

RELINQUISH AND TRANSCEND COUNSELING

STRESS BUSTER



Stress is common and, unfortunately, not something you can totally avoid in life. It can be tricky, though, too, because, believe it or not, there's such a thing as both good and bad stress. Thankfully, though, plenty of excellent stress therapy options and coping mechanisms can help you manage the harmful types of stress when you need to.

When you learn how to deal with stress effectively, you can minimize the impact it has on your day-to-day life and protect your overall mental health. Keep reading to learn stress management techniques that'll be a game-changer in how you cope with (and overcome) stress in your daily life.

WHAT IS STRESS MANAGEMENT?

During periods of stress, your body responds in several interconnected ways. Stress triggers the release of hormones such as adrenaline and noradrenaline. These fire up activities in your sympathetic nervous system (SNS), which speeds up your heart rate and blood pressure. It also stimulates your brain, your muscles, and your immune system. Cortisol is another important stress hormone. It does a lot of things in your body. But one of its primary jobs is to manage your immune system. It also helps you marshal the energy your brain and body need to get you out of a stressful situation—whether you're running from a bear or trying to finish an assignment before a deadline. Stress management is the blanket term for stuff you can do to keep your body's stress response from ramping up too much or too often.

WHY IS STRESS MANAGEMENT SO CRITICAL?

While some stress is benign, too much stress can cause unhealthy changes inside your body. These changes raise your risk for all sorts of medical, psychological, or cognitive problems.

Some of the health risks linked to stress include:

- Heart disease
- Stroke
- Poor immune functioning
- Gut disorders
- Problems sleeping
- Adrenal disease
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Alzheimer's disease

Most of these conditions are linked to chronic stress. This is a kind of long-term stress that lasts for at least three to six months.

There are many different causes of chronic stress. But some common ones include financial worries, unhappy relationships, or problems at work. Stress management techniques can help you avoid or limit the kind of persistent, all-the-time stress that causes or contributes to health problem.

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Stress Buster Continued



FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHEN REDUCING STRESS

- Mitigating or reducing stress looks different for different people; but generally there are four domains to consider when we talk about stress. The first two, our mind and body, refer to the personal, and the second pair, our community and job/school refer to the interpersonal. Rice says that incorporating a couple guidelines within each of these categories that allow for a higher probability of success in your endeavors to mitigate stress:
- Our mind. While it doesn't seem like we should focus on our mind when mitigating our stress, changing our perspective is a behavioral game changer.
- Our body. The mind and body connection rules our overall feelings for the world around us. Therefore, fueling our bodies fuels our minds and vice versa.
- Our community. Are we surrounded by people that act as a resource, are reciprocal, and are filled with gratitude? Or have we found ourselves in a slump of toxicity?
- Our job and/or school status. Do we find value where we are or would a shift to something else save the day?

STRESS MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

There are several coping tools known to reduce or eliminate the effects of stress. They generally can fall into 1 of 3 categories:

- Action-oriented (where you do something)
- Emotion-oriented (where you change how you feel about something)
- Acceptance (where you learn to accept things that you have no control over)

10 TIPS FOR COPING WITH STRESS

The following tips for stress management can be instrumental in allowing you to take control back. You don't have to let stress rule you.

1. Cut out distractions
2. Establish boundaries
3. Work on assertiveness
4. Improve your time management skills
5. Use positive affirmations
6. Adopt the ABC technique
7. Try cognitive restructuring
8. Take steps to improve your health
9. Become more resilient
10. Talk about your feelings



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