

How to Manage STRESS

Stress Journal

You may not know exactly how your body responds to stress, or how you cope with stress. To find out, keep a record to track the times you feel stressed. Write down what may have triggered the stress, what symptoms arrived, how you felt, and behaved in response to the stress, and what you did to help the situation. This can help you reduce some symptom flare ups if you know what causes your stress and what calms it down.



Meditation

Meditation is a simple technique that, if practiced for as few as 5 minutes a day can help you lower stress, reduce symptoms, and give yourself some space to really breathe during this stressful time. Try out a meditation app like HeadSpace to learn!



The Backpack Analogy

It seems that we all carry our own backpacks on life's journey. In our backpack we carry our life's experiences and expectations, and these influence the way we are, what we do, and what we make of our life and how we go about it. Our backpack - and what we carry in it - affects the way we think, feel, and act; towards ourselves, towards others, and towards life in general. If we think about our problems as backpacks, we can take the problems outside of us, which makes it easier to change things in a positive way. Concussion recovery can make everything in our backpack feel different and heavy. Try not to let societal expectations weigh on you when recovering.



Radical Acceptance

Radical acceptance takes lots of practice, and understandable it might feel strange and hard. But remember that radical acceptance is about acknowledging reality - not liking it or contesting it. Once you acknowledge what's really happening, you can change it or start to heal. Radical acceptance has nothing to do with being passive or giving up. Its about channeling your energy into moving on and living life.



Emergency Box

When we are very distressed, it is difficult to think rationally and to decide how to help ourselves. It can be useful to keep an "emergency" box in a prominent and handy place, so that when you feel overwhelmingly distressed, you can go to your box and find something that will help you cope and/or feel better. Include items that will help soothe your symptoms.



Muscle Relaxation

One of the body's reactions to fear, illness, and anxiety is muscle tension. This can result in feeling "tense", or can lead to additional muscle aches and pains, as well as leaving some people feeling exhausted. In progressive muscle relaxation exercises, you tense up particular muscles and then relax them. Start from your toes and work your way up!

