

December 2013



A Message from your EAP:

DEALING WITH SITUATIONAL STRESS

During certain times of the year there are situations that can be sources of increased stress and anxiety. Here is a deep breathing exercise that you can use to keep your stress levels, and blood pressure, down. This is taken from the **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Anger Management Workbook**:

- *Find a comfortable position in your chair. If you would like, close your eyes; if not, just gaze down at the floor. Take a few moments to settle yourself. Now become aware of your body. Check for any tension, beginning with your feet, moving upward to your head. Notice any tension you might have in your legs, stomach, hands and arms, shoulders, neck, and face. Try to let go of any tension.*
- *Now, become aware of your breathing. Pay attention to your breath as it enters and leaves your body. This can be very relaxing. Take a deep breath. Notice your lungs and chest expanding. Now slowly exhale through your nose. Again, take a deep breath. Fill your lungs and your chest. Notice how much air you can take in. Hold it for a second. Now release it and exhale slowly. Inhale slowly and fully one more time. Hold it for a second, and release. Continue breathing in this way for another couple of minutes.*
- *This breathing exercise can be shortened to just three deep inhalations and exhalations. You can practice this at home, at work, on the bus, while waiting for an appointment, or even while walking. The key to using deep-breathing as an effective relaxation technique is to practice it frequently and to apply it in a variety of situations.*

This is a great way of dealing with situational stress! However, if the stress becomes chronic and unmanageable don't hesitate to seek professional help.

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