dried rice noodles
- sambal oelek or other chili paste (to taste)

Directions

1. In a large pot over medium heat, add oil, garlic, and shallots. Cook for 3-4 minutes, until onions are translucent and garlic is fragrant.
2. Add broth, soy sauce, ginger, and shiitake mushrooms and bring to a boil. Lower heat to low, cover and simmer for 20 minutes.
3. Add bok choy and cook for 5 minutes, until tender. Turn the heat to very low and cover.
4. Meanwhile, bring another pot of water to boil and turn the heat off. Add rice noodles, cover and let sit for a few minutes until they have softened. There should be instructions on the package – the average soaking time is around 6-7 minutes.
5. Drain and divide noodles among two bowls.
6. Add broth and baby bok choy to the noodles and top with a little sambal oelek (about 1/4-1/2 teaspoon – a little goes a long way, it's very hot!)
7. Serve.

Watch and Learn

Effects of stress on your body

Stress can initially be a positive form of motivation, but when you experience high levels of stress for a prolonged period they can have a negative effect. Here is a video that explains how stress can negatively impact your body.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v-t1Z5-oPtU>



Here is another short video that can explain how to change our perspective on stress and actually make it your friend! Maybe the reason we are so stressed is because of how we have learned to look at stress?

https://www.ted.com/talks/kelly_mcgonigal_how_to_make_stress_your_friend#t-30296

“Once you appreciate that going through stress makes you better at it, it can be easier to face each new challenge.”

-Kelly McGonigal

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