



Canadian Mental
Health Association
Manitoba and Winnipeg
Mental health for all

Association canadienne
pour la santé mentale
Manitoba et Winnipeg
La santé mentale pour tous



years of
community
ans dans la
communauté

Strategies to Reduce Stress

Stress is anything that poses a challenge or a threat to our sense of well-being. Stressors are the situation, events or people that put pressure on an individual. In small quantities, stress is good for us as it can motivate us and help us to be productive. Signs of stress include feelings of nervousness or alertness, butterflies in the stomach, feeling activated, feeling low, feeling tired or feeling like you can't think of anything but the stressful situation.

Chronic stress develops when stress is ongoing as a result of multiple events. If you ignore your stress it will increase and affect your physical, mental, cognitive and behavioural health. Too much stress can lead to addiction, depression anxiety, heart disease, high blood pressure and other physical ailments.

- **Notice:** awareness of having stress is the first step in alleviating it.
- **Breathe:** Slow deep breathing, in through the nose and out through the mouth can reduce feelings of stress and open your mind to problem solving and relaxation.
- **Pay Attention:** recognizing the signs and symptoms of how stress affects your mind and body will alert you to use self-management techniques.
- **Distraction:** (activities that take our attention off our stress) is helpful – try planning a meal, organizing a closet, singing, reading, playing a game, counting backwards, watching movies, painting or playing with pets or children. Any activity that gets your mind off the stress for a while is helpful. Breaks from stress are very important.
- **Relaxation:** (activities that calm our body and mind) – try meditation, progressive muscle relaxation, deep breathing, listening to music, visualization or acupressure, take a nap, spend some time outdoors breathing in fresh air. Whatever activity that brings you calm is important to do several times per day.
- **Action:** (activities that use self-awareness to empower us to reduce or eliminate stress) try – cooking, cleaning, creating something or fixing something, stretching, walking, biking, yoga, running, journaling or dancing. Get your body moving and you will feel more able to cope and manage stress.

The CMHA Service Navigation Hub (SNH) provides information on a range of topics related to mental health, mental illness, distress and strategies connected to resilience.

When you connect to the SNH they listen and assess your situation; provide immediate support; educate and provide consultation on your rights and to determine next possible steps of action – whether to proceed with intake to CMHA programs or to refer to appropriate community supports.

You can reach them directly at: 204-775-6442 or email at: hub@cmhawpg.mb.ca
Visit: [service navigation hub](#) for more detailed information on the support a Recovery Navigation Specialist can provide as well as other crisis supports within Manitoba.

