

TIPS FOR HEALTHY STRESS MANAGEMENT

- 1. Practice Relaxation** – Relaxation is the body’s natural antidote to stress. Simple breathing exercises, meditation, yoga, taking a bath, reading or playing with a pet are all simple ways to relax.
- 2. Exercise** – The experts all agree that getting regular exercise help people manage stress. There is a variety of fun and easy to do exercises- so explore a few until you find one YOU enjoy. Jogging, walking, swimming, bike riding or even physical activities (yes, including housework) can help relax you. Keep in mind that compulsive exercise can contribute to stress, so exercise in moderation.
- 3. Eat Right** – Eat a balanced diet and limit junk food. If you give your body the right fuel, then it will handle stress better.
- 4. Practice Time Management** – Avoid over scheduling and allocate enough time to get things done. If you are pinched for time, prioritize your responsibilities and consider cutting out an activity or two.
- 5. Say No** – Take a moment to consider your decisions carefully so that you are not pressured into situations that you find stressful. In other words, if you are afraid of heights, do not agree to climb Mount Everest for charity!!
- 6. Positive Thinking** – Your outlook, attitude and thoughts influence the way you see and handle things. A healthy dose of realism and optimism can help you make the best of stressful circumstances.
- 7. Sleep** - a good night sleep helps keep both body and mind in top shape making you better equipped to deal with negative stressors.
- 8. Set Realistic Expectations** – Remember, no one is perfect! Do your best and your efforts will be recognized. Set realistic expectations for others as well, seeking perfection can increase stress levels.
- 9. Identify Personal Coping Skills** – Jot down or make a mental note of the activities or coping mechanism that suit your personality and temperament. You can quickly assuage instances of stress by referring to this list.
- 10. Retreat** – Remove yourself from the stressful situation if you can, even if only for a moment - and breathe!!

About Liberation Programs, Inc.

Liberation Programs, Inc. provides a variety of service options to help youth, adults and families be free of the disease of addiction in order to restore their lives. The agency has sites in Darien, Greenwich, Stamford, and Bridgeport that serve over 1,200 people every day. Last year, the agency served 2,882 unduplicated persons. Services include residential and outpatient treatment programs as well as preventative education and outreach in the community.

About Family & Youth Options

Youth are most impressionable during teen and pre-teen development. That is why Liberation Programs established an innovative three-pronged support system that educates youth and adults about the realities of drugs and alcohol. Peer-to-peer counseling, family therapy, and on-site intervention are some of our core services provided by Family & Youth Options. Prevention education is administered through schools, community forums and is also available to those who work closely with adolescents.

To access treatment services call 203.851.2077

About the Presenter: Barry Halpin

Barry has been the Family & Youth Options (FYO) Prevention Specialist for Liberation Programs Inc. for over 20 years. Barry conducts hundreds of presentations in middle schools, high schools and for community groups throughout Fairfield County each year. Barry has appeared on Lifetime Television, CNN, PBS, WTNH-Channel 8, WPIX-Channel 11 and Cablevision News 12. An avid writer, he has written screenplays for Warner Bros. and Abba Productions as well as plays, magazine and newspaper articles and comedy material for several well-known comics. He currently writes the *Musings and Observations* column for the Darien News. Barry directs the Peer Players, an adolescent improvisational theater group and brings students on tours to Liberation Program's residential facilities. To find out more about these activities, call Barry at 203.451.3615 or email him at barry.halpin@liberationprograms.org.