

WAYS TO MASTER STRESS

Change Lifestyle Habits

- Well-balanced diet, reduce caffeine, junk food. Eat slowly.
- Regular exercise (provides a physical release for anger, tension).
- Adequate sleep (sleep helps your body recover from stress).
- Leisure time (take a break from your worries by doing something you enjoy and schedule the time to do it).

Change Stressful Situations

- Time and money management.
- Assertiveness (let others know what they can expect from you and how much time you are willing to give them. Learn to say “no” to things you don’t want to do when feeling overwhelmed by activities).
- Problem-solving. (Escape for a brief time to give yourself a chance to collect your thoughts and calm your emotions (a walk, listen to your favorite music)).
- Improve relationships that are important to you. Share your feelings with friends and family. Don’t cope alone.
- Take active steps to manage your environment (recognize things that cause you stress and eliminate or change what you can).
- Learn to focus on a task or job while you are doing it. (Fight the tendency to let your mind wander to some other problem or task).

Change Your Thinking

- Look at things more positively (reframing). It’s easy to be critical and to find the negative in people and things. For a week, try to find the positive instead. You may expect too much from others and yourself.
- Keep an open mind about change (view change as an opportunity for growth and healing).
- Reduce negative self-talk: pessimistic thinking, self-criticism, over-analyzing.
- Awareness of mind traps: unrealistic expectations, taking things personally, all-or-nothing thinking.
- Keep a sense of humor.
- Remember there are always options and alternatives in reaching your plans and goals if things do not go as we would wish them to. Be flexible!

Learn to Relax

- Deep breathing, stretching, body scan, meditation, mindfulness, visualization, yoga, hypnosis, exercise, progressive muscle relaxation. The actual method of relaxation depends on what works best for you. The important thing is to regularly spend time doing something that you enjoy and at which you do not feel pressure to succeed.