

Health Bytes

Looking after you...Keeping you informed...Keeping you up-to-date

Be happy @ work



Stress: How do you cope?

Profmed did a **Stress survey** in 2017 on nearly 3000 members. Most of these members work in the medical industry and are in the age group 35 to 44. In a statement issued after the study results were published, Profmed CEO Graham Anderson urged members to **find effective ways to manage stress** to improve quality of life and to prevent falling ill to stress-related illnesses.

- It was no surprise that **work and financial matters are the biggest contributors to stress**.
- Of the respondents 63.11% claimed stress has both an **emotional and physical impact** on them
- About 21.44% of respondents coped with stress by taking time off from work or **going on holiday**.
- According to the study about 10.09% of respondents have **taken time off from work due to stress-related illnesses** over the past six months.
- It is also mentioned that there is an increase in the number of professionals that felt they are **not managing their stress effectively**.
- **Exercise** was the most common method of dealing with stress. It improves your physical health, your mental health and your quality of sleep, thus impacting your general wellbeing and health.



Biggest contributors to stress for professional South Africans



Stress Relieving Tips

Take Time Out

When something upsetting happens, **don't react immediately**. Remove yourself from the situation and find a quiet place to reflect and calm down.

Distract yourself

When it is impossible to leave the environment, **try to remain calm** by focusing your attention on actions such as your breathing, scribbling on a piece of paper, or start counting backwards from 100. Calming self-talk also helps a lot. Keep a stress ball close.

Address the root cause

It is important to address the cause of the emotional stress and to be **assertive and vocal about exactly what is bothering you**. While crying or yelling can be embarrassing, it can be cleansing to the soul, relieving some of your stress during a difficult moment. Repressing your frustration and other emotions may lead to **serious health conditions** (e.g. hypertension), and severe stress and may eventually erupt in something worse than crying.

Follow these three steps:

- ▶ **When you are calm**, state what is making you uncomfortable or angry.

► **Express your needs** and try to focus on how you would like to be treated.

► **Conveying empathy** is vital. Put yourself in the other person's shoes and express empathy, keeping the lines of communication open.

Difficult colleague?

Try to remain calm when you are confronted with aggression from a colleague. **Reacting in anger will only fuel the conflict**. Instead, stop the conversation by saying something like, "I've heard what you said, now I need to think about it."

Eliminate the trigger

Identify and try to **avoid any triggers**, such as a person or a specific event that usually prompts an emotional response.

Don't bad-mouth others

Never blame others for your own overreaction. It is disempowering.



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Have fun and enjoy your job



Choose to be happy

Many will argue but **happiness is a choice**. Your choices at work largely define your experience. You can choose to be happy at work. **Think positively** and contemplate on the aspects of your work that you like.



Do something you like every day

You may love or hate your current job. Take a **fresh look at your skills and interests** and identify the things you enjoy doing every day. Do something you love to do every day and you might find that your job is not so bad.



Take Charge of your own professional and personal development

You are the best person to take charge of your own growth and professional development. Enlist the help of your supervisor to guide you. **Have short term and long term goals for you career**.



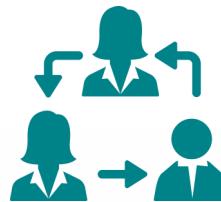
Avoid negativity

If you choose to be happy at work., it will mean **avoiding negative conversations**, gossip, and unhappy people as much as possible.



Make friends

Take time to **know your co-workers** and supervisor. You might actually like them and enjoy working with them. This network will then provide support, resources, sharing and caring.



Be informed

Avoid being ill– or not informed about what is happening at work. Request weekly meetings with your supervisor to gain this knowledge, or **develop an information network** to inform colleagues and assist your supervisor with feedback sessions.



Make commitments you can keep

The **inability to deliver on time** is a big contributor to work stress and unhappiness. Divide a project into smaller tasks and do not volunteer if you will not be able to deliver on time. If the workload is more than you can handle or have time for, ask for help.



Frequent feedback

Ask for feedback after a project or a piece of work has been completed. Use this feedback to assist you in your own growth and development.



Practice professional courage

Use conflict to your advantage. **Conflict** can also help you accomplish your work mission and your personal vision.



Re-evaluate your career

If all the above advice aren't making you happy at work, it's time to **re-evaluate** your employer, your job, or your entire career. **A change might be as good as a holiday!**

References

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