

## SELF-MANAGEMENT TIPS ③

Rehabilitation is a service or activity that can help to address or prevent many of the health-related challenges (or disabilities) that people living with HIV experience. You are an important part of the rehabilitation team and there are many strategies which are considered important components of rehabilitation that you can put into action to help deal with these challenges.

### MENTAL HEALTH & HIV

Many people experience changes to their brain which can affect their thinking and their emotional state. You may find that your judgment, attention, focus, motivation and ability to deal with emotional situations have changed. You may also experience some form of depression, anxiety and/or difficulty coping with the life changes resulting from the illness.

This pamphlet will provide information on strategies that can help you with many of the changes in your thinking and mental health that you may be experiencing.

### MANAGING MENTAL HEALTH CHANGES

Rehabilitation strategies that can help you with these changes include:

- ✦ To help remember activities, try using verbal or written cues or memory aids such as making lists, using a journal or calendar.
- ✦ Develop a routine and structure to your time. For example, join an exercise group or take up a hobby that can occur on a regular basis each week.
- ✦ Develop healthy coping strategies to assist with life situations, for example, identify a counselor or friend who can help you to brainstorm compromises or alternatives.

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### Self-Massage Techniques for Stress Relief

**Scalp Soother:** Place your thumbs behind your ears while spreading your fingers on top of your head. Move your scalp back and forth slightly by making circles with your fingertips for 15-20 seconds.

**Easy on the Eyes:** Close your eyes and place your ring fingers directly under your eyebrows, near the bridge of your nose. Slowly increase the pressure for 5-10 seconds, then gently release. Repeat 2-3 times

**Shoulder Tension Relief:** Reach one arm across the front of your body to your opposite shoulder. Using a circular motion, press firmly on the muscle above your shoulder blade. Repeat on the other side

*Adapted from Source: [Northwestern Health Sciences University](#)*

## NEED MORE INFORMATION?

**Source:** Written by Canadian Working Group on HIV and Rehabilitation [CWGHR] for Canadian AIDS Treatment Information Exchange [CATIE]: "Managing Your Health" Rehabilitation Chapter 2008 Edition.

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