Easy tips for feeling great!

3 choices we have when feeling stressed – ‘CPR’ :-

- Change the thing that is causing stress, or part of it
- Perceive or think about it differently
- Remove yourself from it - temporarily or permanently

Changing the ‘stressor’

Poor health making life harder?
- Exercise until you huff & puff for 30 mins per day, most days
- Prioritise continuous sleep with good habits
- Regularly stretch to reduce muscle tension
- Eat a balanced diet; Lots of water
- Reduce alcohol & cigarettes
- Make real life change – get information, feedback & facts re your current situation; weigh up pro’s & con’s of change, identify risks of no change; develop a ‘SMART’ goal; Implement an easy & simple plan to change which includes small steps; review progress & celebrate success!!

Working too much? Not enough rest or play?
- This is not a dress rehearsal! This is the ‘main event’ – YOUR LIFE!! So, get on with making the most of it!
- What is one thing you can decide to do right now which will give you more rest and/or play?
- Set a ‘SMART’ goal to make life easier &/or have more fun i.e. Specific, Measurable, Attractive, Realistic & Time-specific!

Conflict?
- Stay calm and focussed on the current issue. Do not raise past grudges
- Ask for what you need. Be specific and realistic!
- Remain open and respectful – Assert v’s Aggress!
- Identify options to meet needs & avoid fears
- Treat the problem behaviour or issue as ‘the enemy’ not the person
- Highlight common ground, i.e. “I’m sure we’d both like to sort this out so that we can get on with other things?”

Not enough time in the day?
- Use a daily plan to list the jobs to be done & their level of priority. Be realistic! Do high priority jobs first.
- Keep your work area tidy so you can easily find things; Ensure technology works for you!
- Handle every bit of paper only once i.e. File it; Act on it, Refer it, or Throw it away!
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Perceive or think differently about things

Having trouble “Switching off” from work?

- Leave work while you still have energy. Fatigue is cumulative. Know your cut-off time.
- Change work clothes to “fun” or “relax” clothes when you get home; have a shower; play some music; fly a kite; garden; walk the dog
- Distract yourself by engaging in an activity which really interests, pleases or excites you! i.e. Switch ON to something else!
- Avoid having reminders of work visible at home. Avoid taking work home.
- Using ‘thought stopping’.

Worrying excessively about things?

- Use stress coping self-talk eg. *I've done harder things before!* *What’s the worst that can happen? It'll feel great when it's over!*
- Talk it out with someone; Write it out; Shrug it off; Laugh it off!
- Change 'Should!' & 'Must!' to 'could' or 'prefer'; 'Have to!' to ‘Choose to’; ‘Can’t!’ to ‘Choose not to’; ‘Never!’ to ‘Rarely’; ‘Always!’ to ‘Often’; ‘I'm/they’re stupid!’ to ‘I/they did a stupid thing’.
- Practice relaxation i.e. 3 deep breathes in & out; Count backwards as you exhale; Imagine a peaceful & special place.
- Use ‘Flexible Optimism’ to live longer, healthier & successful lives!

Remove yourself

- You can Remove yourself from the stressor temporarily, eg. take leave or ‘time out’, to gain a new perspective or gather energy to continue on.
- You can also remove yourself permanently. Have you tried everything else and are still stressed? Are you sure you are not just running away from a problem which you will probably encounter again? If so, it may be better to try and sort it out now?
- Contact your organisation’s Employee Assistance Program, Local Community Health Centre or a Psychologist.