

Stress Management Toolkit

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HUMBER**

Agenda

- Build your own Stress Management Toolkit.

1. Physical Activity

- Get active, be physical, move and move a lot. Physical exercise metabolizes the excess stress hormones.
- If there are barriers to physical activity speak to a health care professional to devise some physical activities that fit for you.
- At best, be outside and where possible in nature

2. Relaxation Techniques

- If you can slow down your mind and body long enough, you can remain calm. Relaxation lowers your pulse rate, respiration, and blood pressure lowering your stress levels.
- De-stressing from the inside out – How?
- Breathing deeply
- Mindfulness: bringing one's attention to experiences occurring in the present
- Yoga
- Meditation
- Prayer
- Take a soak in the bath

3. Reframing Your Thoughts

- Learn helpful thinking patterns – develop a growth mindset, get curious, be open – because the way we think about a situation totally affects the way we will respond to that situation and how we feel about it. It also totally affects the things we do next and what actions we take.
- Keep perspective – unhelpful thoughts make things seem bigger than they really are
- Embrace a positive mindset. Try to think of it as a challenge writing down possible solutions to the stressor and evaluating their pros and cons of each one. Then choose one and write down steps to take.

4. Keep a Stress Diary

- Keep a record of the date, time, and place when you feel stressed out.
- Use this diary to try to understand your personal stress triggers.
- Identify activities you can modify or eliminate that cause stress, or ways you could handle stressful situations differently and coping techniques you could use.

5. Food and Nutrition

- A healthy, nutritious, and well-balanced diet can go a long way towards helping you to cope with stress.
- Reduce caffeine, alcohol, and refined sugar consumption as these are stimulants, so they increase your stress levels. Replace caffeinated drinks with water, natural fruit juices, and herbal teas.

6. Talk to Others

- Stay connected – Expressing your feelings to others can help to reduce your stress levels. When you feel stressed, take a break and call or meet a friend. A reassuring voice that makes you feel nurtured and understood will help you to keep your problems in perspective.
- If you don't want to talk to family members or friends, talking to a therapist may help.
- Negative self-talk is damaging. Give yourself a little pep talk. Tell yourself that you can deal with the situation and that everything will turn out fine.

7. Do Something You Enjoy

- Take a break for your hobbies, passions, things you love to do – things that you find fun and make you laugh, listen to music, dance, read a good book.
- The break will enable you to return to a stressful situation with a different perspective and a renewed state of mind.

8. Sleep Better

- Stress can affect your ability to sleep, but lack of sleep is also a fundamental cause of stress.
- Try turning off the TV earlier, dimming the lights and giving yourself some time to unwind and relax before going to bed.
- Getting enough sleep is essential to fuel your mind and body. If you feel exhausted, it may cause you to think irrationally, and this only increases your stress.

Toolkit Summary

1. Physical Activity
2. Relaxation Techniques
3. Reframing your Thoughts
4. Keep a Stress Diary
5. Food and Nutrition
6. Talk to Others
7. Do Something you Enjoy
8. Sleep Better

THANK YOU.

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