



Diabetes Self-Management Education and Support



Module 3
Healthy Coping
Revised July 2024

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration



U.S. Department of Defense



In This Module You Will:

- Identify signs of diabetes distress.
- Define healthy coping.
- Provide examples of how to be an active partner in shared decision making using the SHARE Model.
- Explain your role in diabetes self-management.
- Develop strategies for behavior change.

Diabetes Distress

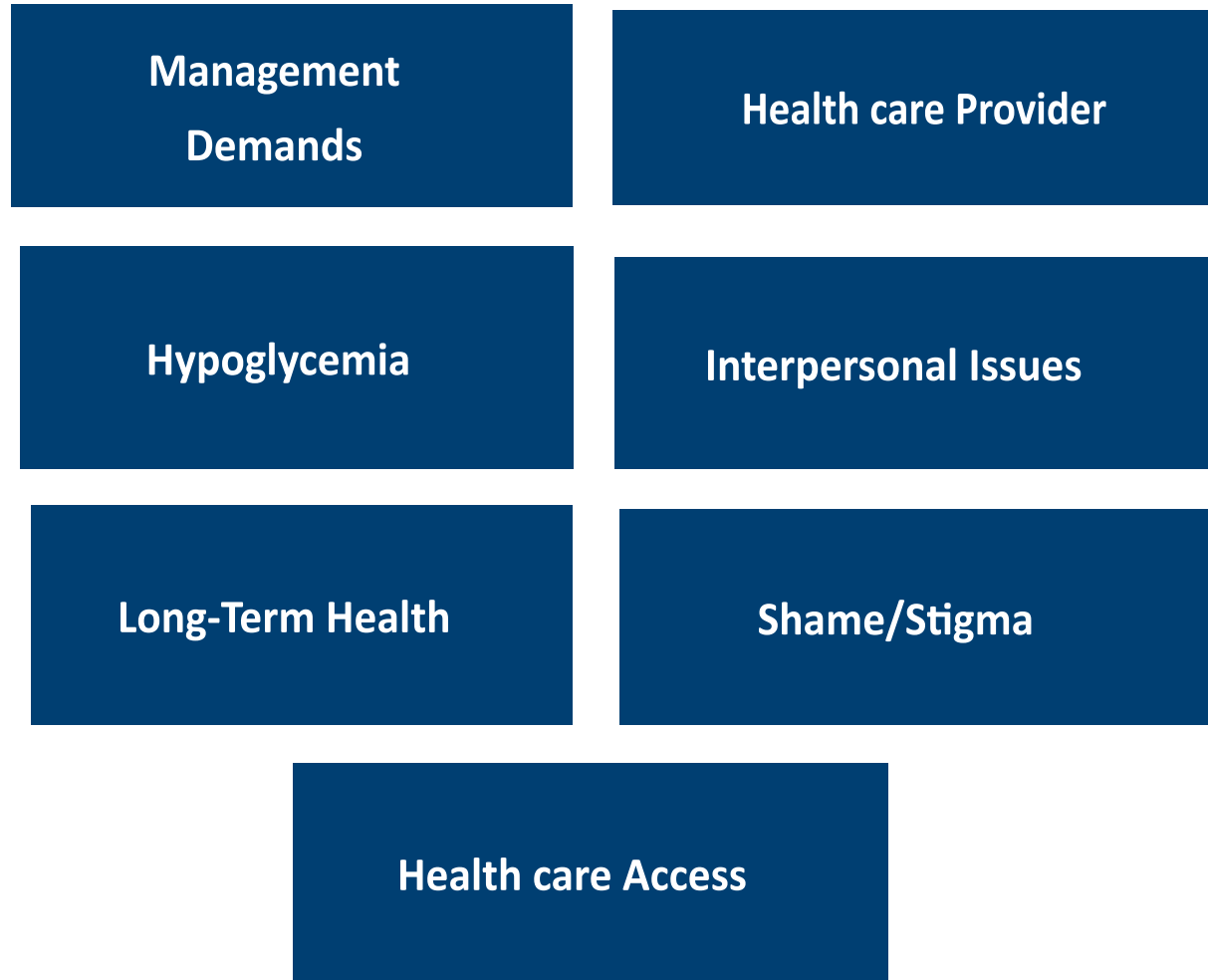
This can be an emotional response to living with diabetes. It's the relentless burden of daily self-management and living with the prospect of developing long term complications.

Managing a chronic disease like diabetes can be stressful and result in emotional distress.

Identifying and addressing the sources of distress can help reduce the burden of managing diabetes.

There are many distress screens available to measure levels of distress.

Go to: <https://diabetesdistress.org>



When is having diabetes hard or stressful for you?

The Emotional Continuum



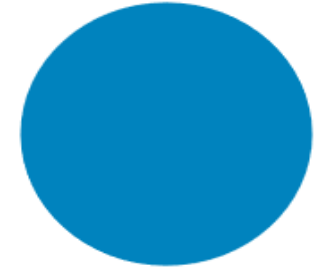
Distress



Burnout



Depressive
Symptoms



Depression

When diabetes distress has not been managed, it can lead to burnout. If burnout persists, depressive symptoms may develop. Without treatment depression will result. Talk to your provider or health care team if you are experiencing any of these emotional states.

Distress—The emotional response to living with diabetes, the burden of relentless daily self-management, and the prospect of its long-term complications.

Burnout—A state of emotional, mental, and often physical exhaustion brought on by prolonged or repeated stress.

Depressive Symptoms—Hopelessness, anger, irritability, tiredness, and difficulty concentrating.

Depression—A disorder with persistent depressive symptoms causing sadness and / or a loss of interest in activities that were once enjoyed. It can lead to a variety of emotional and physical problems and can decrease a person's ability to function at work and at home.

What is Healthy Coping?

- Learning to fit diabetes into the life you want
- Using problem solving tools to manage your diabetes with confidence
- Forming supportive relationships with your diabetes care team, family, and friends

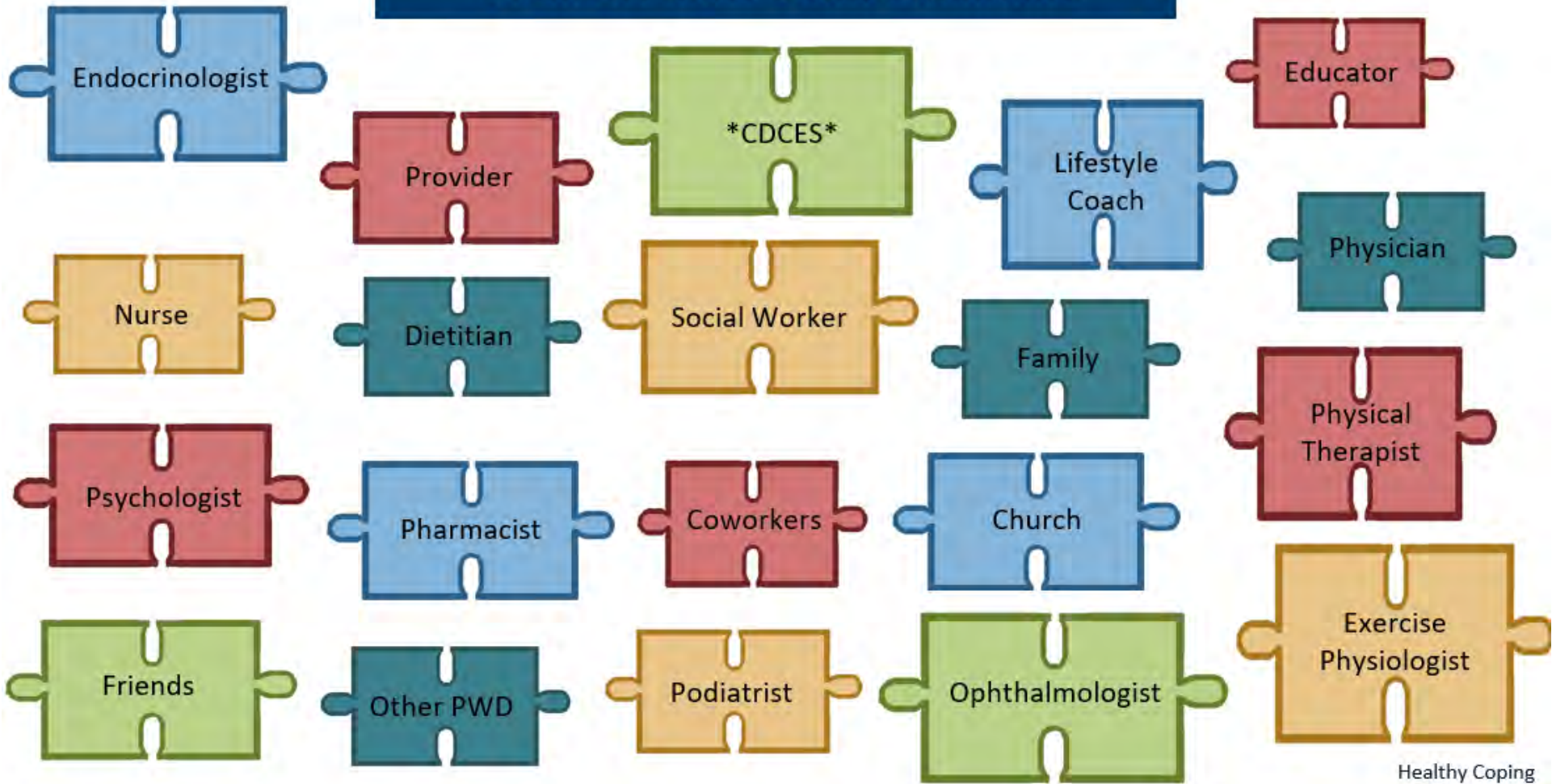


Healthy Coping Strategies

- Pay attention to your feelings
- Do things you enjoy
- Maintain a positive self-image while dealing with challenging life events
- Talk with family and friends
 - ◆ Allow loved ones to help
 - ◆ Allow yourself to be imperfect
- Talk with your provider or health care team about
 - ◆ Concerns about diabetes distress
 - ◆ Negative reactions others have about diabetes
 - ◆ Financial concerns
 - ◆ Food insecurity issues

Notes:

Diabetes Care Team Members



Self-Reflection

Who do you contact for support? _____

PROBLEM SOLVING & SHARED DECISION MAKING



S

SPEAK UP: Your provider will seek your participation. Your role is to speak up, so your provider is aware of your personal needs, perspective, and willingness to manage your diabetes.

H

HEAR WHAT THE CHOICES ARE: Your provider will explore and compare treatment options with you. Your role is to hear what the choices are for managing your diabetes.

A

ASSERT YOUR PREFERENCES: Your role is to assert your preferences and values. Let your provider know what is important to you, even if it is different from what they suggest or recommend. Talk about your feelings about diabetes, what you are willing to try, and what your priorities are. It is important to keep an open mind as you discuss what the treatment options are and be willing to consider one that may work for you.

R

REACH A DECISION WITH YOUR PROVIDER: You and your provider should agree on a decision regarding treatment options. Collectively make a plan that includes what you will do and tools you may need.

E

EVALUATE IF IT WORKED: You and your provider should evaluate if the plan is working. Keep track of your progress and follow-up with your provider on a regular basis for treatment changes.

Why is Shared Decision Making Important?

In many situations, there is more than one choice about treatment, medical tests, and health issues. Discuss pros and cons. Shared Decision Making is especially important when:

- there is more than one reasonable option for screening and treatment
- the possible benefits and harms of each option

What Providers Say About the Value of Shared Decision Making

- Patients are knowledgeable and prepared for dialogue
- Builds a lasting and trusting relationship
- Patients are engaged and more satisfied with their health care

When Patients Engage in Shared Decision Making, they

- Learn about their health and understand their health conditions
- Understand the pros and cons of different options
- Have the tools needed to evaluate their options
- Are more confident speaking with their provider
- Collaborate with their health care team to make decisions
- Are more likely to follow through on their decision

Example of Shared Decision Making for the Treatment of Diabetes

When choosing individualized goals of therapy:



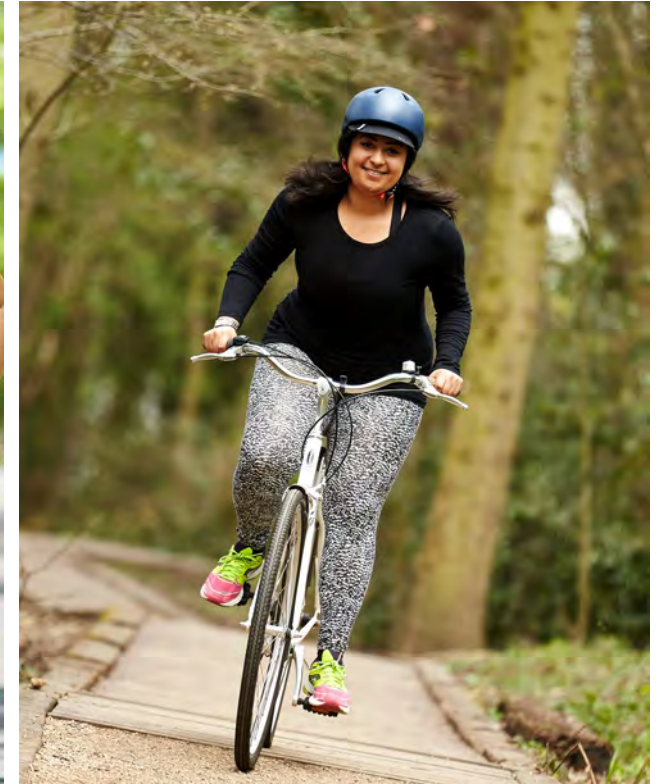
Higher Glycemic Targets: A1c 8.5%

- Limited life expectancy
- Advanced complications
- Extensive co-morbid conditions



Glycemic Target: A1C 7.0%-8.5%

- Hypoglycemia prone (low glucose)
- Presence of microvascular complications
- History of heart disease or stroke



Tighter Glycemic Targets: A1C <7%

- Short disease duration
- Long life expectancy
- No significant heart disease
- Less co-morbid conditions

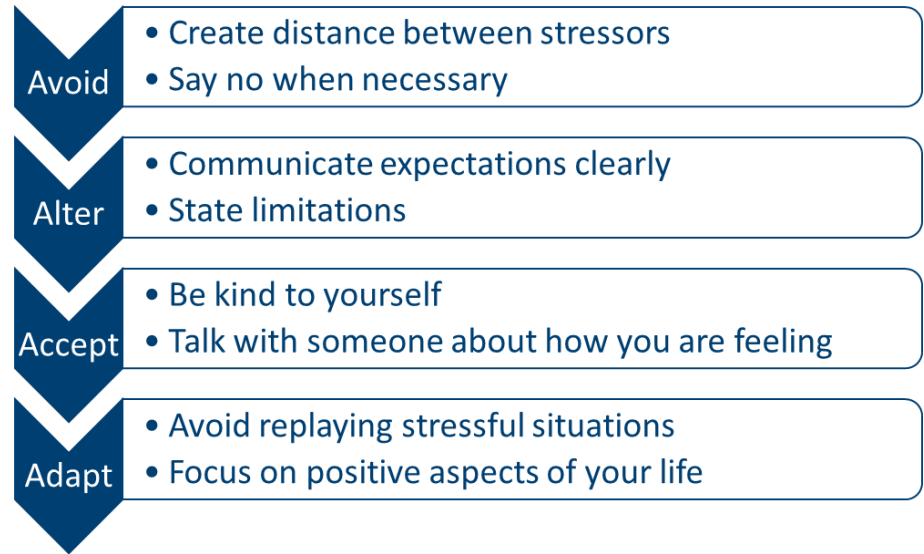
Managing Stress— Using the 4A’s

Avoid—You can avoid stress by planning ahead. Create distance between stressors and say no when necessary.

Alter—Communicate clearly and let people know your expectations. State your limitations in advance.

Accept—Accepting the situation may ease stress. Be kind to yourself. Talk to someone about how you feel.

Adapt—Change your standards. Don’t strive for perfection. Avoid replaying stressful situations over and over in your head. Focus on the positive aspects of your life.



“Why” bother managing your diabetes?

What Brings You Joy?

- Remind yourself of your “why”
- Give yourself grace and practice mindful self-compassion
- Treat yourself like someone you love
- Maintain who you are
- Explore new things

Goal Setting

- Setting goals are an important aspect of self-care
- Both long and short-term goals need to be chosen
- You may need some help setting goals
- Goals may need to be adjusted from time to time
- Goals should be YOUR goals
- Work on one goal at a time
- Goals should be **SMART**

“Listen to the mustn’ts child.
Listen to the don’ts.
Listen to the shouldn’ts,
the impossibles, the wont’s.
Listen to the never haves, then listen close to me...
Anything can happen, child.
Anything can be.”
—Shel Silverstein

S

Specific

What will you do? What steps will you take?

M

Measurable

How much? How often? Use concrete measuring tools.

A

Achievable

What goal is challenging but possible?

R

Realistic

Are you capable of this goal?

T

Time Bound

When will you review your goal to see if it still makes sense for you?

Creating a SMART Goal

Select ONE topic

Monitoring (Module 2)

	I agree to notify my provider or health care team if I have more than 2 consecutive blood glucose readings under 70 mg/dl.
	I will check my fasting blood glucose in the morning _____ times/week for _____ weeks.
	I will check my blood glucose 2 hours after (circle one) BREAKFAST, LUNCH, DINNER _____ times/week for _____ weeks.
	Other Goal:

Healthy Coping (Module 3)

	I will get support from family/friends ___ out of ___ times a week for _____ weeks.
	I will keep a daily routine/schedule _____ days per week for _____ weeks.
	I will practice a stress-reducing activity like walking or meditation _____ days per week for _____ weeks.
	I will contact Mental Health for stress management tools and support within _____ weeks.
	Other Goal:

Taking Medications (Module 4)

	I will take all my diabetes medications daily as prescribed for _____ weeks/months.
	I will carry all my medications with me when I leave my house for errands or travel.
	I will contact my pharmacist or provider for medication adjustments as needed.
	I will fill my pillbox each week for the next _____ weeks.
	Other Goal:

Healthy Eating (Module 5)

	I will reduce my portion sizes of _____ at least _____ times each week/month.
	I will substitute low sodium foods : _____, _____ times a week for _____ weeks.
	I will replace sugary drinks with water or sugar-free drinks _____ times a week for _____ weeks.
	I will eat more non-starchy vegetables for (circle one) BREAKFAST, LUNCH, DINNER _____ times a week for _____ weeks.
	Other Goal:

Being Active (Module 6)

	I will _____, _____ times per week for _____ minutes, for _____ weeks.
	I will notify my provider when starting an exercise.
	Other Goal:

Reducing Risk (Module 7)

	I will see my eye doctor at least every 2 years or more frequently.
	I will have my blood drawn and urine tested as ordered by my provider.
	I will check my feet daily even when I am not at home.
	I will take steps to quit smoking.
	Other Goal:

Problem Solving (Module 8)

	I will carry a fast carb (glucose tablets) with me.
	I will test my blood glucose before I drive my car.
	I will pack a healthy snack: _____ to prevent low blood glucose and to avoid choosing an unhealthy snack when I am away from home.
	Other Goal:

Summary

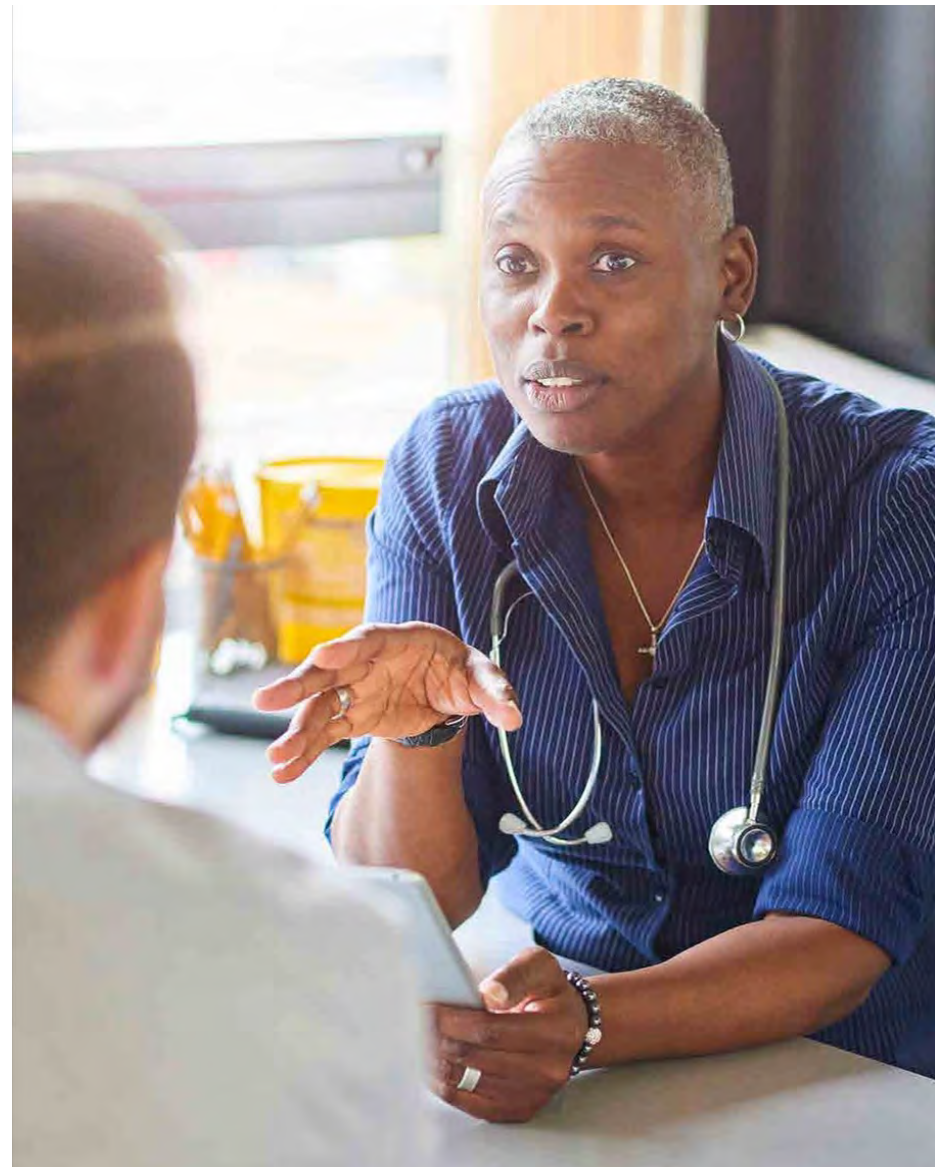
This session identified signs of diabetes distress and its potential sources. Module 3 explained the importance of having a support team and being an active partner in the decision making process using the SHARE model. Finally, this session outlined the importance of creating SMART goals.

Key Points

- Diabetes self-management is challenging but worthwhile.
- Diabetes distress is a real concern. Recognizing the symptoms and knowing how to find support is important.
- Healthy coping requires both problem solving and managing stress.
- Shared decision making is a 2-way street. It involves both YOU and your health care team or provider.
- Keep working on your SMART goals and tracking your progress!
- Continue to enjoy your life!

Before Next Class

- Review Module 4: Taking Medications
- Write down your questions
- Work on your health care goal or changing a habit/behavior





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