

# Conversations in Mentoring

## Managing Stress

### Context

We all face stress, and we all respond differently based on our tolerance, our experiences, and our capacity at any given moment. Stress can be positive, motivating you, increasing your focus, and even improving performance. Stress is also often negative, causing depression or anxiety, interrupting sleep or eating patterns, and impairing thinking and performance.

- Physical stressors: illness, aging, injury
- Environmental stressors: changes in routine, moving or changing living situation, noise, pollution
- Family-related stressors: getting married, arguing with a partner, having a baby, adding a dependent
- Workplace stressors: low wages, overtime, disagreements with coworkers/bosses

### Approaches and strategies

- Take your mind to a better place: visualize a calm place or space.
- Change your surroundings: take a walk, get some fresh air.
- Build positive elements into your routines: spend time with pets or family, play sports, or exercise.
- Ask for help when you first start to feel overwhelmed: seek out a mentor or thought partner.
- Talk to a trusted friend and be open to hearing feedback.
- Practice meditation or breathing exercises: look online for guided practice.
- Set and/or reset boundaries between your work and your personal life.
- Create daily to-do lists: if at work, perhaps run your thinking past a supervisor.

### Considerations and goals toward a more effective practice

- Which of the tips do you already practice?
- Which do you want to try out?
- Identify one small stressor at your work or in your life and concentrate on managing it better.
- Assign yourself a Do Now! Take of a couple of small actions to reduce your daily stress.

