

10 Stress Busters

If you're stressed, whether by your job or something more personal, the first step to feeling better is to identify the cause.

The most unhelpful thing you can do is turn to something unhealthy to help you cope, such as smoking or drinking.

Not taking control of the situation and doing nothing can make your problems worse.

Some of the keys to good stress management are building emotional strength, being in control of your situation, having a good social network, and adopting a positive outlook.

What you can do to address stress

Try these 10 stress-busting suggestions:

Be active

Exercise won't make your stress disappear, but it can reduce some of the emotional intensity that you're feeling, clearing your thoughts and letting you deal with your problems more calmly.

Get started with exercise

Take control

If you think you cannot do anything about your problem, your stress can get worse.

That feeling of loss of control is one of the main causes of stress and lack of wellbeing.

The act of taking control is in itself empowering, and it's a crucial part of finding a solution that satisfies you and not someone else.

Connect with people

A good support network of colleagues, friends and family can ease your work troubles and help you see things in a different way.

The activities we do with friends can help us relax and relieve stress.

Talking things through with a friend may also help you find solutions to your problems.

Read about 5 steps to mental wellbeing, including the benefits of connecting with other people.

Have some "me time"

Many of us work long hours, meaning we often don't spend enough time doing things we really enjoy.

It's important to take some time for socialising, relaxation or exercise.

You could try setting aside a couple of nights a week for some quality "me time" away from work.

Challenge yourself

Setting yourself goals and challenges, whether at work or outside, such as learning a new language or a new sport, can help build confidence. This may help you deal with stress.

It can also make you want to do things and be active.

Avoid unhealthy habits

Don't rely on alcohol, smoking and caffeine as your ways of coping.

They might provide temporary relief, but in the long term, these crutches won't solve your problems. They'll just create new ones.

It's best to tackle the cause of your stress.

Help other people

Evidence shows that people who help others, through activities such as volunteering or community work, often become more resilient.

If you don't have time to volunteer, try to do someone a favour every day. It can be something as small as helping someone cross the road or going on a coffee run for colleagues.

Find out more about giving for mental wellbeing

Work smarter, not harder

Working smarter means prioritising your work, concentrating on the tasks that'll make a real difference.

Leave the least important tasks to last. Accept that you will not have time for everything.

Get tips on how to manage your time better

Try to be positive

Look for the positives in life, and things for which you're grateful.

Try writing down 3 things that went well, or for which you're grateful, at the end of every day.

In this audio guide, a doctor helps you to replace negative thoughts with more positive thinking.

Accept the things you can't change

Changing a difficult situation isn't always possible. Try to concentrate on the things you do have control over.

For example, if your company is making redundancies, you could focus on the things that you can control, such as looking for a new job.