Short-Term Ways to Handle Stress

- **Relax, sitting in a comfortable position.** Take a deep breath in, through your nose. Count to three as your chest expands with air. Hold your breath momentarily and then release it. Repeat three times.
- **Take a break from what you are doing...** get some exercise, go for a walk, get fresh air, or go somewhere private to cry or yell if you want to let it out.
- **Reality check.** Ask yourself if it’s truly worth being upset about this situation. How important is this on a scale of 1 to 10? Will you even remember this in 5 years? Can you choose to stay calm?
- **Talk with a friend about what’s stressing you out.**
- **Procrastination/organization:** list all the things you need to do. Prioritize the list and assign dates for completing the items. Reward yourself for completing each item.

Long-Term Ways to Handle Stress

- **Know your limits.** Learn to say no before you’ve passed the limit of your time, kindness, or patience with another.
- **Choose your own life goals.** Don’t live for others or let them make choices that don’t fit with your goals.
- **Think positively.** Every cloud has a silver lining—is this a learning experience? We all make mistakes; forgive yourself when you are not perfect.
- **Make decisions.** Don’t wait for the world or someone else to decide for you.
- **Realistic expectations.** Don’t expect perfection—set small realistic goal steps; expect some problems along the way. Deal with them or ask for help and move on.
- **Accept what you cannot change.** Know your limits and enlist help when necessary.
- **Anticipate stressful situations and prepare for them.** Practice what you will say/do when it happens. Ask a friend to role-play a conversation with you if you need help getting started.
- **Live in the present.** Learn from the past and move on… the future is yours!
- **Manage your health.** Especially when stressed, pay attention to getting enough sleep, eating well, exercising, and limiting use of substances.
- **Take time for yourself!** YOU are your greatest asset—you deserve to rest and play. Schedule “me time” in your weekly planner if necessary.