



Overly Stressed? Here are Five Things to Help You Reset

Introduction

“I’m stressed,” is a pretty common sentiment right now. COVID-19 coupled with other life events means that adults and children are feeling anxious, depressed or overwhelmed. These feelings, if left unaddressed, can lead to low energy, difficulty sleeping, episodes of heart racing, mood swings, difficulty concentrating, and many others. If you are experiencing these symptoms, you are not alone, and it’s not too late to seek help! There are plenty of things you can do to feel better during this stressful season. Here are some actionable tips for reincorporating joy, adding a sense of normalcy, and resetting after hitting your limit.

1. Talk to Someone About Your Feelings

When we bottle our feelings up, it only makes them stronger, and we can get burned out from pretending we’re fine when we aren’t. Talking about your negative feelings is never a sign of weakness. Find someone you know you can rely on, like an old friend, a spouse, or a relative. Start by saying what’s on your mind, starting with what is upsetting you. Then, if you can find the words, try to name your emotions. Say, “I am feeling sad,” instead of “I am sad.” Naming your feelings in this way can help you feel more in control. In a world that is lacking human connection due to COVID-19, talking about our emotions is a great way to form a connection.

2. Unplug for a While

If you overindulge in negative news media, social media, or a chaotic work environment, you might start feeling burned out and overconnected. If this is the case, it’s time to unplug. Try moving all screens out of your bedroom, or whichever room in your house you find most relaxing. Limit your social media time to one hour per day, keep a strict 9 to 5 email policy, and unplug your TV entirely. These things can help you reconnect with the world around you for long, unfragmented periods of time, and ease your anxiety by avoiding triggers for a while.

It might help to have something else to fill your time. During “unplugged” periods, find hobbies. For example, finish that art project you started months ago and never finished. Go on family walks every afternoon. Have dance parties in the living room after dinner instead of watching TV. These things can reincorporate joy in the normal.

3. Start Meditating

Meditating is the ultimate reset if you are feeling severe stress. This simple practice can provide calmness and clarity and promote happiness. The idea is to empty your mind of all thoughts – negative or positive – so that you can fully connect with your body, your breath and the space around you. The



best part about meditation is that the more often you practice it, the more present you feel in everyday life.

Meditation may sound easy, but it can be very challenging the first few times! Try guided meditation via phone apps, like Headspace, Calm, or Meditation Studio.

4. Take Care of Yourself

You may be thinking, “I know, I need to eat better, exercise more, and get more sleep.” Those are important forms of self-care, but what may be more helpful in the short-term is showing your body true compassion. Take a warm bath with good smelling soap to calm yourself down after a stressful week. Reward yourself for getting through an exam by cooking a delicious meal. Do something you love, like dancing, painting, or having a virtual get-together with friends. These things signal to your mind that you are doing well, despite the stress you are feeling.

5. Visit with a Crisis Counselor

Crisis counselors are trained to work with people experiencing stress and difficult emotions related to a crisis, like COVID-19. Crisis counselors can give you coping mechanisms to build resilience and provide connections to other community members who can also help.

Seeking help is never a sign of weakness. Stay Positive Arkansas is providing **FREE, CONFIDENTIAL** crisis counseling and referral to those experiencing stress from COVID-19. You can take advantage of this program by going to www.staypositivearkansas.com or calling the Crisis Support Line at 833-993-2382.

Sources

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