SWEET Success

California Diabetes and Pregnancy Program

Tip of the Month
~ # 10 ~

STRESS and Resiliance

RESILIENCE is a term borrowed from the more exact sciences. It relates to the property of a material to absorb energy when it has been deformed, and then to have that energy restored.

In physics, this can be measured and the results predicted. In dealing with human stress and trauma, we think of resilience as our ability to recover and heal emotionally.

Here are some of the ways we can do this:

1. We can use our ability to manage anxiety by slowing down our breathing. In the past, we explored basic **breathing exercises** as important.
   - Stop. Focus. Notice and count the breaths.
   - Consciously breathe more slowly until you feel more relaxed. This is a brief chance to REST before we continue with the day.

2. **Positive thinking** increases our resilience. When we are faced with a problem, we can begin to visualize a solution.
   - Often it is tempting to simply complain about what is not going well.
   - Consider never complaining without also planning on a likely solution. For example, if your patient's diabetes regimen is overloaded, guide her to avoid the expectation of rushing through more tasks than can be reasonably handled and feeling the heaviness that goes with that. Encourage her to seek ways to get support for what she can do and move less urgent tasks into another day.

   When you change challenges into possibilities, there is a lightness of spirit and a chance for excitement instead of anxiety. This basic time management activity creates a greater chance for success.

3. **Visualize** bouncing back from a negative situation. I have an image of a "Slinky" toy that is coiled and mashed down but continues to release and move forward.
   - What can you imagine that can be your image of successful recovery?
   - Relax. Think Positively. Visualize being Resilient!