

Managing the Stress of Change and Transition

Our campus community is facing extraordinary times of continuous and tremendous change. Budget cuts, loss of jobs, increased fees, increased workloads and more can trigger emotions of anxiety, stress, and uncertainty in our lives. The following suggestions are provided to help **manage stress** during these difficult times and the adjustment process it creates:

- ❑ Be aware that there are stages in the adjustment process that may include: shock, denial, resistance, anger, sadness, and, finally, acceptance of change.
- ❑ Accept that the adjustment process may include elements of loss, uncertainty, confusion, intense emotions, and feeling out of control.
- ❑ Remember that you may go through the adjustment process faster, slower or differently than others. Do not judge yourself or others for how one is progressing.
- ❑ We cannot control many of the things that are happening today. Accept that you cannot control everything -- let go of trying.
- ❑ Control what you can and take appropriate action in areas where you do have control or influence. For example, how you interact with others.
- ❑ Avoid making other significant changes in your life at the same time as other major changes at work or school, if possible.
- ❑ Maintain or enhance self-care strategies -- good nutrition, sleep, exercise, relaxation, time with loved ones, and time for yourself.
- ❑ Talk with others. Find people you trust to discuss what is happening and how it makes you feel. Establish short-term goals for yourself - accomplishing them will give you an increased sense of confidence and control.
- ❑ Seek information and resources. However, strive to be calm in the face of major news and realize that things can change from day to day. Consider the extent of your exposure to mass media, especially if it creates a feeling of being overwhelmed or depressed.
- ❑ Think back to other difficult times in your life and how you managed to get through them. Remember other times in history and how people were able to cope and survive them.
- ❑ Maintain your dignity and self-respect. Specific events at work or school do not define your worth as a person.
- ❑ Aim at being kind and patient with yourself and others. During difficult times no one is going to always be at his or her best. Being helpful to others will make you feel better and enhance your support system at school, home or work.
- ❑ Work at keeping your sense of humor and finding opportunities to laugh and play. Strengthen your personal support system inside and outside of work and school.

For More Help

Over time, we all vary in our ability to deal with the constant and ongoing changes that are a part of the world today. If you are having stress-related problems that persist and are interfering with your health and well-being, and especially if you are feeling overwhelmed, you may want to seek professional assistance.

Counseling Services for Students: 642-9494

Faculty/Staff Employee Assistance: 643-7754

Also available at www.uhs.berkeley.edu

Staying Healthy During Stressful Times:

- Eating Well
- Managing Caffeine Use
- Managing Stress
- Preventing Headaches and Muscle Tension
- Sleeping Soundly
- Staying Active

This material is provided by Be Well at Work's Employee Assistance Program.

Employee Assistance staff are available to meet with employees or family members who are experiencing difficulties. Call for a free, confidential appointment at 510-643-7754.