

## Sources of Stress

Stress is a part of every student's daily life. Leaving home, managing finances, living with roommates, and juggling work, classes, and relationships all contribute to the normal stress of being a student.

Stress can also come from exciting events. Falling in love, preparing to study abroad, or getting a pet can be just as stressful as less happy events.

Other common sources for stress are internal such as perfectionism, negative self-talk, or unrealistic expectations.

## Quick Tips for

### Reducing Stress

- ◆ Take a deep breath & let it out slowly.
- ◆ Go for a walk or run.
- ◆ Do 30 minutes of cardio or yoga.
- ◆ Pet or play with an animal.
- ◆ Spend time with a friend.
- ◆ Ask for help if you are stuck.
- ◆ Sit in the sun.
- ◆ Take a 15 minute nap.
- ◆ Take a warm bath or shower.
- ◆ Intentionally relax your jaw and shoulders.
- ◆ Make a gratitude list.



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## Managing Stress



## A Guide for College Students

## Signs of Stress

Stress affects each of us in different ways. Being aware of your own experience can help you better manage stress. Some examples of signs of increased stress include:

1. **Emotions:** anxiety, irritability, fear, moodiness or embarrassment.
2. **Behaviors:** crying, “snapping” at others, grinding teeth or clenching jaws, being more accident prone, increased drug use (including caffeine or nicotine).
3. **Thoughts:** forgetfulness, difficulty concentrating, self-criticism, fear of failure, difficulty making decisions.
4. **Physical:** muscle tension, back pain, headaches, stomach aches, frequent colds, dry mouth, changes in sleep or appetite, heart pounding, breathing difficulty.



## Managing Stress

### Take care of your body

**Take a deep breath.** Stress often results in shallow breathing. Taking a deep breath signals the brain that all is well, reducing the impact of stress.

**Get physical!** Physical activity plays a key role in reducing and preventing stress. When you feel anxious, angry or upset, exercise can help you relax and may even give you energy. Running, dancing, yoga, swimming, martial arts, and basketball are all great ways to combat stress.



**Refuel your battery.** Healthy eating and adequate sleep fuel your mind and body. Avoid consuming too much caffeine and sugar. While they give a temporary boost, they often result in crashing later in the day. Allow plenty of time for sleep and give yourself time before bed to unwind and relax.

### Get Organized

**Make a list of tasks** you need to get done. Do one at a time and check them off as you go.

**Manage your time.** Over-commitment is one of the greatest sources of stress. Plan ahead. Make a reasonable schedule for yourself. Be sure to allow time for fun and relaxation.

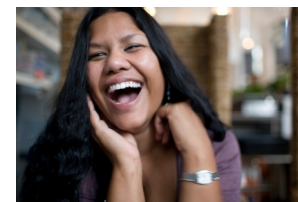
## Other great ideas!

**Connect with others.** Being alone is fine, but being lonely is different. Get out, get involved in a group, invite a friend to lunch, talk with classmates.

**Have a good cry.** Crying during periods of stress can be a good way to relieve emotional stress and may prevent physical symptoms of stress.

**Know your limits.** When facing a difficult situation ask yourself, “is this my problem?” If the answer is no, leave it alone. If yes, identify what you can do to address the situation then trust your decision and actions.

**Avoid self medicating.** Alcohol & other drugs may offer temporary relief from distress. Unfortunately, these only mask the problem. In the long run, behavior while under the influence often increases stress.



**Laugh.** Give yourself a break by reading or watching something humorous. Laughter is good for you.

**Look for the positive.** Actively notice positive events throughout the day (e.g., a smile, a call from a friend, a beautiful sunset).

*Breathe*