

Your Virtual Guide to improve your  
Mental Health and Wellbeing.

# Tips to deal with stress

This self-help guide was made to help  
people with **mild to moderate symptoms**.

If you are not sure how you feel, ask for  
a **Psychological Coaching** with our Clinical  
Psychologists.



## STRESS

We feel stressed when we are under pressure, in a state in which the demands of life become too much to cope with. It is a completely normal response that we all experience from time to time and it is our body's reaction when we are under threat. If the environment is non-threatening, a little stress may be helpful and motivating. However, if you are under stress for too long, you put yourself at risk for a more severe reaction.

The key to good stress management is to develop emotional strength, trying to maintain the control of the situation, building a good support network and adopting a positive attitude.

Avoiding unhealthy habits is recommended in order to help you cope, such as smoking or drinking.



## RECOMMENDATIONS TO FEEL BETTER

1. **Identifying the source of stress.** Start by identifying the causes of stress in your life. While it's easy to identify major stressors, such as going through a divorce, moving jobs or moving houses, identifying the sources of chronic stress can be more complicated. Since, it's easy to overlook how your own thoughts, feelings and behaviors contribute to your daily stress levels. You may know that you're constantly worrying about work deadlines, but perhaps it's your procrastination, rather than actual work demands, that's causing the stress.

2. **Take a closer look at your habits, attitudes and excuses.** Until you accept responsibility for the role you play in creating or maintaining them, your stress levels will remain out of your control.
3. **Start a stress diary (optional).** A stress journal can help you identify common stressors and the ways in which you cope with them. Each time you feel stressed, write it down in your journal. As you keep a daily log, you will begin to see common patterns and themes. Write down:
  - What caused your stress (or the cause that seems most likely to you).
  - How you felt, both physically and emotionally.
  - What you did in response to the situation.
  - What you did afterwards in order to feel better.
4. **Make time for yourself.** Unfortunately, we spend many hours working, which means we often don't spend enough time on the things we really enjoy doing. We all need to take time to socialize, relax or exercise.

It is recommended that you set aside a couple of nights a week to enjoy some quality "time for yourself" outside of work. By setting aside those 2 days, it means you won't be tempted to work overtime.

Do something you enjoy every day and take time for leisure activities that bring you joy, whether it's watching movies, playing guitar, or riding your bike.

5. **Be active.** Exercise won't make your stress go away, but it will reduce some of the emotional intensity you're feeling, clearing your thoughts, and allowing you to deal with your problems in a calmer way.

Being active is not only great for your health and fitness. Evidence also shows that it can improve your mental well-being by:

- Boosting your self-esteem
- Helping you to set goals or challenges, and achieving them.
- Causes chemical changes in your brain that can help positively change your mood.

6. **Work intelligently and not too hard.** Working in a smarter way means organizing your work, focusing on the tasks that will make a real difference.
- Accept that your inbox will always be full. Don't expect it to be empty at the end of the day.
  - Prioritize your tasks. Make a list of the tasks you have to do and prioritize them in order of importance.
  - Divide projects into small steps. If a large project seems overwhelming, use a step-by-step plan. Focus on one manageable step at a time, rather than taking on everything at once.
  - Delegate responsibility. You don't have to do everything by yourself, whether at home, at school or at work.
  - Review our time management guides [here](#).
7. **Keep in touch with others.** A good support network of colleagues, friends and family can ease your work or family problems and help you see things in a different way.

If you don't communicate with others, you won't have support to turn to when you need help.

The activities we do with friends help us relax. We often laugh a lot with them, which is an excellent stress reliever. Talking to a friend will also help you find solutions to your problems.

8. **Challenge yourself.** Setting goals and challenges for yourself at work or externally, such as learning a new language or sport, can help you build confidence. It also helps you deal with stress and it gives you knowledge while making you want to do things instead of just being passive, like watching TV all the time.
- By continuing to learn, you become more emotionally resilient as a person.
9. **Changing what is possible.** Changing a difficult situation is not always possible. Try to focus on the things you have control over. For example, if your company is firing people, there's nothing you will be able to do about it. So, in a situation like that, you should focus on the things you can control, such as looking for a new job.

Plenty of things in life are out of our control, particularly other people's behavior. Instead of stressing about them, focus on the things you can control, like the way you choose to react to problems.

10. **Try to be positive.** When faced with major challenges, try to view these as opportunities for personal growth. If your own bad choices contributed to a stressful situation, reflect on those choices, and learn from your mistakes.

Look for the positive aspects of life and the things you are grateful for. A helpful exercise for this is to write down 3 things that went well, or for which you are grateful, at the end of each day.

You can also search on YouTube or Spotify for audiobooks to increase positive thoughts and remove those that are negative or unpleasant.

#### 11. **Avoid unhealthy habits:**

- **Cut back on caffeine and sugar!** The temporary "rush" provided by caffeine and sugar often results in a crash in energy levels. By reducing the amount of coffee, beverages, chocolate and sweets in your diet, you will feel more relaxed and you will sleep better.
- **Avoid alcohol, cigarettes and drugs.** These may provide an easy outlet for stress, but the relief is only temporary. Don't evade or mask the problem at issue; it's best to deal with them head-on and with a clear mind.