

Dr. McMinn's Five- Step Stress Management Plan

Step 1. Develop your own personalized Stress Management Plan.

Step 2. Name Your Stressors! Maintain a working list of your stressors. As new stressors pop up, then add them to the list.

Step 3. Sort out the stressors that you have listed in step one into the following categories:  
-Stressors that you can control.  
-Stressors that are out of your control.

Step 4. Apply your Stress Filter- Go back through your list of stressors that you can control. An example of this would be watching the news- and thereby inviting “world stress” into your life. The put together a plan to eliminate or minimize these stressors. In this case you would stop watching the news.

For those stressors that you can't control, turn to “day to day” and “moment to moment” as seen in steps 5 and 6.

Step 5. Day to Day: See Dr. McMinn's “stress management toolbox” to identify the tools and techniques that you can utilize on a daily basis to better manage your stress. Perhaps the most important “day to day” practice is to get a good night' sleep. You can cope a lot better when you are well rested. Some daily exercise may also be very important- something simple, relaxing, and non-competitive, such as a daily walk may be very helpful. Other modalities may include meditation (check out the Headspace app), yoga, prayer, biofeedback, and time in nature and sunshine. Experiment and find the modalities that work for you. You can employ multiple modalities.

Step 6. Moment to Moment- Situations are always going to come up in your daily life that cause stress. Realize that there are 2 parts to the equation, the stressor and the stressee. You may not have much control over the stressor (for instance when someone cuts you off in traffic), however you do have complete control of the stressee- how you respond to the stress. When such stressful situations come up in life, then **Ask yourself this question: “Am I in eminent danger.”** The answer is almost always NO. So learn to take a deep breath and let it go. Use some of the tools listed in Dr. McMinn's Stress Management Plan, so that the stressor won't ruin your whole day.