# **Managing Stress**

#### **SLOW DOWN!**

SLOW DOWN before you break down!

- Take a few deep breaths or count to 10.
- Allow yourself brief breaks.
- Take off your shoes, put your feet up, close your eyes and relax.
- Take a one-day vacation.

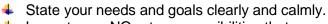


## **USE POSITIVE SELF-TALK/COGNITIVE COPING SKILLS**

- I can handle this feeling without smoking.
- 👃 I had to learn how to smoke and now I am learning how NOT to smoke. This is a difficult and will take time.
- Alcohol does not improve situations; it only provides a brief escape. Only I can change my situation.

#### **BE ASSERTIVE**

Many stressful situations can be handled or prevented completely by being more assertive:



- Learn to say NO -- to responsibilities that are not yours, to emotional demands that leave you feeling drained, and to problems that you can't or shouldn't solve.
- Work together with others to achieve win-win situations.
- Ask directly about things when you are not very clear do not assume that your boss, spouse, or friends "should" know what to tell you.

#### **EXERCISE**

- Regular exercise has a lot of benefits, one of which is reducing your stress.
- ♣ Aim for at least three times a week, for at least 20
- Fitness walking is a good start if you don't already have an exercise or sport you like.



#### **HOBBIES AND FRIENDS**

Do things you really enjoy!



Spend time with friends.

#### AVOID DRUGS AND ALCOHO



These are poor options for managing stress. They actually generate more stress by impairing your judgment, memory, health, and overall ability to handle stressful situations.

## TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

A healthy body will decrease the possibility of experiencing stress. Keep a consistent sleep schedule, eat nutritious foods, and maintain a healthy lifestyle.

