**Managing Stress – lecture transcript**

Good morning everyone. Before we start, I’d like you to consider how you are feeling at the moment. Hopefully you’re positive and full of energy, but it’s quite possible that there are things playing on your mind. Most of us live with a certain amount of stress, and while this is normal, it is often not managed properly and so can affect mental health. And mental health issues have a huge impact: International medical journal *The Lancet* states that mental health issues cost the world economy 1 trillion USD per year. But what does this mean for the individual – you? Well, according to a 2020 study, over 28% of Chinese university students suffer some level of stress related depression. So, in this lecture I’m going to be talking about stress. We will first look at what it is and identify the symptoms. I will then look at causes before finally recommending some strategies for coping with stress.

So to get started then, let’s look at what stress is. Well, the first thing to mention is that stress is not always a problem. It is actually an evolutionary adaptation for dealing with threatening situations. If you find yourself in a dangerous situation - let’s say a burning building – the stress hormones your body releases can help you run faster and get out of that building. This short-term stress response is useful. However, chronic- or ongoing- stress is detrimental. It is one of the major factors that can lead to depression and also serious illnesses later in life, like cardiovascular disease for example.

Given the serious consequences, it’s important to recognize the symptoms of stress, because you might not realize you are suffering from it. Some symptoms are common, but there are also other, less obvious signs. The National Health Service in the UK categorizes the symptoms into three main types: Mental, Behavioural and Physical. Mental symptoms include constant worrying, feeling overwhelmed, difficulty concentrating and forgetfulness. These problems can lead to behavioural symptoms- you might not be sleeping or eating well, or you could be less patient with your friends or classmates. If this becomes more serious you might begin to avoid people, and even feel you can’t face going to class. Then, there are the physical symptoms. Headaches and muscle tension are, perhaps, commonly associated with stress, but you could also find lesser known problems like having an upset stomach or getting sick more often.

Now, hopefully you are not suffering any of these symptoms. But even if you’re not, it is statistically extremely likely that people you know are. So let’s look a little bit more deeply into the issue and examine why stress occurs.

Well, the causes of stress can basically be divided into ‘internal’ and ‘external’ factors.

‘Internal’ factors are related to a person’s personality. This can mean focusing too much on negative news, such as wars, and epidemics. But, it can also come from having unrealistic expectations. In a university context this could be expecting to be first in your class, but you aren’t, and so you feel you’ve underperformed.

So internal factors are a common cause, but it is actually ‘external’ factors that are most likely to lead to stress- especially when they are work or study related. You might recognize some: the amount of work you have to do, fear of failing a course, and certain assignment types such as giving presentations are recognized in research as extremely common.

Now then, moving on to the big question- what can you do about stress? Well, the maxim that ‘prevention is better than cure’ applies here, so I’ll look at four approaches recommended by the UK website ‘Prospects’ that can help you alleviate stress.

## The first is exercise.

This is arguably the most effective stress-buster. Two to three sessions of vigorous exercise per week can be enough and you can choose a form of exercise that suits you- you don’t need to be a talented footballer or basketball player. There are many options here at UNNC: the gym has weights, treadmills for running, exercise bikes; and there are classes in spinning, boxercise, yoga and more.

## Another strategy is simply talking to people.

It’s easy to become isolated and feel lonely in a new situation. Socializing as little as once per week has been shown to reduce stress levels as effectively as therapy or counselling. Talking to other students or even people back home can help you realize that you are probably not alone in feeling stress, and this can help put things in perspective.

## The third strategy is time management.

You’ve already heard about this on this course, but you probably haven’t thought about it as means of reducing stress. Simple time management techniques for prioritizing and organizing your time can help you feel more in control. For example, creating a written schedule and breaking down larger tasks into smaller, more manageable ones. And importantly, don’t just focus on study- a healthy work/ life balance is important, so allocate yourself time to relax, exercise or socialize.

## Finally, getting enough sleep.

Lack of sleep can be a symptom of stress, and a cause of it. You need to wind down before you sleep, so before going to bed do something not related to study. Watch your favourite TV show or read something for pleasure. But not for too long… you probably need to be strict with yourself!

OK, well that’s it for today. We’ve talked about stress and looked at it’s symptoms and causes. And I hope you found the tips for managing stress useful. Please remember that managing stress is a part of normal life and you shouldn’t worry too much about it. However, if you are concerned you can always contact the counselling service, who will be able to offer more specialized advice. Thanks for listening and see you next time.

大家早上好。在我们开始之前，我想让你考虑一下你此刻的感受。希望你是积极的、充满能量的，但是很可能有一些事情在你的脑海中打转。我们大多数人都生活在一定的压力下，虽然这很正常，但往往没有得到适当的管理，因此会影响心理健康。而心理健康问题有巨大的影响。国际医学杂志《柳叶刀》指出，心理健康问题每年使世界经济损失1万亿美元。但是，这对个人--你来说意味着什么呢？嗯，根据2020年的一项研究，超过28%的中国大学生患有某种程度的压力相关的抑郁症。因此，在这个讲座中，我将讨论压力问题。我们将首先看一下什么是压力，并确定其症状。然后我将研究其原因，最后推荐一些应对压力的策略。

那么，为了开始，让我们看看什么是压力。嗯，首先要提到的是，压力并不总是一个问题。它实际上是应对威胁情况的一种进化适应。如果你发现自己处于危险境地--比方说一栋燃烧的大楼--你的身体释放的应激激素可以帮助你跑得更快，离开那栋大楼。这种短期压力反应是有用的。然而，慢性-或持续的-压力是有害的。它是可能导致抑郁症的主要因素之一，也是以后生活中的严重疾病，例如心血管疾病。

鉴于这些严重的后果，认识压力的症状很重要，因为你可能没有意识到你正在遭受压力。有些症状很常见，但也有其他不太明显的迹象。英国国家卫生局将这些症状分为三个主要类型。精神性、行为性和身体性。精神症状包括不断地担心、感到不知所措、难以集中注意力和健忘。这些问题可能会导致行为症状--你可能睡不好、吃不好，或者你对朋友或同学的耐心不足。如果这种情况变得更加严重，你可能开始躲避别人，甚至觉得你无法面对去上课。然后，还有身体症状。头痛和肌肉紧张也许是与压力有关的常见现象，但你也可能发现一些不太为人所知的问题，如胃部不适或更经常生病。

现在，希望你没有遭受任何这些症状。但是即使你没有，根据统计，你认识的人也极有可能是这样。因此，让我们更深入地研究一下这个问题，看看为什么会出现压力。

嗯，压力的原因基本上可以分为'内部'和'外部'因素。

内部 "因素与一个人的个性有关。这可能意味着过多地关注负面新闻，如战争和流行病。但是，它也可能来自于不切实际的期望。在大学里，这可能是期望成为班里的第一名，但你没有，所以你觉得你表现得很差。

因此，内部因素是一个常见的原因，但实际上最有可能导致压力的是 "外部 "因素，特别是当它们与工作或学习有关时。你可能会认识到一些：你必须做的工作量，对课程失败的恐惧，以及某些任务类型，如做演讲，在研究中被认为是非常普遍的。

那么，现在进入大问题--你能对压力做什么？嗯，"预防胜于治疗 "的格言在这里适用，所以我将看看英国网站 "前景 "推荐的四种方法，它们可以帮助你减轻压力。

第一个是运动。

这可以说是最有效的压力克星。每周两到三次的剧烈运动就足够了，你可以选择适合你的运动形式--你不需要成为一个有天赋的足球运动员或篮球运动员。在UNNC这里有很多选择：健身房有举重、跑步机、健身自行车；还有纺纱、拳击、瑜伽等课程。

另一个策略是简单地与人交谈。

在一个新的环境中，很容易变得孤立无援，感到孤独。事实证明，每周只需一次的社交活动就能像治疗或咨询一样有效地降低压力水平。与其他学生甚至家里的人交谈，可以帮助你认识到你可能不是一个人在感受压力，这可以帮助你把事情看清楚。

第三个策略是时间管理。

你已经在本课程中听说过这个问题，但你可能还没有想到它是减少压力的手段。简单的时间管理技巧来安排优先次序和组织你的时间可以帮助你感到更有控制力。例如，创建一个书面时间表，将较大的任务分解成较小的、更容易管理的任务。重要的是，不要只专注于学习--健康的工作/生活平衡很重要，所以要给自己分配时间来放松、锻炼或社交。

最后，获得足够的睡眠。

睡眠不足可能是压力的一个症状，也是压力的一个原因。你需要在睡觉前放松一下，所以在睡觉前做一些与学习无关的事。看你喜欢的电视节目或阅读一些有趣的东西。但时间不要太长......你可能需要对自己严格要求!

好了，今天就到此为止。我们已经谈论了压力，并探讨了它的症状和原因。我希望你觉得管理压力的提示有用。请记住，管理压力是正常生活的一部分，你不应该过分担心它。但是，如果你担心，你可以随时与咨询服务机构联系，他们能够提供更专业的建议。谢谢你的聆听，下次再见。