

7077 - Managing Stress in the Moment



1. Recognize that you always have choice. The number one stressor is a feeling that you have no control and no options. Even entertaining what most of us would consider extreme choices, can help us to deal with the present situation. For example, if commuting to work is difficult, realizing that moving closer to work is an alternative can help us deal with the daily drive, even if we decide not to exercise that choice.
2. When entering and leaving an environment that you know is a challenge for you, envision a physical beginning and end to that time frame. For example, if you are serving on a community board, before you enter the meeting put a mental “area of calm” around you that the chaos and stress of that meeting cannot penetrate. When you leave, use a physical cue such as wiping your feet on the floor before you get into the car to remove any negativity from you before getting into your personal space. Washing your hands is another opportunity to couple a physical cleansing with an emotional cleansing.
3. Take advantage of moments of calm. When you are in the car, avoid thinking of your “to do list” upon arriving at your destination. Instead, enjoy the fact that for the moment, all you have to do is focus on your driving and listen to music you find soothing or uplifting.
4. Protect yourself from the stress of others. Seeing a clear barrier between yourself and someone you know affects you negatively helps to keep your outlook instead of adopting theirs. Envision an imaginary wall of glass, so that you see the words and “vibes” of that person bouncing off that barrier so that they don’t bring you down. You can see them, hear them, respond to them and still keep your own upbeat attitude and objectivity. Another option is to see their stress as a package they are laying on the table, and you can choose whether or not you want to pick it up and adopt it as your own.
5. Take 2. Two minutes of calm physical and mental rest can go a long way towards rejuvenating our spirits and energy stores. Recognizing that sitting back from the computer, or even prolonging your stay in the washroom☺ to breathe, relax, remind yourself of your blessings, the value of rest and your right to be happy will help you deal with issues with more strength and objectivity. Even occasions such as standing in line at the bank can be restful if we take advantage of the opportunity that for a few minutes we have nothing to do!

