

Tips to Manage Stress During Daunting Economic Times



Circumstances which affect us, but over which we have no control, are the most overwhelming. The American Psychological Association's 2008 Stress in America survey showed that 80% of Americans find the faltering economy to be a significant cause of stress. One unique side effect of the economic crisis is that it affects everyone. No one is totally immune either from tumbling retirement account balances, plummeting housing values, or rising prices. The following pointers should help:

- **Take a deep breath and remain calm.** “Like most of our everyday stress, this extra tension can be managed,” states Australian Psychological Society President, Amanda Gordon. “Psychologists first recommend taking pause and not panicking. There are healthy strategies available for managing stress during tough economic times.” Be aware of what is happening in the world around you, but refrain from getting caught up in the gloom-and-doom hype.
- **Strengthen family ties.** Reach out to family and friends. Avoid blaming or belittling your partner. Remember, you are in this together. Be aware that body language and tone of voice communicate just as much as actual words. A mocking tone, rolling eyes or hands on hips is likely to cause a defensive reaction in your partner. Use “I” statements rather than “you” accusations. Add humor and warmth when possible.
- **Maintain a healthy lifestyle.** Aim to get enough sleep, follow a healthy diet, and exercise frequently. Regular physical activity will elevate your mood by pumping up your endorphins and giving you a sense of control over both your body and your life. If you can increase the amount of exercise, so much the better.
- **Develop a Plan B.** Write down specific ways you and your family can reduce expenses. Without alarming children, discuss the need to monitor expenditures. Understand what options you have for healthcare benefits if your employment changes. It will lessen your stress level to make these plans in advance so that you have concrete ideas of how to handle a downturn in your financial situation.

www.myliferesource.com

Carebridge services are available to covered employees and their families at no cost to them. Contact Carebridge at any time by calling 800-437-0911 or emailing clientservice@carebridge.com.