



BHS A.S.S.I.S.T. Spotlight

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Your EAP is a free and confidential service, which provides assessment and short-term counseling for a variety of mental health, substance abuse and work/life related issues. To learn more about your available benefits, contact your BHS Care Coordinator at 800.245.1150.



Using Stress to
Your Advantage

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Tips to Manage
Workplace Anxiety

[Click to Read Article](#) ▶



Spring Cleaning:
De-Clutter Your Life

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Healthy Recipe:
Spinach-Strawberry Salad
with Feta & Walnuts

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Using Stress to Your Advantage

Stress is a constant in many of our lives. It can be expressed physically—"why have I been getting all these headaches?"—or emotionally—"why do I keep snapping at my kids?" Sometimes we don't even realize it may be stress, so we exaggerate our symptoms and think we're bad parents, have anger problems, or need to take pain relievers around the clock. This type of stress can wreak havoc on our nervous systems and lower the function of our immune systems as well.

Stress is a negative experience most of the time, and its fallout can be damaging to ourselves and the people around us.

But what about when stress is helpful?

There is a "good" kind of stress called eustress that is directly related to how you perceive the stressors in your life. If your boss has been hard on your performance at work lately, perceiving it as a positive challenge to improve yourself rather than a personal attack is a good way to use the stressor (criticism from your boss) in a positive way, benefiting your personal growth.

Stress, when managed appropriately, can be an excellent motivator to make us healthier people, both mentally and physically.

Eustress is what motivates you to fulfill your dreams and pursue your goals. Eustress is the discomfort you feel when you know you want to achieve more in life, like own your own home, try for a promotion, or join a gym. Eustress is what challenges you to be better, to improve your life, and to keep working toward the things you want.

Eustress pushes you out of your comfort zone and into a place of self-improvement and growth.

Approaching stressful situations as challenges can help improve your resiliency and increase your ability to rise to the occasion. Try to find motivation and encouragement when a challenge comes your way, and view it as an opportunity for growth instead of a roadblock.

"A ship in harbor is safe, but that is not what ships are built for." John A Shedd

If you are dealing with negative stress and could benefit from speaking with a professional, your EAP can help. Contact your BHS Care Coordinator at 800-245-1150 to discuss your benefits and schedule an appointment with a professional.



Managing Anxiety in the Workplace

Plenty of working Americans experience anxiety every day at work. This can interfere with your work life considerably, impacting your performance, relationships with others, quality of work, attendance, and morale.

The causes are different for each person, but the symptoms are often similar and include:

- ▶ Excessive worry
- ▶ Difficulty concentrating
- ▶ Irritability
- ▶ Fatigue
- ▶ Trouble falling or staying asleep
- ▶ Panic attacks
- ▶ Irrational fears
- ▶ Nausea
- ▶ Inability to eat
- ▶ Avoiding social situations

It's clear why these symptoms can impact you profoundly at work, and it's hard to know how to handle this topic with your colleagues.

Should you tell your supervisor?

Only you know the relationship you have with your supervisor. If you are able to accomplish your tasks and do not feel that your symptoms are interfering with your performance, perhaps

you are managing your anxiety well. If your performance is suffering or you are overly concerned about daily events and circumstances, speaking with your supervisor may provide mutual understanding as to why you are struggling. Your supervisor may be able to assist you with your workload or team up to better manage your work stress. If your work performance is suffering from your anxiety, speaking with a professional may be the best option.

What can be done?

- ▶ Eat a healthy diet. Feeling better physically can make a huge impact.
- ▶ Set small goals that allow you to slowly become more comfortable in anxiety-provoking situations.
- ▶ Ensure you're getting adequate sleep.
- ▶ Exercise. The endorphins released when you exercise can improve your mood as well as your ability to remain calm.
- ▶ Try mindfulness meditation. You can find guided meditations on YouTube or in different apps if you're not sure where to start.
- ▶ Reach out to your EAP. Your EAP is there to assist with a multitude of services, including counseling, and at no cost to you.



Spring Cleaning: De-Clutter Your Life

It's finally Spring! The flowers are blooming and it's getting warmer outside. Spring can be a refreshing time to come out of the winter slump and start anew in the blossoming season. There's no time like the present to get started refreshing your home as well. Try these tips:

- ▶ Complete tasks that can be done in minutes, and don't delay. If you know that the dishes will only take 10 minutes, relieve the stress on your mind by knocking it out. You have to do it regardless, so why not do it now and have an empty sink rather than a full one later?
- ▶ If you see something on the floor, don't think, "I need to pick that up," and proceed to walk away. Pick it up. Imagine how many times you think "I need to do x" during the day, and neglect to do it. It adds to your stress level and makes your environment a less relaxing atmosphere. Remember, you have to pick it up anyway, so do it now!
- ▶ Throw away or sell anything that you don't want or need. We are all surrounded by items we don't need, but keep them around because it's easier than getting rid of them. Take the leap! You will feel refreshed. Many donation centers will even come pick up your items for free!

- ▶ Everything in its place. Once you've rid yourself of items you do not need, have a place for everything. This will keep your house looking neat and tidy, and cleaning up will be a breeze.
- ▶ Don't let yourself get overwhelmed. Being overwhelmed can lead to procrastination and ultimately not getting anything done. Develop a plan and complete one task at a time. Start small, be patient with yourself and be patient with the process.

SPINACH-STRAWBERRY SALAD WITH FETA & WALNUTS

1 1/2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil; 1 tablespoon best-quality balsamic vinegar; 2 teaspoons finely chopped shallot; 1/4 teaspoon salt; 1/4 teaspoon ground pepper; 6 cups baby spinach; 1 cup sliced strawberries; 1/4 cup crumbled feta cheese; 1/4 cup toasted, chopped walnuts

Whisk oil, vinegar, shallot, salt and pepper in a large bowl. Let stand 5 to 10 minutes to allow shallots to soften and mellow a bit. Add spinach, strawberries, feta and walnuts to the bowl and toss to coat with the dressing.

Source: <http://www.eatingwell.com/recipe/270668/spinach-strawberry-salad-with-feta-walnuts/>