

THEN AND NOW



EHS photos

When it was built on Mountainview Road in 1967, Andrew Murray Motors did not have many neighbours. Today, the Chevrolet dealership has been recently renovated. Courtesy of Heritage Halton Hills and the Esquesing Historical Society.



OPINION

# TRY THE TRIPLE-A APPROACH TO STRESS MANAGEMENT

HERE ARE SOME TOOLS TO HELP AVOID PLACING UNDUE BURDEN ON YOUR MENTAL HEALTH, WRITES MELANIE MCGREGOR



MELANIE MCGREGOR  
Column

I'm not sure who first came up with it, but it's plain and simple: "Triple A." This stands for Avoid, Alter and Accept — three approaches we can take when faced with things that tax us.

First, "avoid" — definitely the easiest way to

get rid of stress because it means that we just don't deal with whatever is causing it.

Of course, we can't go around avoiding everything that makes us feel a bit frazzled, but sometimes we can avoid things even if we think we can't. We may get so wrapped up in living up to our or others' expectations or trying to show that we can "do it all" that we don't consider all of our options.

So, how does "avoiding"

actually work? Here are a few things to ask yourself:

- "Am I at my limit?" We only have so much time and energy to give and it's important to keep an eye on how we are feeling. Are you overwhelmed, tired or irritable? If so, be selective about what you're taking on and avoid what you can.

- "Can I say no?" We may be reluctant to say no for a number of reasons. Think about what saying yes would mean for your stress level, and if it seems

unmanageable, consider taking a pass on optional things. It may be key to a healthy balance.

- "Can I delegate?" Delegating doesn't mean randomly pawning off undesirable tasks on others. It means giving up a need for control. Keys to delegating are choosing someone who has time and skills to give, expressing your reason for asking and your gratitude, and then letting it go.

- "Is this a priority?" Just because a task is on your to-do list, it doesn't mean it has to be done now. Weigh the benefit of

getting it off your list with the relief of keeping it for later and decide which is best for you.

Stay tuned to our next two columns for more on altering and accepting.

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