

How Can You Manage Your Stress?

First, recognize stress:

Stress symptoms include mental, social, and physical manifestations. These include exhaustion, loss of/increased appetite, headaches, crying, sleeplessness, and oversleeping. Escape through alcohol, drugs, or other compulsive behavior are often indications. Feelings of alarm, frustration, or apathy may accompany stress.

If you feel that stress is putting you in an unmanageable state or interfering with your academic, social or work life, a first option is to seek help through TCC's Mental Health Services (Student Union 2nd Floor).

Stress Management is the ability to maintain control when situations, people, and events make excessive demands. What you can do to manage your stress? What are some strategies?

Look around

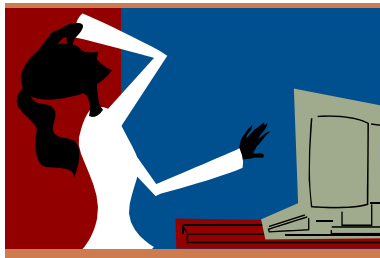
See if there really is something you can change or control in the situation

Remove yourself from the stressful situation

Give yourself a break if only for a few moments daily

Don't sweat the small stuff

Try to prioritize a few truly important things and let the rest slide



Selectively change the way you react, but not too much at one time. Focus on one troublesome thing and manage your reactions to it/him/her

Avoid extreme reactions;

Why hate when a little dislike will do? Why generate anxiety when you can be nervous? Why rage when anger will do the job? Why be depressed when you can just be sad?

Set realistic goals for yourself

Reduce the number of events going on in your life and you may reduce the circuit overload

Don't overwhelm yourself

by fretting about your entire workload. Handle each task as it comes, or selectively deal with matters in some priority

Learn how to best relax yourself

Meditation and breathing exercises have been proven to be very effective in controlling stress. Practice clearing your mind of disturbing thoughts.

Change the way you see your situation; seek alternative viewpoints

Stress is a reaction to events and problems, and you can lock yourself in to one way of viewing your situation. Seek an outside perspective of the situation, compare it with yours, and perhaps lessen your reaction to these conditions.

Do something for others

to help get your mind off your self

Get enough sleep

Lack of rest just aggravates stress

Work off stress

with physical activity, whether it's jogging, tennis, gardening

Avoid self-medication or escape

Alcohol and drugs can mask stress. They don't help deal with the problems

Begin to manage the effects of stress

This is a long range strategy of adapting to your situation, and the effects of stress in your life. Try to isolate and work with one "effect" at a time. Don't overwhelm yourself. for example, if you are not sleeping well, seek help on this one problem.

Try to "use" stress

If you can't remedy, nor escape from, what is bothering you, flow with it and try to use it in a productive way

Try to be positive

Give yourself messages as to how well you can cope rather than how horrible everything is going to be. "Stress can actually help memory, provided it is short-term and not too severe. Stress causes more glucose to be delivered to the brain, which makes more energy available to neurons. This, in turn, enhances memory formation and retrieval. On the other hand, if stress is prolonged, it can impede the glucose delivery and disrupt memory." **All Stressed Up**, [St. Paul Pioneer Press Dispatch](#), p. 8B, Monday, November 30, 1998