

# Stress Management & "Balancing" Tips

- **Prioritize:** Identify the tasks that are most pressing and the initial steps you need to take to make progress towards completing them. Acknowledge the steps you have completed!
- **Develop a Time Management Plan:** Include classes, work, friends/family, study time, sleep, daily living tasks, and leisure activities.
- **Take Breaks and Enjoy Leisure:** Your body naturally experiences high and low work efficiency periods. In the long-run, you will be most effective if you take short breaks throughout the day and include leisure activities in your daily schedule.
- **Sleep:** Chronic stress tends to lead to fatigue, which makes it more difficult to cope with stress. Allow your body the rest it needs.
- **Moderate Caffeine Intake:** Caffeine is a stimulant that actually generates a stress reaction in your body. Cutting back can help you feel less anxious and more centered.
- **Exercise Regularly:** Because stress evokes the "fight or flight" mechanism in your body and you usually cannot do either of these in stressful situations, exercise helps dissipate excess energy and stress.
- **Relax/Meditate:** Just as you are capable of mounting and sustaining a stress reaction, you also have the ability to put your body into a deep state of relaxation. Good for both acute and chronic stress mgt.
- **Check your Thoughts/Beliefs:** Beliefs, often unconscious, about how things "should" be can add a lot of stress to your life. When you find yourself anxious, irritated, or stressed, pinpoint what beliefs may be underlying your stress. Are they reasonable or constructive?
- **Develop Realistic Expectations:** If you are functioning out of unrealistic expectations for yourself or others, you tend to be continually frustrated and dissatisfied. Identify your expectations and have a friend "reality check" them with you.
- **Reframe:** Consider the glass half-full instead of half-empty. When you find yourself being negative and critical, *try* to shift your perspective to a more neutral, if not, positive outlook (i.e., "I'm looking forward to sharing my ideas" instead of "I'm dreading this presentation.")
- **Develop Support System:** Humans are social beings that benefit from each other's support. Build and draw on healthy relationships; avoid toxic ones.
- **Seek Out Humor:** Laughing is great medicine! Allow yourself time and space to experience humor...either in yourself, situations, or through entertainment.
- **Seek Help if you Need Help:** CPS provides individual and group counseling that is already covered by your student fees, is convenient and is available to you daily.