

# 5 ways to get through stress

June 10 2019

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Relationships, jobs, school, finances—stress can creep up on you from all areas of your life. While stress is often associated with negative events, positive events can sometimes be stressful, too. No matter where your stress is coming from, here are some tips to help you get through it.

## **Recognize that stress is a valuable part of life**

Stress is inevitable. While it's often seen as a negative aspect of life, stress can actually provide an opportunity for growth. In fact, every time you deal with stress, your brain becomes more prepared for the next stressful experience. This is known as stress inoculation. Overcoming small stressors in life can prepare you to tackle larger sources of stress more successfully.

## **Use active coping techniques**

Don't wait for situations to fix themselves. Draw on your previous experiences to help you cope. Think about other stressful times in your life—what helped and what didn't? Think of tactics that you've used in the past that can help you get through the stress you're feeling now. Identify your strengths, and use them.

## **Be compassionate with yourself**

Self-compassion is linked to emotional resiliency. Consider how you would speak to a friend that is stressed, and practice using that same language when you speak to yourself.

## **Practice psychological flexibility**

Psychological flexibility describes the emotional ability to bend when you feel you are at your breaking point. Remind yourself of the values that fuel your long-term goals. Connect those values to the discomfort you are feeling now.

For instance, if you don't feel like doing your homework, try to remind yourself why it's important (getting good grades or feeling

accomplished). While it's important to find a balance between work and [self-care](#), it can be helpful to remind yourself that what you're going through is worth the time and effort you put in as you move toward your objectives.

## Find a way to take a mental break

Down time is restorative and essential to navigating stress in the long run. Schedule time to rest and engage in activities you enjoy, such as hanging out with friends, getting active or watching your favorite show.

It's also important to keep stress in perspective. If you feel guilty about taking a break, ask yourself these grounding questions about your situation: How will I feel about this in seven hours, seven days, seven weeks, seven months or seven years?

While the immediate [stress](#) you feel may be overwhelming, it will likely lessen over time. The further you think into the future, the more at ease you may begin to feel and the less guilty you may feel about taking a break.

Provided by University of Colorado at Boulder

Citation: 5 ways to get through stress (2019, June 10) retrieved 20 March 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2019-06-ways-stress.html>

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