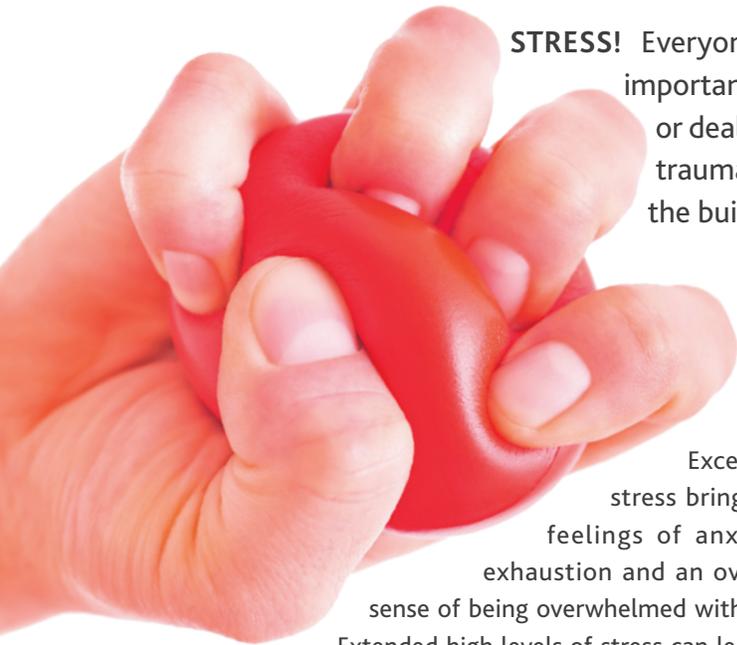


Bring on the **GOOD** STRESS!



STRESS! Everyone experiences it; getting children out the door, meeting important deadlines at work, looking for money for house reno's, or dealing with changes in life situations. Stress can occur after a traumatic event such as a physical injury or concussion, or from the build-up of "little things" in life that have snuck up on you.

When you view stress as "the enemy", the bad effects of stress can take over your life and wear you down. It is not the stress; it is how you manage it that counts.

Excessive stress brings on feelings of anxiety, exhaustion and an overall sense of being overwhelmed with life.

Extended high levels of stress can lead to serious physical, emotional and mental issues. It can affect our ability to participate in work, family life and our communities. That's the bad news.

The good news is that stress is NOT inherently "bad" or "the enemy"¹. Having stress means that we are alive! The "stress response" provides us with the tools we need to tackle stress. When we experience stress, our blood pressure rises, we can become sweaty and our breathing increases. These physiological changes may actually be your body readying itself for the challenge presented. An increase in breathing and blood pressure results in you receiving an increased amount of oxygen to the brain, providing more focus, and preparing you for action. Additionally, when we are stressed, our brains release a neuro-hormone called oxytocin; also known as the "love or cuddle hormone". Oxytocin prompts us to seek out the support we need to deal with the stress. It also is a natural anti-inflammatory, helping heart cells regenerate and heal, and assists blood vessels to remain relaxed.

Manage your stress with the 4 P's: Prioritize, Plan, Pace, and Position

By doing this you can manage your energy levels, replenish and maintain energy levels, and avoid energy drainers.

- **PRIORITIZE** – Decide what is a priority for YOU! Say no to things that are not a priority or may actually drain your energy. (i.e. long periods of sitting, lack of sleep, poor nutrition, dehydration, poor posture, loneliness, depression, worrying, procrastinating, some social relationships, focusing on things that can't be changed).
- **PLAN** – Make long-term and short-term plans. Make lists. Use a calendar. Schedule in time to maintain and re-fill your energy reserves.
- **PACE** – Handle important work when you are most alert. Make space for creativity. Take short breaks before becoming exhausted.
- **POSITION** – Maintain good posture. Find ways to break up sitting and screen time. Keep your workspaces clear of clutter.

Bring on the GOOD STRESS! *(continued)*



Stress does not have to take over your life! By changing your perspective on how stress affects you and by incorporating meaningful activities into your daily routines you can bring your life back into balance!

If you or your clients are having difficulty with prioritizing, planning, pacing, or positioning, we can help.

The therapists at Block Building Therapies can work with you and your clients to help bring balance back into life.

Here's what the staff at Block Building Therapies like to do to manage their stress:



Nicole Beauchesne (OT): loves music and is known to listen to acoustic music which has a calming effect on her spirit!



Alison Keith (OT): participates in yoga or watches America's funniest home videos.



Ashlyn Bohonos (OT): likes to get together with friends for snacks, good company and talk through life's ups and downs, a great way to help her clear her head, de-stress, relax and refuel!



Stephanie Lacasse (OT): takes the dog for a walk and blasts great music in her earbuds!



Susanne Boyd (PT): uses mindfulness techniques like being fully present in the moment, reading, running or taking a moment to breathe deeply.



April Mickelson (OT): journaling and making lists before going to bed allows her to turn off her "working brain" and relax. Singing, dancing and swimming are also great ways to de-stress!



Gloria Dueck (OT): needs to get outside and do something physical like walking, skiing, skating, gardening, and biking.



Cristabel Nett (PT): does yoga, gym workouts, walking, dancing or Zumba. Writing lists or journaling help leave the "to do" aside in order to rest and re-create.



Luke Francis (OT): always remembers about the 'Life' side of the Work-Life balance.



Joanne van Munster (Office Manager): talks herself through stress by deep breathing and positive thinking. Watching a comedy also helps - laughter is the best medicine!