

Tips for Staying Calm When Feeling Overwhelmed

Possible Warning Signs of Stress:

- Physical: Muscle tension, headaches, rapid pulse, indigestion, sleep disruption, etc.
- Emotional: Anxious, sad, angry, shame, guilt, withdrawal, etc.
- Mental: Inability to make decisions, becoming more forgetful, feelings of unfairness, negative self-talk, doomsday thinking, etc.
- Behaviors: Withdrawing from loved ones you may live with, not engaging with friends, increased irritability, increased consumption of alcohol or other substances, eating more unhealthy food.

Breathing/Mindfulness Techniques to Manage Stress:

- i. Three-Minute Sit
 - a. Find a comfortable, quiet place.
 - b. Set a timer for 1-3 min. on your phone.
 - c. Close your eyes.
 - d. Focus on your breath – watch the inhale and exhale of your breath.
 - e. When your mind wanders, simply come back to focusing on your breath.
- ii. Body Relaxation Technique
 - a. Scan your body and notice areas that feel tense.
 - b. Contract and relax the muscles that feel tense.
 - c. Use your muscles: rotate your head in a circular motion, roll your shoulders a few times.
 - d. Relax: replay a positive or pleasant memory in your mind.
- iii. Loving Kindness Meditation
 - a. Find a comfortable place – sit or lie down.
 - b. Bring attention to yourself and silently repeat the following with the intention of loving kindness being sent to yourself: “May I be safe. May I be healthy. May I be happy. May I live with ease.”
 - c. Next, bring your attention to someone you love and silently repeat the following with the intention of loving kindness being sent to this person: “May I be safe. May I be healthy. May I be happy. May I live with ease.”
 - d. Next, bring your attention to someone you feel neutral about and simply repeat the following with the intention of loving kindness being sent to this person: “May I be safe. May I be healthy. May I be happy. May I live with ease.”
 - e. Finally, bring your attention to someone you dislike or are in conflict with and simply repeat the following with the intention of loving kindness being sent to this person: “May I be safe. May I be healthy. May I be happy. May I live with ease.”
 - f. Take a breath, inhale and exhale.
 - g. Notice your reactions. Try not to judge or change anything you are noticing.
 - h. Stare at any object and try to remain focused on just that object for as long as possible. Keep a mental watch on when your mind starts to wander, then just bring it back to the object. The longer you can remain focused, the more your mindfulness will increase.