

## Tip sheet: Simplify and Organize Your Life

Avoiding stress altogether is nearly impossible, especially if PTSD-linked memories make it hard for you to stay on top of all your responsibilities. If you can't get rid of stress, you can at least reduce it.

Try these steps:

- *Learn how to say no.* Decide what tasks you must do and which ones you do not, and stop agreeing to do everything asked of you. Try saying: "I'm sorry but I can't. Can I help another time?"
- *Call for backup.* Take a look at your obligations and see if you can get some help with all of them. Can your children help out with some chores? Can a coworker take on the extra overtime?
- *Relax your standards.* Sometimes people get stressed out because they hold themselves to impossibly high standards. If you feel overwhelmed, see if you can cut corners on yard work, housework, or routine tasks at the office without creating problems.
- *Consider your long-term goals.* Ask yourself where you want to be in one year, five years, or ten years down the road. Then ask yourself whether a specific responsibility will further those goals. Free yourself from dead-end obligations and focus on the ones that will help you reach your long-term goals.
- *Go high-tech:* utilize your computer or smart phone to set up reminders for daily, weekly, monthly, or even yearly chores.
- *Go low-tech:* hang up a bulletin board or whiteboard in a handy location and use it to post all your reminders.