

Stress Management

What is stress?

Stress can mean many different things depending on the person, but in general it is "emotional and physiological responses to a potential stressor".

There are multiple ways to describe different types of stress.

Eustress (positive stress): Stress at low/manageable levels can be beneficial for us. Some short-term stress about an upcoming test, college applications, or job interview can help improve performance and motivation. This can help us meet deadlines, study adequately, and channel our energy in positive ways.

Distress (negative stress): Stress that extends beyond our usual coping abilities can become distressing. Distress can be short- or long-term, cause anxiety or worry, decrease performance, and lead to further problems with functioning about our daily lives. This can encompass experiencing bullying, daily intense stress at work, moving, or even a chronic illness.

Toxic stress: This can occur when an individual experiences repeated, long, or frequent instances of harmful stressors. This can include emotional/physical abuse, exposure to violence, negative relationships, living in a war-torn environment, and other harmful situations.

As stress is bound to come up in our lives, we must learn to manage any present or future issues that burden us. There are many ways in which we can learn to cope and manage stress properly. One of the most important aspects about stress management, and coping in general, is to make sure you have supportive friends/family members that you can rely on for help or as an open heart to listen. Seeking support from others is extremely important.

Eustress

Distress

Toxic Stress

Signs You Might Be Experiencing High Stress

- Low energy
- Headaches
- Stomachaches
- Anxiety/worry
- Tense muscles/pain
- Trouble sleeping/decreased energy
- Over/under eating
- Withdrawing from friends/family
- Procrastination
- Drug or alcohol use
- Anger
- Frequently getting sick/lowered immune system
- Depression

Unhealthy vs. Healthy Coping

Below are some coping strategies you can use to help combat stress:

- Ask for support
- Problem-solving
- Exercise/eat healthy
- Create an organized to-do list
- Stick to a sleep routine
- Limit exposure to common stressors in your life
- Cap the amount of time you spend on your phone
- Meditation/yoga
- Breathing exercises
- Re-frame your difficult situation
- Seek professional help
- Spend time in nature
- and other things that help you!

Below are some unhealthy coping strategies that may be utilized for short term benefit but will ultimately provide long term negative effects:

- Drug/alcohol use
- Aggression
- Social withdrawal
- Avoidance
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Eating too much or too little
- Problems regulating emotions
- Hanging out with others with similar negative habits
- Unhealthy eating/sleep patterns

Make sure you are taking care of yourself during these times. Even though we may have less going on outside of the house, we can still become overwhelmed and stressed. To get to know your personal stressors and stress management strategies better, complete this worksheet <https://www.therapistaid.com/worksheets/stress-management.pdf>

Online Resources

- 7 Cups

Free online emotional support chatting for adults and teens ages 13-17, or you can upgrade to a membership for full therapy. Also available as an online on iPhone/Android

<https://www.7cups.com/>

- <https://www.verywellmind.com/forty-healthy-coping-skills-4586742>
- <https://www.apa.org/topics/stress-tips>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PYsuvRNZfxE>
- https://www.mindtools.com/pages/main/newMN_TCS.htm
- <https://www.edutopia.org/blog/can-stress-help-students-renee-jain>
- <https://www.edutopia.org/blog/help-students-de-stress-success>
- https://www.aap.org/en-us/professional-resources/Reaching-Teens/Documents/Private/Personal_plan_handout.pdf
- <https://www.changetochill.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/16179.pdf>

Hotline / Crisis Numbers

24-hr Crisis Line: 602-222-9444

24-hr Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 800-273-8255

24-hr Teen Lifeline: 800-273-TALK or 602-248-8336

ASAP (Adolescent Substance Abuse Program): 602-434-0249

EMPACT: 866-205-5229

Find Help Phoenix: [Find Help Phoenix](#)

Mercy Maricopa 24-hrs. Hotline (AHCCCS only): 800-631-1314

Pathways Substance Abuse Program: (480) 921-4050

State Treatment Hotline: 800-662-4357

Trevor Project 24 hour hotline (LGBT): 866-488-7386