

Taking Control of Stress



Stress Management

If you're feeling worn down by stress, try applying one or more of the following four A's.

Avoid. Do you have to drive through traffic to run a particular errand? Can it wait? Do you really need to bake a recipe from scratch to take to that party? It may be time to scale back on optional commitments to relieve some of your daily burdens and for the sake of your mental health.

Alter. There are some demands that we can't escape, but we may be able to change them to work in our favor. For example, if a task is more stressful because someone else is making it harder, you may need to assert some boundaries such as expressing that you have limited time and are only able to take on a particular aspect of a project. Getting organized and working smarter can also help reduce stress by maximizing your time.

Accept. There are times when it's important to just move through and accept a new reality or situation. You may need to take time to vent or talk to someone and then pick yourself up, let go of any resentment, regroup, and try to see the positive. For example, your high school student is procrastinating on their college applications and refusing your help but is willing to work with your spouse and the school counselor. Now may be the time to let go and accept that you cannot be in control of everything and look at this experience as preparing them to complete important tasks without you.

Adapt. Changing standards or expectations can help reduce stress. We often apply unrealistic pressure on ourselves or define our success based on messages we've received from our families of origin or the media. These measures might not even line up with your actual values. It's good to step back and take inventory of this. Ask yourself "is this [volunteering at school, being a host, taking on extra projects at work] really important to me and why?"

If you're finding yourself overwhelmed to the point where it is impacting your relationships and health, please contact your Employee Assistance Program for help today.

Conway, Alan (2021). *The 4 A's of Stress Relief*. The Mayo Clinic. Accessed September 6, 2022 from, <https://www.mayoclinichealthsystem.org/hometown-health/speaking-of-health/the-4-as-of-stress-relief>



Your Employee Assistance Program

Anytime, any day, you have free, confidential access to professional consultants and online resources to help you be your best. To access these services, call or log on to get started.

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1.800.424.1749

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