



# ***International Institute of Cricket Umpiring & Scoring***

## **Unit 2 – Stress Management**



How can you manage yourself during a match coping with stress and pressure so that you remain in control of the match

### **STRESS MANAGEMENT**

#### Sources of stress

- |                           |                                 |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Envy                      | Unrealistic expectations        |
| Fear of failure           | Frustration                     |
| Conflict                  | Ambitions conflict with ability |
| Competition               | Ill health                      |
| Ill health of a loved one | Loss of a loved one             |
| Job insecurity            | Traffic jams                    |
| Poor self image           | Financial worries               |
| Lack of direction         |                                 |

#### Pressure and stress

Pressure is what is happening to you

Stress is how you react to those pressures

You can keep the pressure and get rid of the stress

#### Learning how to manage stress

There are basically two main ways to manage stress on the field of play:



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Learn how to turn off the alarm system through various relaxation methods

Learn how to not turn it on inadvertently in the first place

### Relaxation - Deep breathing

Take deep, slow breaths rather than the shallow, fast breathing you feel when you are stressed

Try it now. Make sure you keep your shoulders low. Just the shoulders – don't let the body 'flop'.. Make sure your shoulders do not move up as you breathe in. You can do this stress relieving exercise at any time, including when you are on the field of play.

This really works physiologically to help you shut off the danger alarm

### Muscular relaxation

Tensing and relaxing various muscle groups can work wonders

Try your neck and shoulders, your shoulder blades, your forehead and eyes, tensing these groups for a few seconds, then relaxing them

Doing it with single muscle groups will help you identify them and will allow you to discover how to do it easily and unobtrusively whenever and wherever you need.

You can also combine this with deep breathing by inhaling while you tense, then exhaling when you relax the muscles

### Visualisation

Try to invoke all your senses; sound, touch, smell and temperature, as you imagine being in a very peaceful, relaxing place such as a holiday resort or listening to your favourite music

After trying these methods you need to decide which one is best for you during a match situation

### Avoiding stress

In the long run, however, it is better to learn how to avoid getting stressed out in the first place

Controlling your thinking means you have power over yourself

What matters is how you think about what is happening

Stress will not go away, therefore it needs to be managed

### Coping with pressure

Recognise Pressure Symptoms such as:

Shallow and quick breathing

Sweating of the palms – and elsewhere



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Tense muscle groups  
Failure to relax shoulders  
Becoming irritable and impatient  
Lack of ability to concentrate  
Lack of ability to focus on one objective

There are external and internal sources of serious pressure

Pressure breaks your attention span leading to a lapse in concentration  
NOT coping with pressure  
A lack of control over the situation

Loss of feeling for the game, its values and participants

This results in:

Loss of basic technique and discipline

Complete breakdown in skills

Handling pressure well

Your thoughts should be positive, confident and flowing in accord with the game

You should be feeling calm and in control with a sense of enjoyment and anticipation without effort

You should be focussing on the 'here and now' and wanting the next decision to be yours

Handling pressure badly

Your thoughts will be negative, overloaded with information and you will be easily distracted

You will feel tense, heavy, tired and lacking motivation or goals

You will be focussing on the score, result or back to possible mistakes, weather conditions, noise or captains' reports on your performance

Dealing with the impact of stress

Symptoms:

Increased heart rate

Lump in the throat



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Upset stomach

Withdrawal or reluctance to talk to players  
Stand with your feet apart and knees slightly bent

Relax your neck and shoulder muscles

Try to breathe normally taking deep slow breaths

Clear your mind of the incident

**FOCUS ON THE NEXT BALL!**

Action Plan: Example

Source of stress – your poor self image

Is it within your control? – Yes it is

Goal – develop a positive self image

Strategies:

lose weight

get a haircut

buy new umpiring clothes

clean your shoes

improve your posture

### **MANAGING CONFLICT**

Successful umpires are generally very good people managers

When watching cricket on the television or in a live situation, viewers will notice how well the top-level umpires manage situations that arise during a match. Successful umpires at all levels in the game, should learn to communicate with players and officials and manage the match to the highest possible level. This management will include applying the Laws impartially, being approachable by the players and allowing the match to proceed smoothly

The key is effective communication with the players

Players have become more aggressive on the field of play and the successful umpires will have learnt to remain calm under the pressure of constant appealing. They should



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be able to weigh up the evidence quickly and respond to the actions of the players in a calm and sometimes, good-humoured manner

Resolving conflict is the key to controlling a match

The handling of conflict situations requires special people management skills. Problems may arise on the field between 2 or more players or between a player and an umpire

Players on the field may be upset by an umpire's decision - a bowler is annoyed because the umpire did not give the striker out or the striker is annoyed because the umpire did give him out!!

The umpire will require common sense to deal with the unexpected event, rain interruption, or an awkward player who will not accept a decision.

Conflict management involves acquiring skills related to conflict resolution

Self-awareness about conflict situations - you should be aware of the body language of players and try to anticipate possible conflict and meet with your colleague who may have noticed the developing situation

Conflict communication skills can be learnt by watching more experienced umpires dealing with situations on the field or by watching TV. Your local umpiring association may have a training session on the subject of conflict, if not, ask a question at your next open meeting

Unresolved conflict can lead to aggression - never ignore a conflict situation hoping it will go away. Act with your colleague straightaway and you will probably prevent more aggressive conflict

Establish a structure of thought and behaviour processes for the management of conflict in match situations - use the mnemonic LEAD

Conflict management plan - LEAD

L = LISTEN

You and your colleague should be available and show you are in control by listening to what the player/captain has to say

Nothing can be gained by walking away or ignoring the issue, it may make the problem worse

E = EMPATHISE

Let the players know that you understand their position and how difficult it may be for them at the present time:



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hot day

dropped catches and poor fielding

unresponsive pitch

etc

Conflict management plan - LEAD

A = ACCEPT IT

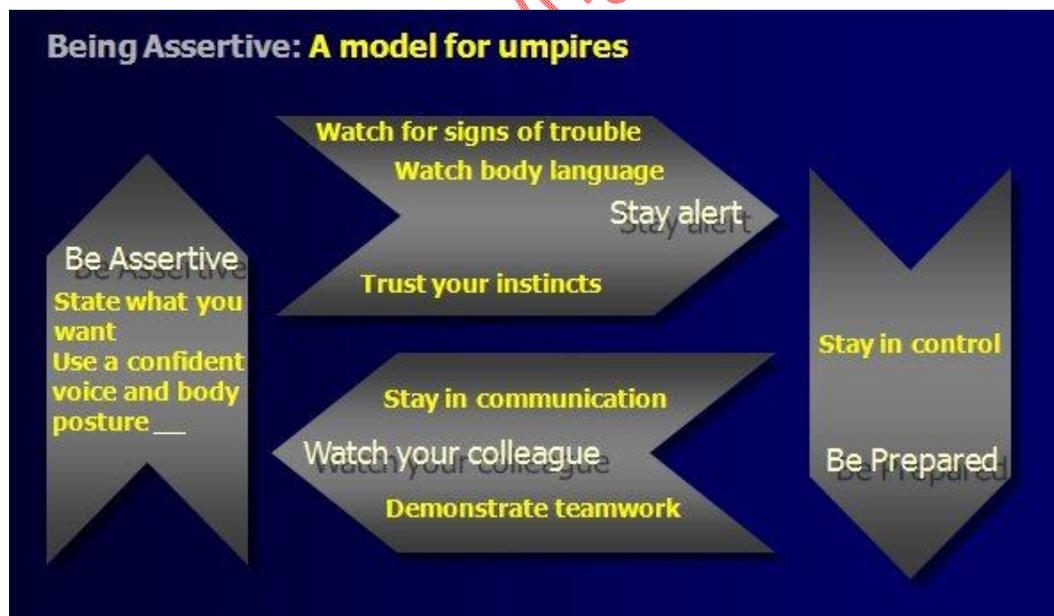
The fact is that no matter what you say, the player are likely to disagree with your point of view, now is the time to break the conversation:

*"The decision has been made so let's all get on with the game"*

D = DISCUSSION OVER

Nothing further can be gained by you and your colleague having a protracted disagreement between yourselves and players

### **BEING ASSERTIVE**





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### Essentials

Handle conflict with confidence

Confront awkward players with confidence

Be assertive, but not aggressive. Be **GENTLY ASSERTIVE**

Stand up for yourself, your colleague, and for the game of cricket

You have a right to be treated with respect

You should not to be taken for granted

You should be allowed to make mistakes

Combine the skills discussed so far and use LEAD as an aid in asserting yourself

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