

Helpful Strategies to Manage Stress

🕒 Reward Yourself

- 🕒 Celebrate successes and accomplishments. Don't think too big, completing an exam regardless of the grade can be rewarding. Checking something off your task list can also be rewarding.
- 🕒 Take breaks as needed.
- 🕒 Do activities that you enjoy such as; reading, listening to music, and enjoying nature. Basically, anything that is "you time."

🕒 Exercise

- 🕒 Aerobic action spends stress hormones, strengthens organs targeted by stress, improves sleep, and increases energy (just to name a few benefits).
- 🕒 When you exercise, beta endorphins, the body's natural relaxants, are released. These counteract the stress hormones raging through your body.

🕒 Belly breathing

- 🕒 Practice deep breathing from your diaphragm rather than your chest. Inhale air, notice your stomach rise.
- 🕒 Inhale through your nose for 3 seconds, hold your breath for 3 seconds, and exhale through your mouth for 3 seconds.
- 🕒 Try combining a positive phrase or word when you exhale or pairing your breath with the flow of an ocean wave.

🕒 Progressive muscle relaxation (PMR)

- 🕒 Practice tensing and relaxing your muscles from head to toe.

🕒 Imagery and meditation

- 🕒 Visualize a place you feel safe and/or calm. Enhance the image with sights, sounds, smells, and sensations. This can also be combined with the belly breathing.

🕒 Sleep

- 🕒 Get yourself on a schedule. Pulling all nighters or staying out all night decreases your ability to function.
- 🕒 Get more sleep. Sleep difficulty is a hallmark of overstress. The less sleep you get, the more likely stress will weaken your immune system.

🕒 Eat

- 🕒 Give your mind and body the nutrients needed. Be careful not to not rely on caffeine, alcohol, or other substances

Stress cannot be avoided just as change cannot. How stressful a situation is, may merely depend on how you are looking at it. There is meaning behind the "glass is half full" concept-if you look hard enough at a situation, there is often a silver lining. Make the choice to view situations differently and make the choice to live a life with less stress.