

## Stress Management

### What is stress?

- Stress is what you feel when you have to handle more than you are used to.
- some stress is normal

### Common signs of stress

- under or over eating
- under or over sleeping
- using alcohol or drugs
- feeling tired
- finding it hard to focus
- feeling anxious

### Ideas to keep stress low

#### 1. Deep Breathing Exercise

#### 2. Non-accusing communication

- ✓ Use “I statements”
- ✓ “When this happens, I feel upset.”
- ✓ “I feel worried when I can’t...”
- ✓ Be honest about your feelings
- ✓ Avoid “never”, “always”, “should”

#### 3. The power of choice and attitude

- ✓ I can choose to be happy or unhappy
- ✓ Being rich ≠ happy, being poor ≠ unhappy!
- ✓ “Getting angry is a reaction, staying angry is a choice!”

#### 4. Me time

- biking
- dancing
- knitting
- music (cpl)
- photography
- reading (cpl)
- sewing
- walking
- yoga (recreation centres)

5. Find an activity you enjoy
6. Laugh and have fun
7. Manage your energy – have breaks
8. Keep things simple and realistic – make small goals
9. Prioritize your life
10. Talk to someone- family/friends, community or professionals
11. Have healthy meals
12. Get help when needed
13. Can we change?
  - ✓ Change the situation
  - ✓ Change how you feel or think about the situation
  - ✓ Change how you behave in the situation

#### **Guiding questions**

1. What stressors can I eliminate, modify or change?
2. What thinking or feeling habits can I change?
3. What behavioural habits can I change?
4. What helps me to relax?

#### **Be patient with yourself!**

Emotional health/mental health resources can be found at <http://diversitycalgary.ca/ew>

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