



## STRESS MANAGEMENT

Stress occurs in everyone's life. How stressful something is depends on how we perceive it. Stress is not necessarily a bad thing. It can help to motivate and drive us toward our goals, whether it is studying for a big test or training for an athletic event. However, prolonged and/or high levels of stress can have a negative impact. Medical school is demanding and can cause both prolonged and high levels of stress. Oftentimes, students find themselves becoming overwhelmed.

It is important to manage your stress effectively. Here are some stress management tips:

- 1) **MANAGE YOUR TIME EFFECTIVELY...**Prioritize your tasks into "essential", "important", and "trivial". Plan your schedule around this. Consider getting rid of all the trivial tasks
- 2) **TAKE TIME FOR YOURSELF...**Pick up a hobby that is completely separate from your studies, Enjoy a good book, Take a hot bath
- 3) **FIND TIME FOR RELAXATION...**Learn relaxation techniques. Use them *before* you feel stressed
- 4) **DON'T OVER-EXTEND YOURSELF...**Look at all that you are involved in and see if you have overbooked yourself. If you have, cut some things out. It is okay to say no!
- 5) **BUILD A GOOD SUPPORT NETWORK...**And *use it!*
- 6) **TAKE CARE OF YOUR BODY...**Eliminate "solutions" that are bad for your health (alcohol, sleeping pills, cigarettes), Eat right, Exercise, Sleep well (without aids)
- 7) **MANAGE YOUR EXPECTATIONS OF YOURSELF...**Allow yourself to be less than perfect. Watch what you say to yourself speak to yourself in a way that you would a good friend. Be encouraging and supportive of yourself
- 8) **USE COPING SKILLS THAT ARE APPROPRIATE AND EFFECTIVE ...**Recognize those coping tools that are short-term and those that are long-term and use them appropriately. Use coping skills that do not add to your stress (i.e. if you are feeling overwhelmed by the information you are trying to learn do not take on a hobby of learning another language)
- 9) **REWARD YOURSELF...**Recognize that you are working hard and deserve a reward
- 10) **BE FLEXIBLE...**Sometimes we are so rigid in our plans and schedules this causes additional stress. Allow for some "wiggle room"
- 11) **ACCEPT WHAT YOU CANNOT CHANGE...**Don't waste your energy on things that are out of your control. Just let them go.
- 12) **TAKE ONE THING AT A TIME...**Trying to do everything all at once leads to more stress. Focus on one things at a time. Not only will you be more focused, you will feel good when you are able to check something off your list.
- 13) **DO SOMETHING NICE FOR SOMEONE ELSE...**Sometimes doing something nice for ourselves allows us to get our minds off our worries, at least for a little bit
- 14) **BE PROACTIVE...**Do all of the above *before* you are overwhelmed. Learn to manage your stress as it comes up instead of waiting for the stress to build up and feel like it is too much to handle.

**For help call the Counseling Center at 407-823-2811 to schedule an appointment**