HAPPY IN THE HEART: CARING FOR YOURSELF SO YOU CAN CARE FOR OTHERS

HOLLY HATTON BOWERS
LYNN DEVRIES

“My mission in life is not merely to survive, but to thrive; and to do so with some passion, some compassion, some humor, and some style.” — Maya Angelou
Today’s Session

• Discuss stress – potential negative impacts on the body and mind
• Assess your wellbeing
• Learn about self-care and why it is important for our health and wellbeing
• Identify strategies to increase resilience, your health, and wellbeing

“What do you mean, you need to find a balance between work and family? We consider you part of our family.”
Feeling Good… Is Good for Business

“Sometimes the best thing is to do is take a nap, or sleep on a major decision. I am amazed how many men avoid seeing their doctors, and therefore do not ensure their physical and mental health is helping, not hurting their ability to make sound decisions for their business and families.” - Elaine Froese, Family Farm Succession Planner

Let’s talk about stress…
Positive or Challenging Stress

- **Eustress** is a positive form of stress having a beneficial effect on health, motivation, performance, and emotional well-being ... during positive stress (“eustress”), such as a promotion or vacation, feel-good chemicals called endorphins are released.

- **Distress**, or negative stress results in the full-blown stress response. If continuous, negative stress can lead to loss of productivity, health problems, and exhaustion.

With a neighbor:

Let’s Talk!

When stressed in a **GOOD** way, how do you look, behave and communicate with others?

When stressed in a **BAD** way, how do you look, behave and communicate with others?
Root cause of your stress...

- Major factor impacting stress is due to your perceptions and your thinking
- Your reactions to external pressures in your environment
- Dr. Derek Rogers found after 30 years of research that the key driver for stress is rumination
- People who constantly ruminate, replaying the past as an awful experience have chronically elevated levels of cortisol and adrenaline
- In other words, stress is some ways is something you create.

Why is this important to me?

- Chronic stress creates high levels of cortisol which can:
  - Increase blood cholesterol, triglycerides and blood pressure which can cause heart disease
- Long-term stress can affect how the blood clots. This makes the blood stickier and increases the risk of a stroke.

Source: Nebraska Medicine
Why is this important to me?

- The human mind has 70,000 thoughts each day!
- That’s 70,000 opportunities for either positive or negative thoughts!
- Furthermore, 80% of repetitive thoughts are negative. But they don’t have to be!
- Focus on your family strengths
- Strengths are often developed in response to challenge
- Crises can tear families apart or make families stronger

Human beings have the right and responsibility to feel safe, comfortable, happy and loved. Strong families are where this all happens.

Centers for Disease Control Study

- 50% higher rate of suicide in farmers now than in the 80’s
- Rates were 58 suicides for every 100,000 male farmers in the 80’s
- CDC reported in 2016 (among men) in farming, they were 90 per 100,000
CDC Study (cont.)

Possible causes:
- Risk of putting crop in ground
- Risk associated with livestock
- Volatile markets
- Stress of hanging on to a multi-generation farm/ranch
- Supporting family during market lows
- Expensive breakdowns
- Accidents
- Unexpected costs rise
- Long days, late nights, sleep deprivation
- What else?

Stress can adversely affect our wellness
Feeling Good Involves the Mind, Body & Spirit  (Elaine Froese)

“Your health is your wealth.”
– Ralph Waldo Emerson

“Be smart. Take good care of yourself. Keep your body and mind sound and your ‘well’ full so you have something to give to your family and your business.”
– Elaine Froese

What is wellness?
The Wellness Wheel

What the Wellness Wheel teaches us about creating well-being

- Well being is multidimensional
  Each wedge represents a different component of health and well-being.

- Everything’s connected
  The multiple dimensions of life are powerfully connected. Each component of well-being influences and impacts the others. This means all components are vitally important and all should be intentionally acknowledged.

- You can only give so much

- Life is fluid
  Last but not least; life is fluid—it changes. The makeup of your Wellness Wheel doesn’t outline what it will be in a few weeks/months/years from now.
Let’s assess your wellness and reflect

Strategies to promote self-care and reduce stress

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF
Four Steps to Building Resilience

1. Wake up and Stay Awake
2. Control your attention
3. Detach
4. Let Go

Wake up and stay awake

- Be present. Be aware of where you are and what you are doing right now.
- Stop dreaming so much about the past and the future. Wake up to the only moment you have ever been in—now.
- Listen to the sounds that are in your environment right now. Hear the sounds that are close to you and the quieter ones in the background
- Next, pay attention to the sensations under the soles of your feet. Feel the temperature on your face.
- See the shapes and colors of the objects in front of you
Control your attention

- As little control as we have over our level of wakefulness, most of us have even less control over our attention.
- The key to controlling your attention is to practice consciously putting your attention where you want it to be and holding it there.
- Keep your attention directed in the present on what your senses can see, hear, or feel.

Detach

- Detachment is the ability to get appropriate distance from the situations you are facing
  - maintain perspective
  - only focus on what you can control

Resilient people are very clear about the difference between care and worry. They see caring as essential to high performance and worry as a waste of time.
**Let Go**

- Will continuing to focus on this help me, my family? If the answer is no, they let it go.

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**Let’s look at some helpful tips in our stress reducing handouts**

- Time Management
- Putting your health first

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Communities of Care

- Self care is not a lone pursuit. Having someone you can reach out to when you need an extra hugs or a compassionate ear can be the difference between burning out or becoming your most powerful self.
  
  Shelly Tygielski

Why Create a Community of Care?

Consider a strand of rope,
It starts out as a bunch of frail strings.
However, when all intertwined, the result is a strong, unbreakable force.

A community of care recognizes when a member becomes detached and starts displaying the warning signs of fatigue or depression, and it intervenes with a shoulder to cry on and a safe place to be venerable.
How to build sustainable communities of care

- Think Big, Start Small
- Self care buddy system
- Find More People open your front yard, doesn’t have to be formal
- Hold on to them, ask them to hold you accountable

Communities of Care are important

Your community of care can have a tremendous impact on how you handle challenges and how quickly you bounce back, and how well prepared you are to recognize issues and engage in proper self-care
Make your wellness a priority!

Look at your wheel of wellness, what are some next steps you will take to be more balanced?

Resources on Stress Management for Farm and Ranch Families

The Nebraska Counseling, Outreach and Mental Health Therapy (COMHT) Program, 800-444-0238, offers no-cost vouchers for confidential mental health services for persons affected by the rural crisis.

Nebraska Farm Helpline - 1-800-444-0238
Farm Mediation Clinics - 1-800-444-0238
Farm Mediation - 1-800-444-0238

Nebraska Legal Aid

The Nebraska Resource and Referral System (NRSS) is a statewide database created with input from Nebraska families, service providers, and organizations. It lists toll-free numbers, websites, and email contacts to help you connect faster to the services you are seeking.

The Nebraska Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault Coalition

Community Action of Nebraska

Department Health and Human Services - food stamps, Medicaid, Kid Connection etc.

University of Missouri Cooperative Extension articles on strong families and programs to help families cope

University of Wisconsin Extension resources for recognizing, responding to and relieving stress; Information is targeted to farm families.

University of Minnesota Extension Service information on drought and fires

A Kansas State University Cooperative Extension guide is designed to help farm families in distress. The four-page guide covers listening skills and includes a referral guide for further assistance.