

REPORT ON STRESS MANAGEMENT CLASS FACILITATED BY KRIS OZIOFU ERO
HELD ON SUNDAY, 22ND MARCH, 2020

As part of her effort to strengthen the society, Double ST Foundation held her monthly WhatsApp class tagged, **Let's Talk**.

Kris Oziofu Ero, a Stress Management expert, held a remarkable session with 155 participants.

The class began at 7 pm after the moderator, Rachael Ogunmuyiwa, handed over to the guest lecturer, Kris Oziofu Ero.

As part of her introduction to the discourse, Kris said, "Everybody experiences stress. The degree of stress is dependent mostly on the personality of the individual and any prevailing health/medical condition. Stress is also a major determinant of how we experience wellness."

Kris also emphasized that it's normal and inevitable to feel stressed. However, she added that whether stress is stressful or not, depends on the individual's response to it.

By contrast, Kris also noted that stress reveals the emotional maturity or emotional intelligence of an individual.

Meanwhile, she highlighted the signs that should be identified when an individual needs help with managing stress. In her words, they are grouped into two:

1. **Emotional or Psychological:** Difficulty concentrating, trouble with focus and memory, moodiness (anger bursts), depression, frustrations, and feelings of being overwhelmed.
2. **Physical:** Low energy, consistent headaches, eye pain, blurry sights, trouble with digestion, body aches and pains, lethargy, and trouble with sleep.

However, she stressed the need to stop seeing stress as bad because having that belief alone is in itself dangerous to anyone's health.

Kris called for the need to have a shift in mindset. Below are her recommendations:

1. **Accept that you are part of the problem.**

This is difficult for a lot of people to grasp, but is true. This is not self-blame. It is simply a recognition that in most cases, you're part of the situation that's stressing you out.

The situation is stressing you out because it is you. And that part, no matter how small, is something you can change.

Imagine that you are caught in traffic- and you are getting stressed out.

- Ask yourself. Did I check the traffic report before going out?
- Did I start my journey late?
- Is this a trip I could have avoided?
- Was the meeting that necessary?
- When you realize your role...you find that it's easier for you to deal with the traffic situation.

For instance, rather than curse Lagos state, you can make a conscious decision to plan your day better especially when we all know that traffic and Lagos are synonymous. So, why stress yourself over something you can't change?

However, you can change your timing, schedules, priorities, mode of movement, and types of meetings.

3. **Change your response.**

Often, we are advised to run away from stressful situations.

The question is why?

Do you know avoiding difficult situations increases stressful feelings because it focuses your mind on those things?

Yes.

If you are used to running away from a stressful situation, why not move instead toward something that you want.

For instance;

So, you probably have a difficult boss- and you want to talk to him about a raise or promotion.

But, because you are used to running away, all you dwell on is how difficult he is and you complain to the point you end up doing nothing about it.

However, if you focus on your promotion, you will find that the difficult nature of your boss isn't the problem. Instead, you will come up with a creative and practical way of approaching him.

So, constantly focusing on the difficult situation increases your anxiety.

4. Give your responses a different interpretation.

Most times when stressed, our heartbeats races, we have clammy palms, we tend to twitch and act all nervous with butterflies in our tummies, right?

Often, we interpret these signs as that of fear. But are they? These are signs that your body is preparing you to rise to the occasion.

They are signals that your body is working well by providing the energy you need to solve the challenge you are facing.

Once your mindset changes this way, you find that you become calm and you have a clearer sense of direction.

For instance,

You are attending a job interview-

When you begin to experience these signals...and you give into them negatively, your stress level heightens, you begin to shake...mentally, all your prepared speeches disappear and you become tongue-tied.

However, when you see these signals as your body prepping you to go smash the interview- your thoughts become clearer, your confidence spikes and you are more composed.

Furthermore, Kris spoke on physical activities that could be embraced to manage stress such as adequate sleep, healthy eating and drinking, reduction of alcoholic consumption, regular exercise, and adequate water consumption.

At the end of her lesson, questions and feedbacks were taken from the participants, and at 9:40 pm, the class was brought to an end.