



# TIPS FOR MANAGING STRESS

## 1) CHANGE YOUR THINKING!

**Acceptance** - Many of us worry about things we have no control over. For example, a family illness, great deal of change at work, or finding out that your basketball team lost. One way to manage stress is to accept when things are beyond your control. It may be helpful to think positive thoughts such as, "Someday I'll laugh about this," or "It's a learning experience."

**Attitude** - Try to focus on the positive side of situations. Ask yourself, "What good can come out of this?" "What can I learn from this situation?" and "How can I handle this better when it comes up again?" Solutions come easier when you focus on the positive and your stress level will be reduced.

**Perspective** - We often worry about things that never happen. Keep things in perspective by asking yourself, "How important is this situation? Can I do anything about it?, In five years, will I even remember it happened?"

**Problem solving** - Try to identify if there are practical or creative solutions to reduce or eliminate the source of your stress. Talking through your problems can help you brainstorm possible solutions.

## 2) CHANGE YOUR BEHAVIOUR

**Changing behaviour** - Sometimes, changing routines or behaviour can help reduce stress. For example, spend more time doing enjoyable activities; maintain a healthy lifestyle with physical exercise, a good sleep routine and healthy diet; look at how you communicate - with others and yourself.

**Relaxation** - Learn some relaxation techniques. Many people have found that this helps them reduce and manage the symptoms of stress and anxiety.

- Simple breathing exercises are easy to do anywhere at any time, only take a few minutes, and can be used as often as you need. These can be readily found on the internet.
- Using voice-guided meditation or a relaxation App or YouTube can help you relax before bed or after a stressful day at work.

**Exercise** - We all know that exercise is one of the most important things we can do for our health and wellbeing. Even with the best of intentions, exercise often slips to the bottom of the list. Any is better than none.

**Sleep** - Sleep is crucial to our quality of life. Poor sleep can impact our health and immune systems.

There are a number of practical strategies for improving sleep habits - they will be at another toolbox talk on sleep tips. At a minimum get 6 - 9hrs per day.

### References:

1. State Anger and the Risk of Injury: A Case-Control and Case-Crossover Study. Daniel C. Vinson, MD, MSPH and Vineesha Arelli, BS. *Annals Family Medicine* 2006 4:63-68