

# Coping Strategies

## 1. Cognitive coping strategies

- Identify elements that you are able to control.
- Cultivate a sense of humor!
- Try to create a new structure in your daily routine if the crisis has disrupted the usual one.
- Allow yourself to fantasize about more positive situations.
- Maintain a positive outlook
- Created a personal plan of action, utilizing a variety of coping strategies suggested below.

## 2. Exercise

- Institute a personal exercise plan, taking into account your physical condition.
- Investigate available facilities and group exercise classes.
- If confined, consider options such as desk exercise, stretching, jogging in place, etc.

## 3. Nutrition

- Beware of the effects of excessive caffeine, alcohol, tobacco products and sugar.
- Incorporate complex carbohydrates and proteins into your daily diet (such as dried fruits, raisins, nuts).
- Maintain a sufficient supply of liquids.
- Utilize hot, non-caffeinated beverages, such as Ovaltine, hot apple cider and bouillon.

## 4. Take Regular “Time Outs”

- Permit yourself to take time out from the stressful situation by doing something that changes your focus: i.e. reading, listening to music, knitting, carpentry, sewing, watching videos, rearranging closets, writing, playing an instrument, etc.

## 5. Support

- Identify an individual in whom you can confide and who will give you honest feedback about your reactions to high stress situations.
- Remember that talking about feelings is an extremely effective method of reducing stress.
- Consider group activities which build a sense of community and allow people to support each other.

## 6. Relaxation Techniques

- Learn, practice and utilize a relaxation technique which might include one or more of the following: yoga, meditation, use of relaxation tapes, or brief relaxation exercises.

Adapted from “Counseling & Training Resources, Inc.” - 1988