

B.A.S.I.C. Stress Reduction Skills

Source: Iko Miyazaki, MFT

What is stress?

Stress is the simply the body's reaction to any change that requires an adjustment or response. The body reacts to these changes with physical, mental, and emotional responses. Stress is a normal part of life.

Stress Symptoms

On your body	On your mood	On your behavior
Headache	Anxiety / worries	Overeating / undereating
Muscle tension or pain	Restlessness	Angry outbursts
Tight chest	Lack of motivation	Drug use
Fatigue	Poor focus	Excessive alcohol intake
Change in appetite	Irritability	Tobacco use
Change in sex drive	Low tolerance or frustration	Social withdrawal
Upset stomach	Sadness	Sleep problems
Restlessness	Depression	Nervous habit
Teeth grinding	Feeling overwhelmed	Procrastinating
Ear ringing	Sense of isolation	Excessive spending
Diarrhea or constipation	Loneliness	Avoidance
Frequent colds	Numbness	Low productivity

How can we better manage and/or reduce stress?

We cannot change the situation, but we can do something to change our internal state in relation to stressful situations. Practice these B.A.S.I.C. stress reduction skills:

B: Behavioral: assertiveness, boundary setting, self-soothing, action-taking, relaxation, reaching out

A: Affect: journaling, open expression, support, gratitude, sense of humor

S: Spiritual: prayer, stillness, meditation, meaning, reflection, relation to divinity

I: Internal sensations: slow down, physical touch, breathing, movement, sound

C: Cognitive: kind self-talk, rational thoughts, realistic planning, positive perspective