



3. MY CLUB AND STRESS

What is stress?

Everyone feels stressed at times People feel stressed when they feel like the demands or pressures on them are more than they can cope with.

In Short: Stress is the emotional and physical strain caused by our response to pressure from the outside world

What causes stress?

Some reasons why you might feel stressed include:

- Health
- Relationships
- Work/School pressures
- Financial pressures

Stress can be made worse if you are having difficulties at work, in your family or at school.

People are affected by stress in different ways, you may find that you get very stressed out by exams, but your friends don't seem bothered!

Positive events can also be stressful, for example starting a new job or going to university. Many people need a little bit of stress to give them the "get up and go" to do things that are important to them.

What are the effects of stress?

Stress can affect people in different ways. Stress can affect your body and your feelings. Some of the effects are listed below:

Effects on your body:

- Tired - disturbed sleep
- Going off your food / eating too much
- Change in mood
- Headaches and tension
- Aches and pains in your neck and shoulders.

Effects on your feelings:

- Feeling sad or easily upset
- Being irritable, losing your temper easily or being angry
- Finding it hard to keep your mind focused or poor concentration

How do I cope with stress?

Several things that can help you cope with stress include:

- Don't suffer in silence! Feeling alone makes stress harder to deal with.
- Talking to somebody you trust can really help you to deal with stress and to work out how to tackle the problems that are causing it.
- Make a list of all the things in your life that are making you feel stressed— write them down on a piece of paper. Then take each one in turn and list all the things you could do to tackle it. Problems look easier to deal with one at a time.
- Take a break - do something that you really enjoy.
- Do something relaxing, for example take a hot bath or watch a film.
- Do some exercise? This produces chemicals in your body called 'endorphins' which make you feel good!

When to get help?

Signs that stress is getting too much and when you should seek help:

- You feel that stress is affecting your health.
- You feel so desperate that you think about stopping school, leaving work running away from situations or harming yourself.
- You may feel low, sad or tearful.
- You lose your appetite or overeat
- You might find it difficult to sleep.
- You have worries, feelings and thoughts that are hard to talk about because you feel people won't understand you or will think you are 'weird'.
- You think negatively about yourself most of the time
- You are using drugs or alcohol help you cope and block out stress.



Who can help?

It is important that you talk to someone you trust and can help who can help you this may be:

- a close friend
- parents, a family member or family friend
- a teammate, coach, committee member
- a social worker or youth worker
- someone in your community you respect and trust
- a support agency you know about (details of support agencies are in the back of this booklet)

Some people may find it easier to talk to somebody on the phone. See the section on further information below for details of confidential advice lines- Lifeline for any young person in difficulty and 'Talk to Frank' for anyone wanting help or advice about drug problems.

Self Help - things you can try



First, some breathing basics: When you inhale, you trigger your sympathetic nervous system to kick in—the one that's wired to boost your heart rate and blood pressure, says Bill Hartman, P.T., C.S.C.S., Men's Health's sports medicine advisor.

But on an exhale, you kick-start your parasympathetic nervous system, which lowers your heart rate and blood pressure.

So when you're stressed, slowing down your breathing and focusing on that exhale sends your body into a parasympathetic resting stage, helping you unwind, says Hartman.

Regulating your breathing will stop your body from going into panic mode and reduce anxiety levels

If you can't change the source of your stress try to focus on changing your attitude towards it

H.O.W. T.O. B.E.A.T. S.T.R.E.S.S

Holiday

Open Up, Talk

Work

Try to stay in the present

Own up, your feeling stressed – half the battle is admitting it

Be realistic about what you can do

Eat a balanced diet

Action plan

Time, prioritise what you need to do

Set goals

Talk, it helps

Relax

Exercise

Say no and don't feel guilty

Seek professional help if things don't change

