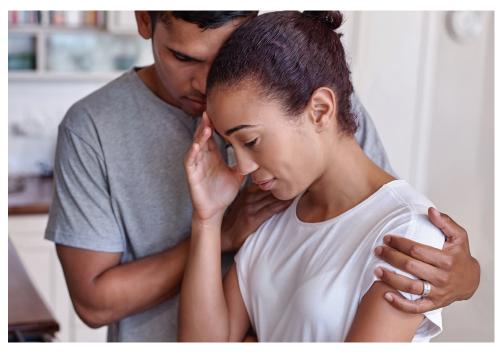**Success Over Stress**

Coping with life's challenges

Stress happens to everyone at some point. We all face problems and situations that can be stressful. This can be losing a job, an unexpected move, losing a loved one, or problems at work. Even happy events such as a marriage, new baby, or new job can cause stress and anxiety.

Too much stress can hurt your health. The American Psychological Association says chronic stress can lead to heart disease, depression, headaches, weight gain, and other health problems.

But no one can avoid stress completely. The best strategy is to learn ways you can cope with the challenges of life and lower your stress levels through healthy thoughts and habits. The American Academy of Family Physicians offers these tips:

- Figure out what you can and can't control. If you have no control over something (like the weather or someone else's behavior), try not to worry about it.

- Tackle small, doable problems if the big ones can't be done right now.

- See change as an important lesson and a challenge that will help you learn and grow.

- If you have conflicts with others, try to address them calmly. Resolving differences can relieve stress, anxiety and anger.

- When you're feeling stressed, talk with someone you trust.

- Be realistic with your schedule. Say "no" to things you can't do.

- Get regular exercise. It can lower stress levels and help you sleep better.

- Choose healthy foods to nourish your body and help you feel your best.

- Take part in an activity you enjoy that can take your mind off stressful things. Sports, music, classes, or just a regular walk around the neighborhood can help you clear your mind.