

# A MENTAL HEALTH MINUTE



## Stress Management – In These Difficult Economic Times by Greg Browne, LCSW

In these difficult economic times you may find yourself feeling increasingly stressed. Stress can manifest in both psychological and physical ways.

**PSYCHOLOGICAL SYMPTOMS** of stress may include the following:

- Excessive, unrealistic worry about money
- Excessive, unrealistic worry about health
- Excessive, unrealistic worry about work
- Inability to stop the worry cycle
- You feel your worries are beyond your control

**PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS** of stress may include the following:

- Fatigue
- Restlessness
- Difficulty sleeping
- Dizziness/ Irritability
- Muscle tension
- Gastrointestinal discomfort or diarrhea

**ECONOMIC WORRY SYMPTOMS** You may also experience the following symptoms:

- Checking online finances every hour.
- Worrying about things that are not at risk, such as FDIC bank deposits.
- Worrying about ending up in a homeless shelter, food kitchen or unemployment lines.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT

DO'S	DON'TS
✓ Do concentrate on things you can control; e.g., saving money and paying off debt; control your bank account and how you spend your money; decide which expenses are important.	✓ Don't be motivated by fear. Never make a financial decision under pressure, or during an emotionally difficult period of time.
✓ Do determine if immediate action is required; make a plan; talk to a financial advisor about diversifying your portfolio and the risk-level.	✓ Don't avoid taking action if it's necessary; e.g., if you've recently lost your job; or you are close to retirement; talk with a financial advisor.
✓ Do spend time with children or your pet, or drinking a cup of tea. Surround yourself with positive people.	✓ Don't seek the company of negative people who fret about the rising prices of everyday things.
✓ Do get enough sleep, eat healthy, exercise, and allow for personal time; use relaxation techniques such as meditation, prayer, yoga, or get a massage.	✓ Don't increase substance use, especially alcohol, or over-eat.
✓ Do turn off the TV -- take a break from the bad news.	✓ Don't watch TV for hours each day focusing upon bad economic news.
✓ Do talk with a professional counselor, if you have tried all of the above and you continue to feel anxious and/or depressed.	✓ Don't keep your feelings inside or think that family and friends can answer questions that may need temporary, professional clinical help.

To learn more,  
visit Mental Health Kokua  
[www.MHKHawaii.org](http://www.MHKHawaii.org)  
808-737-2523

