



You Can  
Manage  
Stress

Mental Wealth  
Is Our  
Priority!

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# 20 Tips to Manage Stress

Stress is a common and normal physical response to challenging or new situations. A little bit of stress can be beneficial, by increasing motivation, overcoming challenges and helping you achieve your goals, however, too much of it can damage our mental and physical health. Therefore, it's important to manage stress so it doesn't become an ongoing problem.

Stress management is an important part of our overall health and mental wealth. How can we manage our stress? Fortunately, we have 20 practical and effective stress management tips below that can help us reduce stress and improve our overall wellbeing.

## 1. Avoid Procrastination

Procrastination. We're all guilty of it at some point in our life. We have put off what we know is important, and it seems the more pressing the task at hand, the better we are at avoiding it. At the end of it all, we regret that we had put it off in the first place.

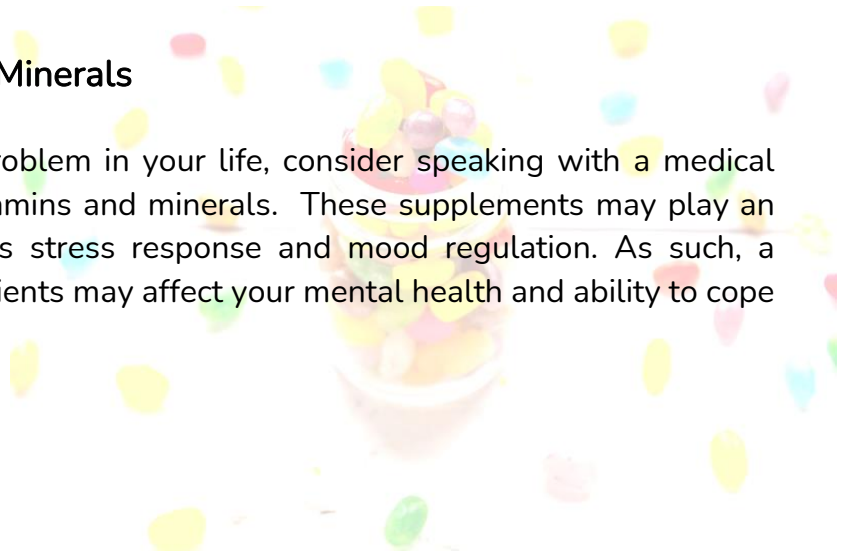


How can you avoid procrastination?

- **Set goals.** Make simple and reachable goals rather than face a big, vague plan. This makes your goals less intimidating and more attainable.
- **Set deadlines.** Whatever you set out to do, do it as soon as possible
- **Prioritize.** give yourself a time period to get your tasks done in order of priority and avoid multitasking. Work smartly by getting the hard stuff out of the way first, so that everything that comes after it will seem more manageable.
- **Hold yourself accountable.** If you need help in holding yourself accountable, tell a friend or family member and ask them to check up on your goals, deadlines, and accomplishments.
- **Reward yourself.** Don't forget to think about a reward for yourself after completing a task. It could be as simple as saying, "Once I finish this assignment/task, I can watch an episode of my favourite TV show."

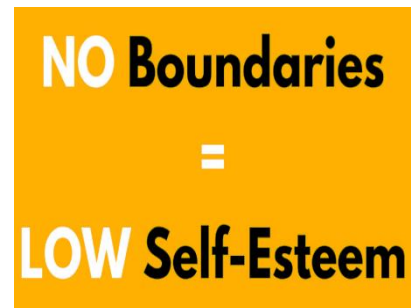
## 2. Consider Vitamins and Minerals

If stress continues to be a problem in your life, consider speaking with a medical professional about taking vitamins and minerals. These supplements may play an important role in your body's stress response and mood regulation. As such, a deficiency in one or more nutrients may affect your mental health and ability to cope with stress.



### 3. Set boundaries

Setting boundaries is an important part of establishing one's identity, boosting self-esteem and is a crucial aspect of one's mental wealth. Putting too much on your plate may increase your stress load and limit the amount of time you can spend on self-care. Taking control over your personal life may help reduce stress and protect your mental health.



Boundaries start with clear communication between you and others including family, friends, romantic relationships, coworkers, and strangers. It's important to create healthy boundaries in your life by declining to take on more than you can handle. Like an internal compass, boundaries can start with a "gut feeling" that tells you when you have the energy or time to devote to something versus when you need to say "no". Saying "no" is one way to control your stressors.

### 4. Do your best

Do your best, be a high achiever but avoid being a perfectionist. Both types of people want to succeed. However, high achievers are motivated to do their best, while perfectionists are motivated by fear and paralyzed by the idea of failure. Instead of aiming for perfection, be proud of however close you get.

### 5. Follow a healthy diet



A healthy, well-balanced diet can help us think clearly and feel more alert. It can also improve concentration, attention span, decrease our risk of deficiencies in nutrients that help regulate stress. Being stressed may lead you to overeat and reach for highly palatable foods, which may harm your overall health and mood.

### 6. Get enough sleep

When stressed, your body needs additional sleep and rest. Adequate sleep makes us more resilient to everyday stress, better able to manage our emotions, and less likely to experience symptoms of anxiety and depression.

Most adults need 7 or more hours of good quality sleep while teens need 8 to 10 hours good quality sleep. Getting enough sleep isn't only about total hours of sleep. It's also important to get good-quality sleep on a regular schedule so you feel rested when you wake up.



## 7. Get more physical activity



Feeling stressed? Physical activities like walking, jogging, skipping, swimming, playing ball, yoga and any other forms of exercise can help. It will help improve your quality of life, emotionally, mentally, and physically.

Starting something new can be challenging and even more challenging is sticking to it. Why not get an “exercise buddy.” It's often easier to stick to your exercise routine when you have to stay committed to a friend, partner, or

colleague. Also, start with gentle activities such as walking, yoga, pilates, biking or swimming. Be patient with yourself. It usually takes about four to eight weeks to feel coordinated and sufficiently in shape so that exercise feels easier.

## 8. Learn what triggers your anxiety

Daily stressors like traffic jams, missing your train, family problems, work or college deadlines can trigger us. Keeping track of your feelings on paper is a great way to help know what situations make you feel anxious. In addition, writing down any effective coping strategies can be helpful to refer back to in the future.

## 9. Limit alcohol

Consuming alcohol may seem to relieve stress but it does so only temporarily. Actually, drinking alcohol as a stress reliever does more harm than good. Over time it can change how your body responds to stress, making it harder to cope without it. It can interfere with what the brain needs for good mental health, disrupt sleep, worsen anxiety, trigger panic attacks and can lead to long-term damage to major organs.



There are a number of ways to cope with stress that don't involve alcohol. Many of these are found in our 20 practical stress management tips like physical activity, getting proper and sufficient sleep and eating well. Remember that you don't have to cope with stress on your own. A counselor, therapist, and community organisations may all be able to give additional support.

## 10. Maintain a positive attitude

Having a positive attitude makes us happier. We are not only happier with our lives, but people will likely want to be around us and this makes us even happier. Effort is certainly required to have positive thoughts because it's easier for us to focus on

negative thoughts, views, and actions. Thinking positively means staying focused on the outcome you want as something that you are able to reach. You are aware that obstacles can arise but you choose not to hold on to the negative outcomes.

## 11. Minimize phone use and screen time

Smartphones, tablets, and computers are an unavoidable part of everyday life for many people. However, minimizing screen time may help reduce stress and improve sleep. On the other hand, too much screen time may negatively affect one's psychological well-being and sleep and increase stress levels.

## 12. Practice deep breathing

Deep breathing is one of the best ways to lower stress in the body. Deep breathing activates your body's relaxation response and counteracts some of the physical sensations of stress. How does deep breathing work? When you breathe deeply, it sends a message to your brain to calm down and relax. The brain then sends this message to your body. Breathing exercises are easy to learn. You can do them whenever you want, and you don't need any special tools or equipment to do them.



## 13. Practice self-care

Self-care means taking care of yourself so that you can be healthy, you can be well, you can do your job, you can help and care for others, and you can do all the things you need to and want to accomplish in a day. In other words, taking time to care for yourself is essential in order to live a healthy, happy, and satisfying life. Setting aside time to practice self-care may also help reduce your stress levels.

Self-care doesn't have to be sophisticated or complicated. Some examples include:

- aromatherapy
- exercising
- getting a massage
- going for a walk outside
- lighting candles
- make time for a hobby
- practicing yoga or pilates
- preparing a healthy meal
- reading a good book
- schedule quiet time
- stretching before bed
- taking a bath

## 14. Reduce your caffeine intake



Caffeine is a natural chemical found in coffee, tea, cocoa, chocolate, medicines, energy drinks etc. that stimulates your central nervous system. Consuming too much may worsen and increase feelings of stress and anxiety and may also harm your sleep. If you notice that caffeine makes you jittery or anxious, consider replacing it with decaffeinated herbal tea or water.

Reducing your caffeine intake can be a difficult task. It is recommended that you do this gradually because if you cut out caffeine from your diet quickly, you may suffer from withdrawal headaches. If this happens drink plenty of plain water.

## 15. Spend time outside

Spending time outside in nature or green spaces such as parks, forests, hiking, or gardening is one of the easiest ways to improve your mental health and wellbeing. It may help lower blood pressure, reduce stress, slow heart rate, and boost your mood. Try it today – go outside, it doesn't matter where you go. Take a deep breath and enjoy it.



## 16. Spend time with friends and family

Spending time with family, and relatives can help you get through stressful times. Having strong social ties is important for overall mental well-being. Remember that friends can also be your "family". If you're feeling alone and don't have friends or family to depend on, social support groups may help. Why not consider joining a club or sports team or volunteering for a cause.

## 17. Spend time with your pet



Spending time with a pet is a soothing and pleasurable way to reduce stress. Research has shown that simply petting a dog lowers the stress hormone cortisol and your body releases oxytocin — a hormone that's linked to positive mood. Having a pet provides companionship, support and can help you be more active. They give you a reason to get outside, get some fresh air and get active, which is proven to improve your self-esteem, mood, sleep, and mental health and reduces levels of loneliness, stress and anxiety.

## 18. Talk to someone

In the moments when stress creeps in and become overwhelming, it can be difficult to remember what helps to alleviate stress. Sometimes, venting to a trusted friend, family member or someone who has either gone through your situation or is going through it with you may be all you need. Don't be afraid to talk to others and let them know how they can help you. If you need additional help, consider contacting a professional therapist to help you work through your stress and anxiety.

## 19. Practice Yoga or Pilates



Yoga is proven to help reduce stress hormone levels, blood pressure, symptoms of anxiety and depression and give ones a sense of calmness. It is low impact exercise with many powerful tools because the discipline focuses on three aspects of you; the mind, body, and soul. Another low impact exercise that's similar to yoga, is pilates. When practicing yoga, you normally adopt a position and hold it, or flow into a different position. However, in pilates, you adopt a position and then challenge your core by moving your arms or legs. Both yoga and pilates can help you to manage stress.

## 20. Welcome humour

It's true: laughter is strong medicine. Laughter is a natural mental health remedy and the ultimate stress relief medicine. Laughing automatically triggers positive physical and mental changes that help to relax your mind. It also strengthens your immune system, boosts mood, diminishes pain, and protects you from the damaging effects of stress. By seeking out more opportunities for humor and laughter, you can improve your emotional health, strengthen your relationships, find greater happiness—and even add years to your life.