



## *Customer Service Notes for*

### ***Managing Stress and Not Letting it Manage You***

The end of the year, including the holidays, can be stressful for many people. Now, in the midst of a pandemic, that stress is likely increased. As WIC professionals, it is important to not let our stress impact our service to participants, and internal service to co-workers.

We must also recognize that this time of year will likely be more stressful for participants. If an otherwise pleasant participant is preoccupied or abrupt, it may be that she is trying to cope with the added stress. Do what you can to assist participants during these challenging times.

Although this can be difficult, try to be as positive as possible with both participants and co-workers. Dwelling on the negative will only increase your stress and may also increase the stress of participants and co-workers.

Give thought to and utilize stress management techniques that have worked for you. Below are techniques that can be helpful.

- Take a short walk
- Breathe deeply
- Listen to music
- Read inspirational stories
- Exercise or stretch
- Drink tea (perhaps herbal)
- Talk to others who are upbeat
- Watch an uplifting movie
- Cook one of your favorite dishes
- Avoid watching the news too often

If your stress level becomes overwhelming, seek help. If you sense a participant or co-worker is overwhelmed by their stress, suggest that they seek help.

With the pandemic, an increased level of stress at the end of this year is to be expected. So, do what you can to manage your stress and look forward to better days in 2021.

#### **Questions for Reflection**

1. Are you patient with participants who may be preoccupied or less pleasant because of being stressed?
2. Do you utilize stress management techniques to deal with your own stress – both techniques that have worked in the past and new techniques?

