



INSPIRING
MUSLIM
MINDS
PRESENTS ...

MANAGING STRESS



Muslim Medical Association of Canada



UNIVERSITY OF
TORONTO

Institute for Global Health Equity & Innovation



muslimstudents'
ASSOCIATION
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CHECKING IN

IS NOT JUST Places

Please complete the short stress assessment from mindcheck.ca

Over the past week...

- [] I found it hard to wind down
- [] I tend to over-react to situations
- [] I felt that I was using a lot of nervous energy
- [] I found myself getting agitated
- [] I found it difficult to relax
- [] I felt that I was rather touchy
- [] I was intolerant of anything that kept me from getting on with what I was doing

0 = *Did not apply to me at all*

1 = *Applied to me to some degree, or some of the time*

2 = *Applied to me a considerable degree, or a good part of time*

3 = *Applied to me very much, or most of the time*

Stress Check Total: _____

0-7: **Average** // 8-9: **Slightly Above Average** // 10-12: **Significant** // 13-21: **High Stress Levels**

[Retrieved from <http://mindcheck.ca>. Adapted from Lovibond, S.H. & Lovibond, P.F. (1995). Manual for the Depression Anxiety Stress Scales. (2nd. Ed.)]

Is Stress Good or Bad?

- Can be adaptive - stress response is life-saving in a fearful situation, all body functions are aimed at survival
- Can be maladaptive - stress response occurs in non-threatening situations or continues after threat has subsided

“And We will most certainly try you with somewhat of fear and hunger and loss of property and lives and fruits; and give good news to the patient” (Qur’an 2:155)

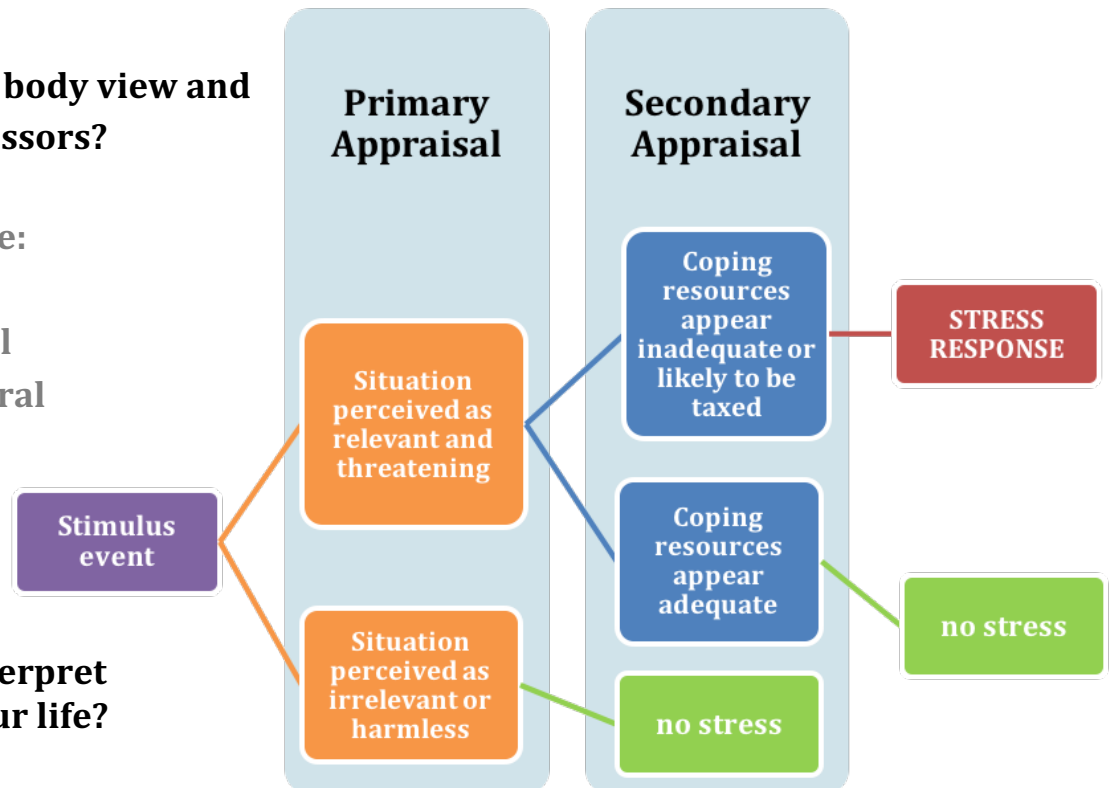
How does your body view and respond to stressors?

Stress Response:

- Physical
- Emotional
- Behavioural
- Cognitive

How do you interpret stressors in your life?

- **Coping mechanism**
 - **problem focused vs. emotion focused**
- **Perceived control**
 - **internal locus vs. external locus**
- **Explanatory style**
 - **optimism vs. pessimism**



--- Islamic Strategies for Alleviating Stress ---

God-Consciousness in Acts of Devotion

- Disengage from worldly stresses and engage mindfully in prayer, supplication, and remembrance of Allah

Social Support

- Spending time with family & friends, going to the community masjid

Realistic Goals

- Placing trust in the Ultimate Provider AND putting in an effort

Gratitude

- Reflect on the blessings in your life, big and small, and be grateful

Acts of Kindness

- Increases happiness of those around you and your own too

Reframing

- Appreciating that Allah is the best of planners and that there is wisdom in all of His decisions, even if it's hard to comprehend at first

Sabr (Patience)

- *Sabr* is not passive, means remaining steadfast to achieve your goals despite all barriers

"How wonderful is the case of a believer; there is good in every affair of his and this is not the case with anyone other than the believer. If prosperity attends him, he expresses gratitude to Allah, thus there is good for him in it; and if adversity befalls him, he endures it patiently, thus there is good for him in it". [Muslim]

// When to seek professional help //

Stress that is functionally impairing (unable to live “normally”, unable to go to work/school) and results in six months or more of:

- Poor sleep
- Feeling fatigued
- Feeling restless
- Irritability
- Poor concentration
- Muscle tension

Also note if multiple other domains are impacted:

- Appetite
- Mood (ability to feel content)
- Negative thoughts (worthlessness, guilt)
- Thoughts of ending own life *seek medical attention*

Take Home Points

- Everyone gets stressed but high levels of sustained anxiety is not healthy
- Spirituality reduces stress when you believe your life is within your control and you have an optimistic outlook
- Use a multimodal approach to manage stress and anxiety
 - Complete a formal mental health assessment
 - Psychotherapy + medication

Where to get help?

- If you're in immediate danger, call **911**

Visit your family doctor (GP) to refer to:

- GP Psychotherapist
- Psychiatrist
- Psychologist /Social Workers/Counsellors

UofT Health and Wellness Centre

<https://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/hwc/services-offered>

Muslim Chaplaincy of University of Toronto – Student Drop in

<http://mcoft.com/counselling/>

Muslim Medical Association of Canada website

<http://www.muslimmeds.ca/>

Naseeha Muslim Youth Helpline

<http://naseeha.org/> 1-866-627-3342