

# Personal Strategies for Managing Stress

## 1 Healthy Body, Mind, and Routine

### Healthy habits include:

- Eating **balanced meals** throughout the day
- Getting consistent, quality **sleep**
- Engaging in regular **physical activity**
- Drinking enough **water**

## 4 Reframing Negative Connections

Stress can lead to **negative thinking**. Cognitive restructuring helps create more **balanced perspectives**.

### ABCDE model:

- **A – Adverse event:** A challenging situation occurs
- **B – Beliefs:** Negative thoughts form
- **C – Consequences:** These thoughts affect emotions
- **D – Dispute:** Challenge the negative beliefs
- **E – Energization:** A balanced perspective improves motivation

Practicing this strategy supports **emotional well-being** and **positive responses** to challenges.

The practice of being **present in the moment** without judgment.

### Benefits:

- Less stress and anxiety
- Better emotional regulation
- Greater empathy and compassion

### STOP strategy:

- **Stop:** Pause when overwhelmed.
- **Take a breath:** Use slow, deep breathing.
- **Observe:** Notice thoughts, emotions, and sensations.
- **Proceed:** Respond calmly.

## 2 Mindfulness

## 5 Self-Compassion

Self-compassion can reduce **emotional exhaustion** and **build resilience**.

- Avoid harsh **self-criticism**
- Recognize that everyone **experiences stress**
- Treat yourself with **kindness** during difficult moments

## 3 Emotional Support

Educators support others' **emotional needs**, but their own **well-being** is just as important.

### Helpful strategies:

- **Talk** with trusted friends, family, or colleagues
- **Journal** to process thoughts and feelings
- Engage in **relaxing hobbies** like art, reading, or exercise



## 6 References

Cabbell, S. (2025). Preventing burnout in early childhood professionals: Practical self-care strategies. Zero to Three. <https://www.zerotothree.org/resource/preventing-burnout-in-early-childhood-professionals-practical-self-care-strategies/>

Erdman, S., Colker, L., & Winter, E. (2020). Preventing compassion fatigue: Caring for yourself. NAEYC. <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/jul2020/preventing-compassion-fatigue>