Six Steps to Managing a Stressful Situation

1. **STOP** – Just for just a moment, stop what you are doing and the continuous flow of negative thoughts and judgments about the situation.

2. **BREATHE** – Take three deep breaths. Inhale deeply and exhale slowly. Imagine cooling a bowl of hot soup. Feel your abdomen rise and fall, releasing any tension in your body as you exhale.


4. **REFLECT** – Consider what is really going on. Just the facts. Is the situation a crisis? What can you do now to cope? Do what works.

5. **CHOOSE** – Recognize that you have choices. You can make a choice about your thoughts about the situation. You can make a choice about how you will react. You can make a choice to ask for help. Notice what your choices are.

6. **ENCOURAGE** – As you breathe out, say to yourself a simple word or phrase of encouragement, such as: “Calm,” “Wait, step back,” “This will pass,” or “I’m doing the best I can right now.”

*Keep breathing, slowly and deeply.*

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