

### Thoughts/Resources for Dealing with Stressors (created by Heidi Saarinen, NDSU Nursing Faculty):

- Music: Listen, dance, sing, share! It is amazing how music can make our hearts sync with the beat, change our mood, give deeper meaning to a situation, or just be a welcome distraction or energy boost! Our heart beat often conforms to the music we listen to, so try to listen to relaxing music if stressed to break you from the stress cycle.
- Quotes: Ultimately, words can inspire or crush our spirits. Choose to speak (and think!) life into yourself and into others. You might have to hang something that resonates for you in your living space, your car, your computer, your bathroom-get inspired!
- Yoga: Free 1 month Yoga site with instruction: [www.dailyburn.com](http://www.dailyburn.com) (Only first 30 days are free. Has 15 and 20 minute workouts to choose from, etc.)
- Spontaneity: Do something you don't normally do (a walk outside, an e-visit with a friend(s), cook something new, start a random craft, etc.)
- Humor: Use humor as a way to cope with work/stress. Look for pinterest quotes and comics on being a nurse or related to medicine or just humorous jokes in general.
- Exercise: make a habit of it, whether you start by walking, stretching, running, or other
- Boundaries: Distance yourself from work/school during set times: set up boundaries so that you are not always in "work mode"
- Network: stay in touch with your classmates to feel comfortable asking one another questions and develop new mentors to network/collaborate with.
- Expectations: set realistic expectations for yourself and your work.
- Create: Contribute to a cause by getting involved, as this helps you connect to the community, an organization, or other network. There is always a way to help if you look for a way to "be the solution". When you focus on others, you can be amazed how your problems appear smaller.
- Eat healthy: Remember to eat a varied and balanced diet. Taking time to prepare a lunch for yourself keeps you on track and helps you feel productive too.
- Recognize your defense mechanisms: Try to identify things that set you off and what really matters, so that you can focus on what matters when you become defensive.
- Sleep: Make sure to get enough sleep (8 to 8.5 hours every 24-hour period) to help you manage stress and cognitively process problems and new learning.
- Support: Seek out relationships that uplift and build you up. Spend time with those you love.
- Attitude: Know when to adjust your attitude or your course of action. Remember that you own or are responsible for at least 50% of all interactions and 100% of how you react.
- Mindfulness: Practice being mindful versus mind FULL (Books: Altman, D. (2011) One Minute Mindfulness)
- "Butterfly Hug": Rub forearms to help increase oxytocin and show self-kindness (seems weird, but can help, or give yourself a foot massage)
- Breaks: Know when to be done for the day. Don't work late every night. Separating yourself for a time can help recharge you and allow you to be subjective.
- Prioritize: If you aren't pleased with what you are spending your time on, prioritize and see how you can better allocate the time you are given.
- Learn: Learn about something other than related to the medical field
- Breathe: Deep breathing exercises are not just for our patients! Find one that works for you and use it often. Google or youtube different ones/ways.
- "Stress-Free Zone": Make sure to have a space/area/place/time you can "escape" to that is calming and enjoyable to just sit, relax, and not think about stressful things, even if only for 5-10 minutes (yes that means no kids, spouses, significant others, roommates, etc. if applicable)

- “Talk it out”: Journal or talk with family/friends/therapist (allows feelings to be let out before they can grow out of control and try not to overburden just one area/person)
- Living Space: Try to make your space away from work/school as peaceful as possible to establish a refuge, gain clarity, relax, be still/low stimulation, or withdraw: limiting/refraining from the use of electronics before bed, decorating your space in a pleasing/relaxing manner, listen to soothing music instead of TV, setting aside time at home for conversation, etc.
- Expectations: Are your daily expectations reasonable (can be met without sacrifice to my personal well-being?), Are you doing your part or are you expecting too much of yourself or others? Evaluate what is important to you.
- Self-care: Self-care is a muscle that needs exercise. You need to get in the habit to start to make a difference and build upon that.
- Baby Steps: Be patient as you try to make changes and just focus on making one positive choice per day for yourself (taking 5 minutes for yourself, a walk for exercise, positive thinking, etc.)

\*The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience but where he stands in times of challenge and controversy. Martin Luther King Jr.

\*Opportunities to find deeper powers within ourselves come when life seems most challenging. Joseph Campbell

\*You have power over your mind — not outside events. Realize this, and you will find strength. Marcus Aurelius