

THE MAMCD NEWSLETTER

The Official Monthly Newsletter of the MAMCD

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OBSERVANCE OF MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

Written by Ricardo Phipps



As we observe Mental Health Awareness month during May, I am honored to showcase the work that the Maryland Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development (MAMCD) has done over the last year to heighten awareness of a number of mental health concerns that affect the residents of the state of Maryland and beyond. The mission of MAMCD is to be especially attentive to the counseling needs of people of color and people from other culturally diverse backgrounds as well as to be a place of support for counselors and counselor educators who come from culturally diverse backgrounds, realizing that helping professionals need a community to encourage and energize them. The programming of MAMCD during this past year has been focused on mental health needs that are especially critical now.

OBSERVANCE OF MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH (CONT.)

In November's Fall Workshop, we addressed the topics of working with clients who are survivors of sexual harassment and launching and maintaining private practice during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. As the new year began, we offered presentations on counselor self-care, interpreter-assisted therapy, and counseling BIPOC clients with process addictions. The variety of themes has allowed MAMCD to be a source of support to a number of new affiliates of our division, including graduate students, novice and experienced clinicians, counselor educators, and other helping professionals. This year's MAMCD professional development activities culminated with our Spring Conference, which took place on April 30. With an inspiring keynote address by incoming MCA President Pat Dudley, the conference featured presentations about supporting BIPOC students in predominantly White, K-12 independent schools, clinical supervision with BIPOC counselors, and understanding critical race theory (CRT). The day-long conference ended with a panel discussion of leaders of counseling centers at area HBCU's that left participants with a number of insights about the wellness needs of HBCU students and the challenges and joys of working in HBCU counseling centers.

As my year of serving as President of MAMCD comes to a close, I am proud of the work we have done. We have remained rooted in our past and legacy--I am especially happy about the work our archivist, Dr. Carl Barham, has done to build up the online MAMCD archives through partnership with the library of Bowie State University so that we have clear documentation of MAMCD history. We have remained relevant to the needs and challenges of the current day, as evidenced by the programming highlighted above. Lastly, MAMCD is poised for a bright, impactful future. Our Membership Chair, Asia Rodriquez, has diligently planned Networking Events throughout this past year to introduce counselors not already active with MAMCD to the mission of the organization. Our Newsletter Editor and Emerging Leader, Naliah Beckford, has greatly increased MAMCD communication by expanding the quarterly newsletter to a monthly publication. We continuously work to increase our online presence and to address the needs of the graduate students, the next generation of counselors. And I look forward to honoring individuals who have made special contributions to multicultural counseling in next month's MAMCD Awards Ceremony.

Thank you to the MAMCD Board, all MAMCD members, our friends in the other MCA divisions, as well as to the MCA leadership (especially Executive Director Cathie Eaton and President Sara Pula), and to everyone else who has supported MAMCD this year! Let us continue the work of eliminating the stigma around mental health service seeking, especially for culturally diverse communities!



WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT STRESS

Written by Dr. Carl S. Barham

Stress is a biological term. It is the consequences on how our body response appropriately or inappropriately to emotional or physical threats. This threat can be real or imagined. An endocrinologist, Han Selye popularized the concept stress in the 1930's to include the body response to any demand. Simply said, stress is how the body reacts to a stressor.

Stress covers a huge range of conditions from mild irritation to the kind of severe problems that might result in a real breakdown of health. Everyone experiences stress. The real problem is how you cope or adapt to it. You will either cope in a healthy way or an unhealthy way. Your body will let you know the kind of decision that is being made by the symptoms you experience.

What are the signs of stress?

Signs of stress come in many disguises such as cognitive, emotional, physical or behavioral. These signs include poor judgment, a general negative outlook on life, excessive worrying, moodiness, irritability, agitation, inability to relax, feeling lonely or isolated, depressed, aches and pains, diarrhea or constipation, nausea, dizziness, chest pain, rapid heart beat, eating too much or not enough, sleeping too much or not enough, withdrawing from others, procrastinating or neglecting responsibilities, using alcohol, cigarettes, or drugs to relax and nervous habits(e.g. nail biting or pacing).

What is the difference between acute stress and chronic stress?

We have two types of stresses; they are acute and chronic stress. Acute stressors are short term stress that can affect you greatly or regularly. Likewise, chronic stressors are long term stress that can also affect you greatly or regularly.

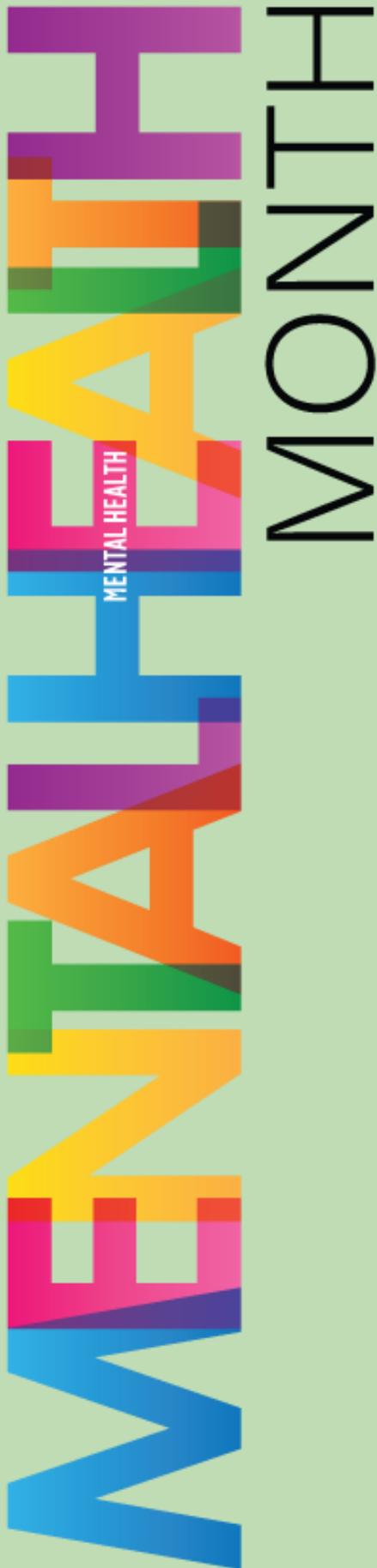
What is the difference between eustress and distress?

Stress that enhances your function physically or mentally may be considered eustress.

Example: Challenging work, strength training, and selective hobbies.

Stress that is persistent and can not be resolved through coping or adapting is called distress.

If you would like help in managing your stress, please feel free to contact us.


 A vertical graphic for Mental Health Month. The words "MENTAL HEALTH" are written vertically in large, colorful, block letters. The letters are filled with various colors including purple, orange, green, yellow, pink, and blue. The word "MONTH" is written vertically in a simple, black, sans-serif font to the right of the colorful text. A small pink rectangle with the words "MENTAL HEALTH" in white is positioned over the letter "H" in "HEALTH".

MENTAL HEALTH MONTH

What stages do our bodies go through in dealing with stress?

Our bodies go through three stages: Alarm, Resistance and Exhaustion. In the first stage Alarm, the threat or stressor is identified or realized; your body response to the stressor as a state of alarm. During this stage adrenaline will be produced in order to bring about the fight or flight response. The body also produces the hormone cortisol to help in this process to reduce stress.

In the second stage Resistance, it would become necessary for you to attempt some means of coping with the stressor, if the stressor persists. Your body begins to try to adapt to the strains or demands of the environment. Your body can not keep this up indefinitely. As a result your resources are gradually depleted.

In the third stage Exhaustion, at this point all of the body's resources are eventually depleted and the body is unable to maintain normal function. At this stage you will experience from the autonomic nervous system symptoms such as sweating, raised heart rates, etc. If stage three persists for an extended time, long term damage may result as the capacity of the glands, in this case the adrenal gland, and the immune system is exhausted, the function is impaired.

The critical point to remember at this stage is that your body will begin to give you red flags to get your attention. The result can manifest itself in obvious illnesses such as ulcers, depression, panic attacks, anxiety attacks, diabetes, trouble with the digestive system, constipation, cardiovascular problems, along with other mental illnesses. Your body never lies! Listen to it! Listening and paying attention to the red flags can be the differences between life and death, emotional wellness or emotional illness.

How does stress relate to disease and sickness?

Stress can significantly affect your body's immune system, as well as your perceptions and reaction to it. Your immune system changes can create more vulnerability to infections. Chronic stress has shown to impair developmental growth in children by lowering the pituitary gland's production of growth hormone. When children are associated with a home environment involving serious marital discord, alcoholism, or child abuse, they are at risk of having emotional and relationship problems. People suffering from higher stress have higher levels of visceral fat in their bodies.

If you would like help in managing your stress, please feel free to contact us.

MAMCD Needs YOU

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN JOINING MAMCD, CLICK HERE

[HTTPS://WWW.MDCOUNSELING.ORG/PAGE-1596003](https://www.mdcounseling.org/page-1596003)

VOLUNTEERS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME!!! IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO VOLUNTEER WITH MAMCD, PLEASE EMAIL:
MAMCD.BOARD@GMAIL.COM

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN SERVING ON A COMMITTEE OR AS A CHAIR OF ONE OF THE COMMITTEES, PLEASE EMAIL:
MAMCD.BOARD@GMAIL.COM

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