TAKING CONTROL OF STRESS AND BUILDING RESILIENCY

Stress from everyday life affects almost everyone. If you know how to confront stress when it appears, you can control it and avoid some of the negative outcomes of stress. Up to 42% of adolescents and a similar percentage of adults struggle to manage their stress levels. That’s why it’s important to learn strategies that you can use to control stress.

There are five steps you can take to control stress. The first one is recognizing the signs of stress in your body. You might feel your heart race, feel anxious, get headaches, or notice other symptoms. When you notice them, take time to think about how to respond. If you ignore these symptoms, you simply let stress take control, rather than responding to it in a positive way.

The second step is to take a break from what you’re doing. A break can help you gain perspective on your stressor.

The third step is to take deep breaths. Taking deep breaths has been proven to help slow your heart rate. This can help you clear your head and feel calmer. With a calmer mind, you’ll be able to focus on your next steps and find constructive ways to approach what’s stressing you out.

Step four is to exercise and eat well. If you’re stressed, you might eat unhealthily or forget to exercise. It’s important to try to eat well, especially when you’re stressed. That means not loading up on lots of caffeinated drinks and junk food. It will only make you feel worse! Instead, focus on maintaining a healthy diet of vegetables, fruit, whole grains, and lean protein. Also, be sure to make time to exercise. Exercising can help you protect your heart health and calm your body’s stress responses.

Step five is to talk about your stress. Whether you talk to a mental health professional, friend, or family member, talking about your stress can help you get the support you need.

These strategies can help you be resilient when facing stress. Resiliency means that a person is able to face a problem or difficulty, such as stress, and quickly return to their pre-problem state. In other words, resiliency means that you are able to recover from stress quickly. People who are resilient are patient, accept their own limitations, see themselves as survivors rather than victims, are comfortable with asking for help, and are good at solving problems.

![WHILE YOU’RE READING...](image)

**MARK WITH SYMBOLS**

- **!** when you find something interesting.
- **?** when you are unsure or confused by something.
- ***** when you find something important.

**HIGHLIGHT WITH COLORS**

- **yellow** power words or key terms
- **green** key phrases and definitions

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Question 1: Suggest an activity you might use as a break when you’re feeling stressed (as in the second step for responding to stress).


