HOW TO COPE WITH STRESS

Five suggestions that experts say will help you better handle stress at work & home:

- **Manage your time**
  Randall S. Schuler, research professor of human resource management at the Stern School of Business at New York University, recommends listing the tasks you have to do each day and spending your time on those things that are most important. Delegate or eliminate less important items.

- **Manage your body**
  Catalog how your body reacts to stress, then become proactive in counterering these physiological effects. If you get an upset stomach, for example, avoid spicy foods, coffee and alcohol during stressful times. Build in brief breaks during the day. Daily exercise - particularly an aerobic workout - is another excellent outlet for stress.

- **Manage your mind**
  Meditate or use relaxation techniques such as focusing on a pleasant scene or listening to soothing music. Repeat affirmations - such as "I am in control of my life"- that will enhance your self-esteem. Take advantage of any stress-control programs that may be offered by your company.

- **Communicate your needs**
  If you're not getting enough information about a project or if you're feeling overwhelmed with work, Schuler recommends letting the boss know your needs. The boss can't make changes unless your needs are known.

- **Adjust your attitude**
  Decide to detach from situations or people that upset you. By detaching, you reduce the importance of it.

- **Know when to get out**
  Experts believe that quitting should be the last step to take-but sometimes that is what is necessary and you ultimately find a more fulfilling career. But first try stress management techniques.

_Santa Clara County Employee Assistance Program_
(408) 241-7772
www.scceap.org