

## BOUNDARIES

### Reduce Activity Levels

- Delegating: have someone do what you used to do, e.g. hire a cleaner; have other family members do the grocery shopping
- Simplifying: continuing to do something, but in a less elaborate way e.g. clean less often; cook simpler meals; online shopping
- Eliminating: cut out some tasks / activities altogether

### Set Limits for Individual Activities (as previously discussed)

- e.g. time spent driving, on phone / computer, housework, socializing
- find your limits by experimenting and paying attention to energy level and resulting ME/CFS symptoms

### Time of Day

- Many with ME/CFS/FM have better or worse times of day
- Use your best hours for the most important / demanding tasks

### Take Scheduled Rests

- Intersperse activity with rest periods
- Adding in pre-emptive rests every day will help reduce symptoms, e.g. 30 mins – 1 hour, morning and afternoon, whether you feel you need them or not! This will help reduce your symptoms and gain stability
- Optimal length of rest period varies from person to person
- **Rest** = laying down with eyes closed in a quiet place. (Use a relaxation / meditation technique for a busy mind)

### Use Short Activity Periods

- 2 short activity periods with a rest break in between can produce more, with fewer adverse effects, than the same amount of energy in one block of time
- e.g. 10 minutes housework; 5 minutes rest; 10 minutes housework
- Alternating activity and rest helps expand functional capacity

### Practise Task Switching

- Switch periodically between activities – physical, mental, social
  - Categorize activities into levels of difficulty – light / moderate / heavy
- Change often between types
- Don't include too many taxing tasks in one day

### **Keep a Health Log/Diary**

- A few minutes per day of record keeping can give you a clearer picture of your energy profile, and reveal the connections between what you do and your symptoms.
- Especially important when trying something new – medications, therapy

### **Develop Personal Rules**

- e.g. no more than 3 trips from home per week
- No driving more than 10 km
- Maximum 20-minute phone calls
- No phone calls before / after a certain time

### **Simplify your Environment**

- De-clutter
- Turn off TV / radio if not watching / listening
- Avoid busy, crowded environments where possible (online grocery shopping?)

### **Identify & Manage Stressors**

Stress Management coming up in Workshop 4

### **Mental Adjustments**

- Pacing means adopting new habits
- Pacing also requires psychological adjustments – acceptance that life has changed
- **Acceptance is not resignation!**