



# Managing Stress and Pursuing Wellness – Coping Strategies

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What strategies or “tools” are you using to cope with the stresses you experience? Is there a strategy or “tool” that you once used and was effective at the time, but it is no longer useful? **Often, we don’t have the tool that would be the most useful in our current toolbox, so we may need help getting it from someone else or learn how to use a new tool that works better in solving a problem.** Think about the coping strategies you are currently using and whether they are effective. Here are some questions to ask yourself about your current coping strategies:

- Does the approach you are using have a helpful effect or a harmful effect?
- Think about matching the strategy you will use to a particular need. Are there tasks that you could delegate to another person to lighten your load?
- Brainstorm and explore the variety of coping strategies available to be used. [My Coping Strategies Plan \(handout 3\)](#) provides a list of useful coping tools that can be a part of your toolbox for managing individual, family and/or farming/ranching stresses.
- Learning new strategies or adopting different ways of managing stress that you have not used before may be necessary. Being open to new coping practices is helpful.

**“Sustainable farming includes sustaining the farmer.”** Your first coping priority is to **rest and renew your own well-being**. You can’t care well for your farm or family if you don’t care for yourself. Self-care includes: paying attention to your stress levels, getting enough sleep and exercise, and giving yourself time to renew your energy. Build in personal “time outs” or rests breaks on a daily and weekly basis. A second coping priority is to focus on **open, continuing and healthy communication**. Be willing to share your stresses or concerns with others. One of the largest obstacles to healthy communication is being unwilling to share with others due to feelings of pride, stubbornness or inadequacy. A third coping strategy is **focus on the relationships** that are the most important to you and can help sustain you. Family and other relationships that are positive and healthy provide a large source of support.

For more information, contact Rebecca at 785-229-3520 or [rmcfarla@ksu.edu](mailto:rmcfarla@ksu.edu).

Brotherson, S.E. & Berg, B.S. (June 2018). *Managing Stress and Pursuing Wellness in Times of Tight Margins, Facilitator’s Guide*, Kansas State University.