

STRATEGIES FOR SELF SOOTHING AND CALMING DOWN

- Take a time out and immediately start to deep breath.....
- Deep breatheclose your eyes, visualize a pleasant experience, press your feet into the floor intermittently, breath in through your nose slowly and fill your lungs and diaphragm as much as you canhold your breath for three seconds then slowly breathe out through your mouth ...try three sets or morein between sets tell yourself something positive such as “calm down”, “I can do this” or “Its Ok”..... You may also hold a stone with a positive saying on it which can be purchased at the dollar store or hold on to something that is calming and has meaning to you. This exercise will help produce calming chemicals in the brain.
- Listen to calming music such as Chopin (classical music), ocean waves, rain forest sounds...deep breathe while you are listening to music.
- Tense and release your muscles from the top to the bottom to let go of tension
- Take a brisk walk, breathing steady, at least 15 minutes, to produce endorphins which will calm you, you may also need to use self – talk in order to produce calming effects Join an exercise class, walk at the track at Bud Miller or buy in home exercise tapes
- Get a monthly therapeutic massage to work out of your body, harmful toxins from stress
- You may need to consider short term use of mood stabilizers available by seeing your physician. You may also opt for natural substances purchased at a health food store such as Melatonin for sleeping, L – Theanine, Gaba, calm – aid, stress relax, B – 50 vitamins, lemon flavoured fish oil, homeopathic calms pellets used under your tongue for immediate relief, 5 –HTP, Sam E , all must be under the consultation of a natural health practitioner or pharmacist for any drug interactions.

- Build in a ritual daily of deep breathing, logging your mood; your thoughts and feelings, making an effort to challenge or deal with negative feelings and thinking.
- Drink at least 8 glasses of water daily which will help your energy levels. Keep your blood sugar stable by eating snacks every two hours such as nuts, raisins or dried fruit and 70% dark chocolate, cheese and crackers, fruit or whole grain toast with nut butters. Make an effort not to skip meals or drink too much coffee, tea or energy drinks that can promote irritability.
- Distract yourself by engaging in activities that bring out your creative side such as hobbies or take up an activity that interests you
- Manage your environment, don't plan too many things to do in one day, if you are working at a job that requires long hours and days without breaks and getting very little sleep, you may need to consider changing employment from time to time before you burn out.
- Even if you can't draw ...art is a form of putting what you are feeling and experiencing on paper and releasing negative emotions and thoughts
- Write a therapeutic letter to yourself or someone you are upset with using your feeling words...not to send it but the idea is to release negative emotions and thoughts
- Constantly challenge what you are thinking/feeling and practise thought stopping and thought re framing ...turn old messages to new messages.....
- Take a hot shower to relax muscles or a calming bath with Lavender and chamomile essential oils. Buy special lamps designed for Seasonal Affective Disorder to boost mood
- Practise belly laughter daily ...your body does not know the difference between really laughing at a joke or inducing laughter yourself, you will get the same benefit