



Stress Less—A Resolution We Should Make Every Year

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Everyone experiences different levels of stress in their everyday lives and we could all use a chill pill sometimes. In challenging times such as these with low commodity prices, unpredictable weather, diminishing markets, raise in minimum wage, and just plain getting older to name a few, to say our agricultural community is especially stressed is the understatement the year. In addition to confiding in friends and family and utilizing service agencies for counseling, there are tactics that you can use on your own every day at home. Michigan State University Extension suggests using self-talk, using your breath, and using acceptance to help cultivate a productive mindset. According to their factsheet:

USE SELF-TALK

The body hears what the mind thinks. So choose your thoughts with purpose. Tell yourself that you can overcome any challenge. You can adapt. You have come through rough times before. You can do it again. You can't always avoid difficult situations, but you can choose the thoughts you have when you experience them. Try choosing three words to tell yourself to help maintain the mindset you want – like calm, capable, and controlled.

USE YOUR BREATH

When faced with a challenge, first use your breath. Deep breathing calms the mind and can help you focus. It can also reduce chronic pain and improve sleep. Try breathing deeply five times, releasing the air slowly. Combine deep breathing with self-talk to boost productivity and stay on task.

USE ACCEPTANCE

When things are beyond your control, the most productive step you can take is to accept it. Making acceptance a part of your mindset can save you time and energy by letting you focus on the solution instead of getting frustrated by the problem. Try making the word “accept” a part of your self-talk and using deep breathing as a time to pause, accept, and begin problem solving.

The entire Fact Sheet can be viewed at http://msue.anr.msu.edu/uploads/resources/pdfs/MSUE_Farm_Stress_Fact_Sheet_WEB.pdf.

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