

Stress Management

Tools to reduce and respond to everyday stressors

Know your stress signals

- Physical: tension headaches, jaw clenching, shallow breathing, fatigue.
- Emotional: irritability, tearfulness, feeling overwhelmed or numb.
- Cognitive: racing thoughts, indecision, forgetfulness.
- Behavioral: procrastination, over/undereating, isolating.

Quick resets (2–5 minutes)

- Physiological sigh: two inhales, one long exhale — repeat 3x.
- Step outside for fresh air and sunlight.
- Splash cold water on your face.
- Text one supportive person.

Daily stress buffers

- Movement most days — even a 10-minute walk counts.
- Consistent meals with protein and complex carbs.
- A protected 15-minute window for something enjoyable.
- Limit doomscrolling and news intake.

Reframe the load

- **Circle of control:** list what you can vs. can't influence. Act on the first, release the second.
- **One-thing rule:** pick the single most important task for the day.
- **Values check:** is this aligned with what matters most to me?
- **Say no on purpose:** every yes is a no to something else.

Longer-term supports

- Regular therapy or coaching if stress is chronic.
- Community — faith, hobby, or interest groups.
- Sleep, nutrition, and medical care as a foundation.

When to reach out

If stress is affecting your sleep, mood, work, or relationships for more than a few weeks, a professional evaluation can help identify what's driving it and what will actually help.

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