

### **Strategies to**

# **Manage Stress**

These are stressful times for our families, coworkers, friends and ourselves.

Managing that stress is critical to maintaining our health, productivity and our sanity. Not managing our stress can create many more challenges, such as lack of ability to focus, cognitive impairment, immune system suppression.

Checkout these tools for managing your stress during these uncertain times.

#### **EXERCISE**

Exercise releases endorphins in the brain, which elevate mood and decrease stress. Try a workout video or a short 20 minute walk.

Remember, any movement is better than no movement!

#### SUPPORT SYSTEM & SELF CARE

Have one or more friends with whom you can share personal matters.

Create and focus on positive self-statements such as, "I'm safe, I'm strong, and I'm healthy." Focus on your good qualities and accomplishments. Don't forget "Me Time!"

#### **NUTRITION**

Eat a balanced diet daily. Eat more whole grains, nuts, fruits and vegetables. Substitute fruits for desserts.

Choose foods that are low in fat, sugar, and salt. Avoid caffeine, nicotine, sugar, and cola. Avoid using chemical substances (including alcohol or nicotine) to reduce your stress level.

## Strategies to Manage Stress

#### **MINDFULNESS**

Be where your feet are! Focus on being in the present moment and not allowing your mind to wander to the "what if's." Direct your attention on your breathing, set an intention to stay in the moment, and maintain a productive attitude.

#### **SLEEP**

Be consistent with your sleep schedule to ensure you are getting 7-8 hours a night.

Do not use medication or chemical substances (including alcohol) to help you sleep.

#### DELIBERATE BREATHING

Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth using the diaphragm.

Add counts to the breathing. Inhale for 6 and out for 6. Repeat.

Quiet the mind by focusing on a state of present moment awareness or gratitude.

