

# Follow this 3-step system to manage your stress in a healthy way!

## STEP 1:

### IDENTIFY THE STRESSORS IN YOUR LIFE

Are there certain situations, circumstances, relationships or responsibilities that are acting as stressors in your life right now?

## STEP 2:

DETERMINE WHICH STRESS MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES HAVE AND HAVE NOT WORKED FOR YOU IN THE PAST.

ASSESS WHETHER OR NOT THEY WERE HEALTHY STRATEGIES.

Healthy stress management technique assessment:

- The technique was effective
- It did not prevent me from dealing with the stressful situation
- It did not create more stress for me or others
- It did not put me or others at risk
- It had positive long-term effects
- It did not use more resources (financial, physical, emotional, etc.) than I could afford

Adapted from: InnerHealthStudio.com  
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## STEP 3:

### TAKE ACTION!

EXPLORE NEW, POTENTIAL STRESS MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES AND TRY THEM OUT!

Determine what works for you!

<b>Decrease stress at its source</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Set boundaries in stressful relationships</li> <li>❖ Evaluate priorities in an over-committed schedule</li> </ul>	<b>Physical Activity!</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Exercise (yoga, walking, running, stretching)</li> <li>❖ Non-competitive sports</li> </ul>	<b>Creativity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Journaling, drawing, writing</li> <li>❖ Hobbies</li> <li>❖ Engage the five senses! (aromatherapy, get outside)</li> </ul>
<b>Self-care &amp; Socializing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Healthy diet</li> <li>❖ Positive self-talk</li> <li>❖ Make time for the things you enjoy!</li> <li>❖ Vent to a friend, family member, mentor, counselor</li> </ul>	<b>Time management</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Plan ahead</li> <li>❖ Prioritize tasks and responsibilities</li> <li>❖ Schedule "me time"</li> <li>❖ Decrease procrastination</li> <li>❖ Set goals &amp; reward yourself when goals are met</li> <li>❖ Use a planner</li> </ul>	<b>Relaxation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Passive/Progressive Muscle Relaxation exercises (find them on YouTube)</li> <li>❖ Meditation</li> <li>❖ Deep breathing</li> <li>❖ Get your sleep!</li> </ul>

**Remember:** When developing stress management techniques, keep in mind that the effectiveness of the strategy is unique to each situation, stressor and individual. Finding the right strategy for you will involve trial-and-error, exploration and creativity!



# THE EFFECTS OF STRESS AND WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT

No surprise — stress is a major issue affecting most of the U.S. population. Though it's everywhere, many people aren't aware of its impact on health, wellbeing, careers and relationships. Stressors hit people in different ways, and there's no single solution. But there are many ways that we can manage life to keep stress in check.

**SIGNS OF STRESS INCLUDE:**

**TECHNOLOGY**  
 A study found that workers distracted by e-mail and phone calls suffer a fall in IQ more than twice that found in marijuana smokers. Participants in a study about Facebook said the site made them feel anxious, guilty over rejecting friend requests, pressured to post inventive updates, and frustrated with applying different rules of online etiquette to different friends.

**WORK**  
**77% of Americans** are stressed by at least one thing at work. Stress costs businesses billions of dollars each year for reasons such as lowered productivity, absenteeism, & compensation claims.

**MONEY**  
**76% of Americans** are stressed out about money. A 2010 study found that paying bills and managing accounts is the most stressful household task - even worse than housecleaning!

**RELATIONSHIPS**  
**73% of parents in America** are stressed by family responsibilities. Did you know that stress is contagious? This phenomenon has been linked to mirror neurons, brain cells involved in empathy reactions.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT

Stress can be crippling, but successful stress management can make drastic improvements in your life. One study found that a major characteristic consistent among people who live to 100 is the ability to manage stress. Want to be among them? Then try the simple tips below.

**EXERCISE**  
**48%** of adults exercise or walk to manage stress. If your schedule doesn't allow for regular trips to the gym, try parking further away and walking to work, taking the stairs, or stretching at your desk to relieve tension.

**ORGANIZE**  
 Stop stress before it starts: a survey investigating the most effective stress management techniques revealed that planning is the #1 way to minimize stress. Clutter in your physical environment can affect your mood and productivity. Clearing your work space just might help you clear your mind, too.

**TAKE CHARGE**  
 Feeling out of control is a top stressor. So try focusing on what you can control. Set small, achievable goals that give you a sense of daily accomplishment. Learn to say "NO." Taking on new tasks when you're already busy may seem helpful, but too much on your plate is likely to decrease the quality and volume of work you actually accomplish.

**SCHEDULE "ME TIME"**  
 Taking "me time" is one of the most popular ways that Americans tackle their stress:

- 31%** relax with a hobby
- 35%** play video games
- 49%** listen to music

**SOMEONE WITHOUT STRESS:**

**EXERCISE**  
 CLEARER DECISION MAKING  
 BETTER MOOD AND OUTLOOK  
 BETTER SLEEP  
 MORE PRODUCTIVE  
 LESS STRESS EATING  
 HEALTHIER IMMUNE SYSTEM  
 MORE NATURAL ENERGY

**TAKE CHARGE**  
 SURE! Why not?  
 I CAN'T. Sorry!

**SCHEDULE "ME TIME"**

Brought to you by: **C3\*** for Stress

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Sources include: American Psychological Association, American Institute of Stress, and Mayo Clinic