



Stress – *It's Under Your Control*

Stress is a part of life that everyone experiences at one time or another. There are a variety of ways to help manage your response to stress and relieve the effects of stress. What works for one person may not work for another. Try different activities to help you keep your response to stress in check, and try different relaxation methods to reduce the impact of stress. Then choose what works best for you.

Which of the following activities will you use to reduce stress and manage your response?

- Set priorities and learn to say no to less important activities and interruptions.
- Think about quality over quantity. No one is perfect, so limit how much you do and focus on the quality of what you do.
- Focus on and complete one task at a time. When projects seem overwhelming, find ways to break them down into smaller tasks.
- Schedule and plan your time on a calendar and use a checklist to track your progress.
- Live a healthy lifestyle. Eat nutritious food, get enough sleep, exercise, and balance work and play.
- Exercise daily. Whether you choose vigorous, moderate or recreational exercise, it has a variety of health benefits, including reducing stress.
- Use a journal to gain awareness, transfer thoughts and frustrations, problem-solve, identify your strengths or your triggers and patterns for stress, and to shift to a positive attitude.
- Be kind to yourself and others. Start by being realistic with your expectations. Be thankful and express your gratitude. Journaling your thankfulness helps you focus on the positive aspects of your life.
- Let go. Learn to be flexible and let go of the little stuff. Reduce stress and resolve conflict by compromising, weighing pros and cons, and exploring alternatives for the issues that are most important to you.

Find ways to relax and renew your energy. Check off the methods below you will try.

Stimulate your senses

- Work with your hands – do a puzzle, try pottery, draw or sketch, or play computer games
- Express emotions or feelings; laugh, cry, hug, touch
- Watch a movie, play or comedy show
- Look through old pictures or photo albums
- Listen to music, go to a concert, sing or move to music
- Enjoy the smell, sight and touch of nature
- Spend time with your pet

Do something physical

- Take a long walk
- Dance to your favorite music or video
- Lift weights, bicycle, swim
- Go fishing or golfing
- Try tai chi, yoga or Pilates
- Try a new sport or activity

Be social

- Share your feelings with someone you trust
- Call an old friend or make a new one
- Attend support meetings
- Attend sporting, cultural or other social events
- Join a book club, hiking or volunteer group



Take up a hobby or new interest

- Woodworking
- Sewing or needlepoint
- Learn a new language
- Painting, crafts, photography, or other artwork
- Gardening
- Learn to play an instrument
- Other: What is something new you've wanted to try?

Rest

- Take a nap
- Read a good book
- Watch a good movie
- Take a shower or hot bath
- Balance work and play (leisure)
- Get a massage, a pedicure or a facial

Relax and refresh your mind

- Meditate
- Pray
- Read
- Use visualization or just daydream

Do something different

- Change your routine
- Change your pace
- Change your scenery
- Connect with or help someone
- Eat by candlelight or have a picnic

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