

# Healthy Farmer

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## Coping with Recession Stress

Nearly everyone has been affected in some way by the ongoing recession in this country. This type of economic uncertainty can be a source of chronic stress. The economy will not turn around "overnight" but there are things that everyone can do to manage our perspective and behavior and that will help decrease our stress levels.

An article on eHow \* provides some useful suggestions for managing recession stress. We've summarized the article's information and added our comments in italics: (After the last sentence in each bullet).

- Assess your situation to see where you are currently. *Having a plan before a crisis hits or shortly after will help you to know that you are managing your future and that there are steps to take that can help. Be sure to include everyone in the household in the discussion of the plan so that all can work together to carry it out.*
- Develop your action plan and set goals. Make sure to do something towards those goals each day. *Every step will count! It helps to have a running account of accomplishments, setbacks and how you feel about things. Keep a journal and refer to it periodically to see how you are doing compared to earlier stages.*
- Work on reducing your debt and building up your savings account. Especially in times of recession it can feel good to accomplish these things. *Sometimes the savings are not monetary. For example, canning and freezing your own garden produce saves money. Eliminating some luxuries that you can do without helps, such as reducing the number of channels that you pay for on your cable television, eliminating a landline telephone unless it is necessary for the operation of your computer, walking or riding your bike for short errands, raising your own poultry for eggs and meat, selling unused items around the house in a yard sale, or consignment auction, and donating your time instead of money.*

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- Turn off the news! The news is filled with reports about the economy and loss of jobs. Try not to obsess with what is happening. *Remember that what you think about changes your body chemistry. Worrying produces an adrenaline surge, which is followed by increases in your cortisol level. Adrenaline keys us up and adrenaline makes us feel lethargic and encourages fat deposits. Talking in person, on the phone or by electronic exchange helps us gain perspective. And remember that you can control the topic of the discussion and can keep it positive.*
- Spend time with family and friends. Most communities have some sort of free or low-cost entertainment. Host some meals or game nights for friends and neighbors. *And it's always good to laugh. Remember that laughter, comforting touches such as hugs and physical recreation produce our own serotonin and norepinephrine, which are healthy body chemicals.*
- Make time for your hobbies—even if its just for awhile. *The time you spend reading, gardening or fishing will be worth it. Sometimes you can't afford the real thing, such as a fishing trip to Canada, but reading about fishing adventures in books and sporting magazines and making your own fishing lures and flies helps create the same feelings as if you were there with a "big fish on the line." Daydreaming can be healthy! Meditating while driving your vehicle and when undertaking fieldwork that doesn't require intense concentration can renew your spirits.*
- Volunteer. Organizations are always looking for volunteers. And it will feel good to give back during this time. *Giving of ourselves by serving on boards, performing volunteer work and helping at community events recharges our own batteries. Often we find that we gain more than we give by serving others.*

Remember—this too shall pass! Stay positive—the recession will not last forever. *Amen!*

\*By dzagotti, eHow member

[http://www.ehow.com/how\\_4852189\\_handle-emotional-stress-during-recession.html](http://www.ehow.com/how_4852189_handle-emotional-stress-during-recession.html)

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*We thank you* for your consideration.