



YOUR FARM ...YOUR FAMILY ...YOUR FUTURE!

Since 1974

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June 2019

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## THANKS TO OUR CLIENTS

All of the staff at Corporate Farmer wish to express our thanks to you, our clients, for another successful tax season. Tax season is always a busy time for us and we greatly appreciated your patience as we worked hard to get your bookkeeping and returns completed. We were pleased with the general receptivity of our new tax organizer and appreciate your willingness to try something new. We found that the new organizer gave us better quality information to prepare your returns.

## DID YOU KNOW?

On our website we have several of our most commonly requested forms available for you to access and print 24/7. This includes, "green sheets", PIK certificates, tax organizers, the code card, and many other forms. The link to our client documents page is:  
<https://corporatefarmer.com/client-forms/>

## REFERRAL BONUS REMINDER

You, our clients, are our best form of advertisement. We have found that word of mouth is the way we get most of our new business. If you refer someone to Corporate Farmer and they decide to join us as a client, you will receive a \$250 check from Corporate Farmer as a token of our appreciation.

## FARM STRESS RESILIENCY

*This is the second in a series from the ISU Extension and Outreach Dairy Team on Dealing with Farm Stress.*

**Farming** is dangerous and stressful, no doubt. Farmers have varying degrees of resiliency to deal with the physical and mental dangers of farming, leading to varying stress levels. The integrated blend of family, farming and nature can cause unique situations of stress in farm families.

**Stress** is *normal* and can be healthy as it might push us to do things that can promote growth. But, too much acute stress or piled up chronic stress can make it difficult to:

- Concentrate, remember, and process information
- Organize, calculate, and make decisions
- Sleep, relax, and breathe properly
- Communicate, share, and bond as a family

Stress can become a source of conflict but can also help families grow together. Many farm families are strong because they have gone through a tough time together. Too much stress can lead to anxiety, doubt, depression and hopelessness. Developing coping skills can help families have more resiliency to farm stress.

**Resiliency** can be a learned, life skill. It is a person's ability to deal with stress, using skills, to better cope and possibly even overcome the root causes or maybe just its effects. Since stress reduction techniques are a learned skill, the aim of this article is to assist farmers and those working with them with a "PRIMER" acronym tool to better deal with farm stress. The tool is a six step process outlined below. The "PRIMER" Tool will then be detailed along with skills and goals that pertain to each step.

### Perception

Perception is heavily related to the image or picture we have in our minds of whatever situation, coupled with any meaning or attitude attached to that image or picture. An occurrence might happen to two people and one might very positively perceive it and the other very negatively with a wide range of other "perceptions" in between.

A farm family's perception can pertain to their internal environment, such as perceived interpersonal and familial strengths, as well as their external environment, including positive and negative experiences pertaining to the family's ability to adapt. Research suggests that families who **reinterpret** initial negative to more positive meanings of their overall crisis situations, are more likely to be in control of their stressors, to find possible solutions to crisis situations and to adapt well eventually to the crisis. The problem is not that there are problems or stress, the problem is expecting otherwise and thinking that having a problem is a problem.

Seeing stress as normal and a means of growth is a great tool. Accepting that life is difficult at times and that it is in the process of overcoming difficulty that gives life some of its meaning by helping us grow, is often an attitude that can lead to a more positive perception of stressful situations.

### **Reality**

Reality is the sum of a person's internal capacity and external environment to understand the situation surrounding stress or a crisis event. Some situations take families by surprise or are beyond their control. If life events come too soon, are delayed or fail to materialize, health, happiness, and well-being may be affected. Intensified emotionality and/or behavioral disorganization in families and their members are likely to occur as a result. Another crucial variable in dealing with the unexpected is family development and environmental fit.

Ambiguous loss is often a reality and a difficult stress to deal with as something is being lost, but not knowing what is happening; what might happen; or even what can be done to prevent the loss due to circumstances beyond a person's control. So, the reality of farm and family stress can be normal living or it can cause many physical, mental, personal and family ailments. The goal is to understand the reality of the stress environment and seek remedy.

### **Identify**

Identify emotions of stress related circumstances. Emotions are often so intertwined and often mangled that identifying the underlying causes or emotion is not easy. For instance, an exhibit of anger, a secondary emotion, often is expressed due to another emotion. Anxiety and depression often have a root cause. Once we realize our perception and the reality of the situation, we look inward to identify causes so as not to transfer negative emotions to or onto others.

When angry, it might be easiest to transfer the cause to the person closest to us, a spouse for instance, since they were part of the environment when the situation occurred, though they were not the source. Thus, the identification of emotions and causes of stress is important so as not to wrongly blame or transfer negative emotions to someone who may just be an innocent bystander. Know that facts are much easier to untangle than emotions coming from a multitude of experiences.

The goal is to have positive emotions regarding stressful and other situations. Situations exhibit chemical reactions in our bodies that trigger our emotions. Our brains may label the experience as good, bad, happy or sad. It's mind over matter as positive thoughts are a precursor to positive feelings or emotions. So, the skill to learn is how to identify emotions that have occurred while thinking positive thoughts. Thus, we are about as happy as we make up our minds to be. Choose happy and return there even when life gets us down, though granted, easier said than done.

### **Manage**

Manage through stress knowing all situations have some hope, alternatives or options. Identify what can be controlled and accept what is beyond control without blaming oneself. Understand that lack of clarity of the future can induce stress as it brings worry, confusion, conflict and even shame. Assess stress symptoms - rapid heart rate, shallow breathing, headaches, anxiety, outbursts, lack of focus and hope - to know stress levels.

### **Extend**

Extend oneself to others as social isolation and loneliness can further add to stress. Those in family environments are best helped by family members, but introverted males often do not extend their thoughts and feelings readily to allow for healthy family support. Guilt, shame and social stigma often inhibit extending to others for help, as well.

Feeling close to others increases oxytocin in the blood. Doing things for others increases happiness and reduces focus on self and personal problems - a subliming tactic. Force oneself to find things to smile and laugh about - laughter being the best medicine is more than a metaphor.

Seek advice from others as many have experience with stress and difficulty as it is a common part of life, so realize one is not alone. Verbalizing or writing concerns often helps clarify thoughts and organize action plans. Lack of social support, on the other hand, can be a cause of future depression and loss of hope.

The goal is to become more intertwined in other's lives as stressed people are often helped by family and friends who care. When extending to others, we often find new perspectives and mindsets, not to mention better feelings toward stressful situations at hand. Lastly, by extending oneself to others for help, consolation or comradery, we often experience a basic human need of compassion that helps humans realize we are not alone in our issues.

### Resources

Resources are important in life. Families that are able to make positive meaning of their stressors and use effective coping strategies as well as internal and external resources are more likely to adapt. This applies to individuals, also. Internal resources and coping strategies were shared in previous sections. External resource needs tend to focus on things that help develop skills in:

1. **Interpersonal Communication** - everyone has their own beliefs, feelings, needs and agenda to be shared. Knowing healthy/ideal versus unhealthy/common behaviors can separate success and failure in overcoming stress or conflict.
2. **Family and Community Support** - immediate and intergenerational families, and intertwined communities can be a source of both stress and strength - attend to self-help and other resources, and other people's needs as family and community support is a two way street.
3. **Problem Solving Techniques** - use processes to: define the problem/stress; consider pros and cons to alternatives; select a plan; take action steps; identify resources; and use group/family meetings. Be "proactive" in problem solving.
4. **Goal Setting** - Make them SMART - Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-Based.

### FUN FARM FACTS

- Total US corn yield (tons per acre) has increased more than **360 percent** since 1950.
- Farming accounts for about **1 percent** of the US gross domestic product.
- **Women** make up 30 percent of the total number of US farm operations.
- Farm and ranch families comprise just **2 percent** of the US population.

### FORM 720 INSTRUCTIONS

As part of the Affordable Care Act, medical reimbursement plans are treated as self-insured health plans and are subject to a small excise tax. The tax is reported on Form 720 and must be mailed during the

month of July every year. For the year 2018 the tax is \$2.39 per covered person for the plans ending prior to October 1, 2018 or \$2.45 for plans ending on or after October 1, 2018 and before October 1, 2019. This fee is deductible under code 596 as it is a type of a payroll tax.

The worksheet should be completed and returned to Corporate Farmer. Sometime after July 1, 2019, you will receive a Form 720 in the mail along with instructions on where to file the return. This return cannot be e-filed and you will need to enclose a payment.

A medical reimbursement plan is a plan where a business, whether a C corporation, an S corporation or partnership, either reimburses the employee for their medical expenses or pays them directly. A shareholder of a corporation or a partner in an LLC or partnership is considered to be an employee.

The shareholder or partner and their spouse who can also be a shareholder or partner should go on the line number ONE. Line number TWO is for shareholder's children or other dependents covered under your businesses' medical reimbursement plan. These would only be the number of children or other dependents for whom you have paid medical expenses.

Line number THREE is for non-shareholders covered. This means any employees of the corporation, LLC or partnership for which the corporation pays wages and also covers their medical expenses. These could be adult children or unrelated parties who work for you.

The last line covers spouses or the dependent children of any non-shareholder employees which are covered by your company's medical reimbursement plan. This would include any non-employee who is covered under an employee's family plan.

There is a MINIMUM fine of \$135 for non-compliance with the reporting of Form 720 taxes on medical reimbursement plans so we recommend you file and pay the applicable fee.

Please keep in mind that you can no longer provide a medical reimbursement plan if you have more than one employee. Therefore, if your total number of persons covered is greater than one and they are not all part of the same family, you should discontinue the plan immediately or face being assessed the penalty of \$100 per employee per day. This is the case whether or not the plan is available to all employees or not.

The worksheet for preparation of Form 720 is on the next page. Please remove it and return it to our offices and we will complete the return and return it to you for filing.



# FORM 720 WORKSHEET

Employer's Name \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Tax ID # \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

Do You have a Medical Reimbursement Plan?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

Plan ending date?

Prior to October 1, 2018?

On or After October 1, 2018?

If you do not know it is likely your tax year end for the previous tax year. For individuals that would be December 31, 2018 and the fiscal year for corporations.

Total Number of Covered Employees \_\_\_\_\_

1307 6th St. SW #1  
Mason City, IA 50401

**CORPORATE  
FARMER**

