



YOUR PERSONAL STRESS MANAGEMENT PLAN

Each of us handles stress differently, so each of us needs to develop our own personal stress management plan.

Below, is a template to help you reduce the stresses in your life. You don't need to address every area of the plan. Decide which areas are most important to you, and tackle those first. Remember, this stress management plan is about reducing your stress, not increasing it!



Part 1: Addressing the problem

1.	What is the problem? Describe a problem that brings you stress. If you have many, work on one problem at a time – and if the problem you have looms too large, break that down into smaller pieces. Go to the heart of the matter and write down exactly what's going on.

	What steps am I prepared to take to fix the problem? What can you do to fix the problem? Is it out of your control, or is a solution within your grasp? Write down the actions you are prepared to take.
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•	How will I avoid stress associated with the problem? Now, look at what you can do to minimise or avoid stress associated with the problem. For example, you may be able to avoid certain people, places or things. You may be able to stop engaging in certain behaviours.

art 2	: Changing the way I think
ou th	times you can't change a stressful situation, but you can change the way nink about it. By changing your reaction, your expectations or you le, you can regain a sense of control.
1.	Choose your reaction Stand back from stressful situation and ask yourself: "is this something can change?" Explore your response, and identify the positive steps you can take. Write your thoughts in the space below.
2.	Reframe your problem Take the time to write down how you can view stressful situations from a more positive perspective.

3.	Adopt an attitude of gratitude Reflect on all the things you appreciate in your life, including your owr positive qualities and gifts. Take the time each day to write a list of the three things you are grateful for. Start now in the space below.
4.	What will I let go? What are the things in your life that are worrying you that you can't fix? What thoughts do you have that simply waste your time? Write down the things you will let go of, so that you can focus on the things you can change.

5. Keep your eye on the big picture
Spend some time writing down your life goals, vision and values. Then assess each stress against those goals. Does this stress fit in with your big picture? If the answer is no, then it may be time to focus your energy elsewhere.



Part 3: Dealing with my emotions

While every feeling has its value and significance, keeping distressing emotions in check can help us cope with stressful situations. To do this:

1. Take up journal writing

Use a journal to increase your awareness of your feelings and help you identify patterns and limiting beliefs. Find a quiet time every day to write down how you feel.

Observe without judgement Spend a day practicing the art of non-judgement by naming your emotions: joy, peace, love, anger, fear and sadness. Accept the presence of emotions without judgement – and then let the emotions go. What have you learned? Write your thoughts in the space below.

3.	Express your feelings Explore how you feel about the problem. This may mean sharing your feelings with a trusted friend, writing down how you feel in your journal or making an appointment with a professional. How will you let your worries go, rather than letting them build up? Make a plan for how you will tackle this.

4. Learn to forgive

Write a list of all the anger, bitterness and resentment that is holding you back. Look at each one objectively and decide how you will let this situation from the past go.

What is holding me back?	How will I let this go?
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5. Stay in the present

Make time each day to practice mindfulness – even if only for a few minutes.



Part 4: Looking after my body

1.	Embrace the power of exercise Commit to doing something works your body for 20 minutes each day. What will you commit to? Make a plan and stick to it. Write down your commitment in the space below.
2.	Choose active relaxation Which relaxation techniques will you embrace? Commit to one, and make a plan for how you will find time each day for active relaxation. Write down your commitment in the space below.
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3. Eat well

Good nutrition makes a difference to how we handle stress. What changes are you ready to make to your diet? Write them down, stick them on the fridge and then stick to them!

4.	Sleep well
	Getting good night's sleep will help you handle the stresses of the following day. How will you get a good night's sleep? Will you avoid caffeine before bedtime? Take a relaxing bath? Dim the lights before going to bed? Remove electronic devices from the bedroom? Make a plan for what will work best for you.



Part 5: Contribute

Sometimes, we feel caught up in the hurly burly of everyday life, and lose sight of the big picture. At these times, giving others a helping hand can be the best way to get your life back on track.

Write a plan for how you are going to help others in your community – it may be friends or family, or it may be volunteering in the community. You may gain a sense of achievement from helping to plant trees, volunteering in a soup kitchen, lending a hand at your child's school or helping your elderly neighbour with the weekly shopping.

Decide what will make you feel good – and then reach out.

