COPING STRATEGIES FOR STRESS

NEXTGEN COUNSELING
WELLNESS FOR ADOLESCENTS & TEENS

Healthy Ways to Cope with Stress

Feeling stressed or overwhelmed can happen to anyone, especially when dealing with challenges in school, friendships, family, or personal health. Some people turn to drugs or alcohol to handle stress, but there are healthier, more positive ways to cope. Finding strategies that work for you can make a huge difference. So what can you do to help cope?

Physical Activity

Moving your body can reduce stress and improve your mood. Exercise releases chemicals in the brain that help you feel more positive and calm.

Try going for a walk, running, playing a sport, or even dancing to your favorite music. You don't have to be a pro—just moving your body can make you feel better.

Creative Outlets

Activities like drawing, painting, playing music, or journaling allow you to express feelings you might not know how to talk about. It can be a great way to get your emotions out in a safe and positive way.

You don't need to be "good" at art or music for it to help— just enjoy the process!

Talking it Out

Sometimes, sharing your stress with someone you trust can make it feel less overwhelming. Whether it's a friend, family member, or counselor, talking about your feelings can be a big relief.

If talking face-to-face feels intimidating, you could start with texting, writing a letter, or messaging online.

Remember:

Stress is a natural part of life, and everyone experiences it differently. The key is not to eliminate stress entirely but to learn how to manage it in healthy ways. Take a moment to acknowledge what you're feeling—it's okay to feel overwhelmed at times. Finding the right coping strategies can take time and patience, so be gentle with yourself as you explore what works best for you.

Progress isn't always linear, and that's okay. Celebrate even the smallest victories and remember that seeking help is a sign of strength, not weakness. Keep moving forward, one day at a time—you've got this!

Breathing Exercises and Meditation

Simple breathing exercises can help you calm down when you feel overwhelmed. Try this: breathe in slowly through your nose for four seconds, hold it for four seconds, and then breathe out slowly through your mouth for four seconds.

Practicing mindfulness or meditation can also help you feel more in control of your emotions. There are lots of free apps that offer guided sessions, too.

Setting Small Goals

When life feels chaotic, it can help to break down tasks into smaller, achievable steps. Instead of focusing on everything at once, tackle one thing at a time.

For example, if school feels overwhelming, make a list of tasks and focus on just one at a time. Small accomplishments can give you a sense of progress.

Does NextGen Offer Different Types of Family Therapy?

Managing stress in healthy ways is an important part of taking care of yourself, especially when facing life's challenges. Whether you choose physical activity, creative outlets, talking things out, practicing mindfulness, or setting small goals, what matters most is finding what works for you. It's normal to feel overwhelmed at times, but you are not alone, and support is always available.

Remember that making even small changes can lead to big improvements over time. Be patient with yourself, and celebrate each step forward. If you need extra support, don't hesitate to reach out to trusted friends, family members, or professionals. Taking care of your mental health is just as important as your physical health–and you deserve to feel your best. Keep exploring these strategies, and stay hopeful. You have the strength to manage stress and build a healthier, happier life.

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