

April (Affects of Stress on Family & Friends)

Vignette:

You and your significant other have been arguing lately. You arrive to pick them up on a Friday for dinner with friends and an argument starts. You're both upset and go to dinner. Your friend asks you what's up between you and your significant other, and you talk with them about the arguments and stress of family issues related to your parents' bad health and the pressure you feel. Your friend asks if you've talked with your partner. You say no, the relationship is too new to get that serious. Your friend thinks you should talk with your partner and also offers to listen and help out however they can. How do you handle this situation?

- A) Ignore it, and just try to be nice to your partner while caring for your parents.
- B) Share with your partner and trust they will be open and listen.
- C) Take out your stress on someone else that can handle it like a friend.
- D) Talk with your siblings about plans to care for your parents.

BEST ANSWER: B and D.

Ignoring your stress will not make it go away and you could unintentionally be harming your relationships with others. You could also be putting yourself or others at risk if you don't address it. Trust those you love to listen, understand, and problem solve with you.

Discussion Q & A:

- Have you gone through a similar experience before? If so, how can you help others through a similar situation?
- What do you think prevents people from reaching out for help when experiencing stress?
- At what point would you turn to professional BH supports or refer another service member to BH?
- How does stress impact those you care for and love?
- Other than talking to someone, what else do you do to cope with stress?

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Takeaways:

- Stress is a natural part of life.
- Bottling up your stress and feelings can lead to behavior and mood changes, such as irritability and easy to anger. This can lead to negative effects on your relationships with friends and family.
- Chronic stress without talking about it or asking for help can lead to long term mood changes or poor physical health outcomes that may require medical attention.
- Your friends and family love you and likely want you to ask for help when you need it.

Follow-Up Resources

- Army Director of Psychological Health (DPH): 1-877-504-2358
- Air Director of Psychological Health (DPH): Patricia Weiner (608-234-8820) & Emily Barrett (608-400-5275)
- Chaplain: 608-630-1660
- Army Military and Family Life Counselor ([ACS :: Ft. McCoy :: US Army MWR](#)), 352-801-2742
Air Military & Family Life Counselor: Alicia Zenk, 608-215-3037
- Soldier and Family Readiness Specialist Number: 1-800-292-9464 (Option 1)
- Airman Family Readiness: Jerry Hook (115FW/Volk), 608-245-4654 & Amy Thompson (128ARW), 414-944-8249
- Comprehensive Health and Wellness Courses: [CHW Courses – Wisconsin Service Member Support Division \(wisconsinmilitary.org\)](#)
- Military One Source: 1-800-342-9647

Feedback from the Field:

Thank you from the Operation Resilience Team!

We know your time is valuable and we want to thank you for setting aside some time to talk over these topics. Your feedback is highly encouraged and welcomed.

We would love to hear your thoughts and ideas as to how well these discussions were implemented as well as how well they were received. For feedback, suggestions or even any success stories that you would like to share, a survey can be completed at:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SMSD2021>
