Ten Ways to Cope with Stress

1. **Prepare yourself to cope with Stress.** Recognize that stress is an inevitable, essential part of life, and but it can also be harmful if not dealt with properly.

2. **Learn to identify signs of stress and their sources.** Try to become acquainted with your own stress moods and have a sense of the amount of stress you can manage without an energy breakdown.

3. **Develop the ability to interpret stress events in a positive way.** The energy from stress can be channeled into a constructive form and can be a helpful tool to initiate changes in your lifestyle.

4. **Be aware of your own power.** Marcus Aurelious noted, “If you are distressed by anything external, the pain is not due to the thing itself, but due to your estimate of it.” You do have the power to control your own stress response.

5. **Plan your response to stress.** Certain events in your life are repeated, and you can learn to anticipate a crisis. Determine that you will manage the next one with greater calmness. Example: You may be able to postpone a decision about moving, changing jobs, etc., until you can handle it better.

6. **Treat yourself positively.** Worrying is neither profitable nor constructive. Do what you can about a situation and then move on to other things. Assure yourself that you do your best and that things will work out well. Think positively and say to yourself: Today, I will accomplish... This is much better than negative, hand-wringing indecisiveness.

7. **Work on being open and politely assertive.** Suppressed feelings, anxieties, self-doubts, and low-esteem are among major stresses that lead to illness and disease. Expressing feelings in a clear and direct way, nondefensive yet nonthreatening, can be a great tension reliever.

8. **Develop a repertoire of assertive skills.** Act on your own best interest. Express emotion. Respect the rights and needs of others. Stand up for your rights without fear or anxiety.

9. **Make personal guidelines.** Don’t set self-expectations too high or create a state of frustration and time pressure. Re-evaluate your goals periodically. Other examples:
   - Do one thing at a time.
   - Keep some humor.
   - Accept the reality of the world.
   - Remember there are always options.
   - Don’t look back.

   - Treat people with respect.
   - Take steps to improve important relationships.
   - Be in touch with your needs.
   - Choose to be well.
   - Cultivate and capitalize on your strengths.

10. **Make changes.** Consider changing the part of your life that brings about chronic stress. When all other attempts fail to relieve stress, there may be a need to eliminate the source.

*From: The Student Success Center Resource File*