

STRESS

In a drought one of the worst things is the stress. Here are some positive actions that you can take so you don't unravel.

LOOK AFTER THE BODY

EXERCISE Energetic exercise for 20 minutes every other day releases stress, improves the immune system, builds up endorphins (the body's natural pain killers), reduces the risk of depression & heart disease.

DRINK WATER: A couple of litres a day supplies our bodies with calcium, iron, & other minerals as well as washing the impurities out of our system.

USE YOUR SENSES Look! listen! touch! smell! enjoy! Taking pleasure in things around us builds up a sense of affirmation

LOOK AFTER YOUR MIND

PRIORITISE. Make lists of things to do in order of importance & give yourself the satisfaction of ticking them off as they are completed. Set goals that are achievable.

USE CHOICE Choice is a most powerful de-stressing tool. Even in the most severely restricted situation it is possible to find something of choice. We can choose how we breathe, the tone of voice we use, whether we tackle a task in a way that is constructive or defeatist, Acknowledging the range of choices open to us, & taking responsibility for the one we choose, is the bottom line of all stress management. The consequence of making our own choice is that we can no longer blame another for what happens.

LOOK AFTER THE EMOTIONS

LAUGHTER IS GREAT THERAPY. 'A happy heart is like good medicine, but a broken spirit drains your strength.' - A Biblical proverb. Laughter... good belly laughter!... helps us keep in shape. Laughter has the ability to change our expectations, our attitude.

LET IT OUT - DON'T BOTTLE IT UP Unexpressed feelings of frustration, anger, guilt, bitterness failure, disappointment, can lead to illness & worse an eruption that can have disastrous results. It is important to share our feelings with those we can trust. In this way we can support each other. We are dependent on each other. Studies have shown that group support promotes good cheer, confidence, competence, creativity, hardiness, & the ability to re tune stress for the good of all.

LOOK AFTER THE SPIRIT

LET GO - LET GOD! God has an 0800 free line! We can always tell God exactly how we are feeling. He will 'never let us down. When we come to him in complete honesty he has promised to uphold & strengthen us & accompany us through life's trials. God said, "I upheld you since you were conceived & have carried you since your birth, Even to your old age & grey hairs. I have made you & I will carry you; I will, sustain you & I will rescue you." (Isaiah 46)

God will help us if we let him.

BE STILL - REFUEL! As well as speaking to God we need to allow him to speak to us. We often don't stop still long enough to allow him to come into our lives & energise, encourage & direct us. A way of allowing him to speak to

us is by reading his handbook for life - The Bible. It is full of techniques for relieving stress & it shows us Jesus - the stress Manager par excellence! Learning from him will change our lives.