

Stressmanagement

Tips for a healthy way to deal with stress



How does stress arise?

Stress can be caused by a variety of circumstances. These can include time pressure, unforeseen events or conflicts. Equally, stress can also be triggered by positive things like career advancement, vacation, or reconciliation.

The stress reaction is functional. It is a mental and physical state that serves to cope with external circumstances. Changing circumstances – both positive and negative – mean that body and mind must adapt. In this process, stress can be a motivator. At the same time, stress can add up. In the long term, it can lead to overload. The consequences can be exhaustion, tension, back pain or cardiovascular diseases.

Dealing with stress in a healthy way

Stress management helps to cope with stressful challenges in a healthy way. It consists of four elements.

The first element is the *analysis*. Here you reflect when and why you are stressed. This is the basis for all subsequent steps. The second element is the *mental stress management*. This is about how inner expectations and thought patterns can increase stress. Self-reflection and a change of perspective help to reduce internal stress. The third element is the *instrumental stress management*. Here, the goal is to reduce external stress. Many useful tools for this come from self- and time-management. Finally, there is *regeneration*. Here you learn about ways to relax effectively and sufficiently.

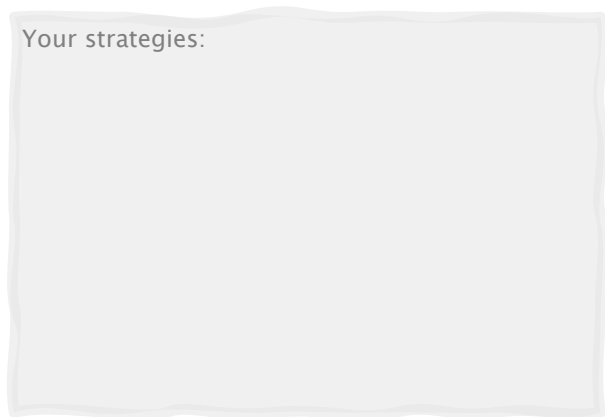
Healthy stress management is characterized by the flexibility to use multiple strategies. Sometimes, for example, you may need a better time or conflict management. But sometimes a situation cannot be changed, and that's when mental stress management is especially valuable. Therefore, check which strategies you are already using and which ones you can expand.

How to improve your stress management

First, think about what you already apply in stress management. Then read through the following tips and mark the elements you would like to strengthen. Chose one thing and write down what and when you want to do it.

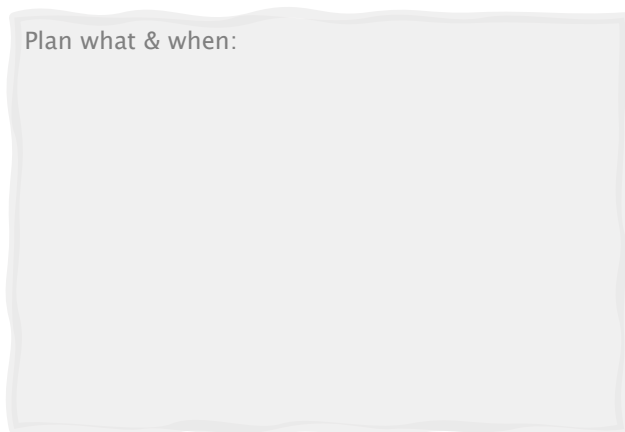
When I am under stress it helps me to...

Your strategies:



Additionally, I want to do / try out...

Plan what & when:



Extra tip: If you are unsure, where to start, begin or end each day with a short self-reflection. It just takes one minute!

Tips for a healthy stress management

- ❑ *Analysis:* When you brush your teeth in the evening, ask yourself: How am I doing? What do I need? What was good today?
- ❑ *Analysis:* Write a stress diary using an Excel spreadsheet, Post-its or an app (e.g. mood tracker or mindfulness diaries)
- ❑ *Mental stress management:* Ask yourself what your expectations are for yourself. Which ones are realistic?
- ❑ *Mental stress management:* Who shows composure? What can you learn or copy from this person?
- ❑ *Instrumental stress management:* Write down all your tasks consistently in list and sort them by relevance (e.g. with outlook calendar or Todist)
- ❑ *Instrumental stress management:* Block some focus time for your most important tasks
- ❑ *Regeneration:* Try relaxation methods, e. g. breathing or mindfulness relaxation (e. g. Headspace, 7 mind, freemindfulness.org), muscle relaxation (e. g. local classes, YouTube videos)
- ❑ *Regeneration:* Establish fixed relaxation rituals, e. g. three deep breaths every hour, a midday walk, or muscle relaxation in the evening