11 Time Management Tips

1. **Spend Time Planning and Organizing.**
   Using time to think and plan is time well spent. In fact, if you fail to take time for planning, you are, in effect, planning to fail. Organize in a way that makes sense to you.

2. **Set Goals.**
   Goals give your life, and the way you spend your time, direction. Set goals which are specific, measurable, realistic and achievable. Goals can give creative people a much-needed sense of direction.

3. **Prioritize.**
   The trick to prioritizing is to isolate and identify that valuable 20 percent of your time that is most productive. Once identified, prioritize time to concentrate your work on those items with the greatest reward. Flagging items with a deadline is another idea for helping you stick to your priorities.

4. **Use a To Do List.**
   Some people thrive using a daily To Do list which they construct either the last thing the previous day or first thing in the morning. Don't be afraid to try a new system — you just might find one that works even better than your present one!

5. **Be Flexible.**
   Allow time for interruptions and distractions. Save (or make) larger blocks of time for your priorities. When interrupted, ask this crucial question, "What is the most important thing I can be doing with my time right now?" to help you get back on track fast.

6. **Consider Your Biological Prime Time.**
   That's the time of day when you are at your best. Are you a "morning person," a "night owl," or a late afternoon "whiz?" Schedule your most important tasks at these times.
7. PRACTICE THE ART OF INTELLIGENT NEGLECT.
   Eliminate from your life trivial tasks or those tasks which do not have long-term consequences for you. Can you delegate or eliminate any of your To Do list? Work on those tasks which you alone can do.

8. AVOID BEING A PERFECTIONIST.
   Yes, some things need to be closer to perfect than others, but perfectionism, paying unnecessary attention to detail, can be a form of procrastination.

9. CONQUER PROCRASTINATION.
   When you are avoiding something, break it into smaller tasks and do just one of the smaller tasks or set a timer and work on the big task for just 15 minutes. By doing a little at a time, eventually you'll reach a point where you'll want to finish.

10. LEARN TO SAY "NO."
    Such a small word — and so hard to say. Focusing on your goals may help. Blocking time for important, but often not scheduled, priorities such as family and friends can also help. But first you must be convinced that you and your priorities are important — that seems to be the hardest part in learning to say "no."

11. REWARD YOURSELF.
    Even for small successes, celebrate achievement of goals. As Ann McGee-Cooper says, "If we learn to balance excellence in work with excellence in play, fun, and relaxation, our lives become happier, healthier, and a great deal more creative."

* STUDENT COUNSELING SERVICES TULSA * 918-660-3109 *
TOP TEN SELF CARE STRATEGIES FOR OVERALL STRESS REDUCTION

1. Get enough sleep
   Lack of sleep can negatively affect your ability to handle stress, be productive, and function properly.

2. Maintain proper nutrition
   A poor diet can make you more vulnerable to stress.

3. Exercise regularly
   Exercise provides stress release and keeps your body healthy.

4. Maintain social support
   Social support can keep you healthier and happier, creating a buffer for stress.

5. Find hobbies
   Having some down time is important, and hobbies provide a nice distraction from stress and help to relieve tension.

6. Pamper yourself
   Don’t overlook the importance of pampering yourself on a regular basis to feel great about yourself.

7. Keep your mind sharp
   If you maintain the attitude that stress is a challenge rather than a threat, you are better able to handle it.

8. Have the right attitude
   Looking at things from an optimistic frame of mind can not only decrease your stress levels, but bring you more success in life.

9. Process your emotions
   It is healthier to listen to your feelings, process them and try to understand them.

10. Maintain a spiritual practice
    Spiritual practice is deeply personal, and whatever you practice, it should nurture your soul.
Top Twelve Stress Fighting Foods

1. **Oatmeal** – boosts Seratonin for calming effect

2. **Whole grain cereal, bread, & pasta**

3. **Dark chocolate** – quick boost

4. **Oranges** – vitamin C strengthens immune system

5. **Spinach** – regulates stress hormone Cortisol

6. **Tuna & Salmon**

7. **Black tea** – calming

8. **Pistachio nuts** – regulates stress hormones Cortisol and Adrenaline

9. **Avocados** – reduces blood pressure

10. **Almonds** – Vitamin E

11. **Raw Veggies**

12. **Milk** – soothes tension
Managing Stress in a Demanding Academic Environment

Jill Bernis, LPC, NCC
OUHSC Student Counseling Services
What is Stress?

- Your body’s response to threat.
  - Threats can be physical or psychological.
  - Your body responds to same to both.
Is Stress Always Bad?

**Eustress** – Good Stress
- Can improve performance

**Distress** – Harmful Stress
- Can impair performance

The Relationship Between Stress and Performance

![Graph showing the relationship between stress and performance](image)
Symptoms of Stress - 4 Types

- Physical
- Behavioral
- Psychological
- Interpersonal
Physical Symptoms of Stress

- Fatigue/Insomnia
- Headache
- Cold extremities
- Flushing or sweating
- Muscle aches/Stiffness
- Heart Palpitations
- Chest Pains
- Abdominal cramps
- Nausea
- Frequent colds
Behavioral Symptoms of Stress

- Pacing
- Fidgeting
- Nervous habits
- Increased eating
- Smoking
- Drinking
- Crying
- Yelling/Swearing
- Blaming
- Physical violence
Psychological Symptoms of Stress

- Decrease in memory
- Decrease in concentration
- Indecisiveness
- Mind racing
- Going blank
- Confusion
- Loss of sense of humor
- Anxiety
- Depression
Interpersonal Symptoms of Stress

- Nervousness
- Anger
- Frustration
- Worry
- Fear
- Irritability
- Impatience
- Short temper
- Withdrawal
What Triggers Stress?

- External vs. Internal Triggers
External Triggers of Stress

- Physical Environment
- Social (interactions with others)
- Organizational
- Major Life Events
- Daily Hassles
Internal Triggers of Stress

- Lifestyle choices
- Negative self-talk
- Mind traps
- Stressful personality traits

It is important to note that most of our stress is self-generated.
Stress Management

1. During Exams
2. On a Daily Basis
Stress Management During Exams
Positive Cognitions

Practice calming phrases during tests:

- This test alone will not permanently affect my future.
- I feel calm and relaxed.
- I can do this.
- I can achieve my goals.
- I am in control of my life.
- I am a good & valued person.
Stress Management During Exams

Behavioral Strategies

- Take slow breaths, close your eyes & stretch.
- Walk to the bathroom if needed.
- Don’t worry about temporary memory lapses. Skip that question and go back to it later.
2. Stress Management & Relaxation Strategies

VISUAL IMAGERY FOR PREPARATION

- Image the testing situation completely in your mind
- Allows you to practice in advance so that you are prepared to handle it in real life
Managing Daily Stress

1. Positive Attitude
2. Relaxation Strategies
3. Nutrition & Exercise
4. Time Management
5. Personal Time and Hobbies
6. Support System
1. Stress Management & Positive Attitude

Negative thinking can:

- Damage your confidence
- Harm performance
- Paralyze mental skills
- Create emotional disturbance
1. Stress Management & Positive Attitude

Mind Traps:

- Perfectionism: A desire to be unfailing and competent at all times.

- Self-effacement: A desire for everyone to like you all of the time.
1. Stress Management & Positive Attitude: Keeping things in perspective

- View mistakes as learning experiences
- Break seemingly huge and impossible problems to a number of smaller, more manageable problems or tasks.
- Prioritize your problems: Decide what’s worth worrying about and what’s not!
1. Stress Management & Positive Attitude

Positive Thoughts

- I can do this.
- I can achieve my goals.
- People will like me for who I am.
- I am in control of my life.
- I learn from my mistakes.
- I am a good & valued person.
2. Stress Management & Relaxation Strategies

Deep Breathing

- Focus your attention on your breathing.
- Inhale slowly through the nose & exhale slowly through the mouth.
- Concentrate on deep breaths in and out.
2. Stress Management & Relaxation Strategies

**BREATHING & VISUALIZATION**

- Visualize health & relaxation flowing into your body when you inhale, and stress or tension flowing out when you exhale.
2. Stress Management & Relaxation Strategies

**IMAGERY**

- Mental image of a pleasant and relaxing place.

- Involve all your senses in the imagery.

- The more intensely you use your imagination to recreate the place, the stronger & more realistic the experience will be.
3. Stress Management & Nutrition

- **Caffeine**: stimulant that induces “fight or flight” response
- **Alcohol**: depletes body of B vitamins that help you cope with stress
- **Nicotine**: Most ex-smokers report feeling much more relaxed on a general basis.
- **Sugar**: Sugar-rich foods raise energy in the short term & cause “crashes”
- **Well-Balanced Diet**: Decreases stress!
3. Stress Management & Exercise

Releases endorphins that increase feelings of happiness and decrease depression and anxiety

Improves: Muscle Tension, Sleep, Overall Health
4. Stress Management & Time Management

Set Priorities with a To-Do List

- Mark tasks according to what is most pressing or essential and then work your way down the list to things that realistically can be put off.
5. Stress Management & Personal Time

- Don’t neglect yourself.
- Set aside a quiet time each day.

Always make time for fun activities/hobbies such as:
- Photography
- Drawing/Art
- Reading
- Music
- Community affairs
- Coaching sports
- Dancing
6. Stress Management & Social Support

- Talk with partner, friends, family. Don’t bottle feelings up inside.
- Spend time with positive, supportive people.
- Join a social group
Summary

- What is Stress?
- Good Stress vs. Bad Stress
- Types of Stress Symptoms
  - Physical, Behavioral, Psychological, Interpersonal
- Stress Triggers
  - Internal vs. External
- Stress Management During Exams
  - Positive Cognitions, Behavioral Strategies, Rehearsal
- Daily Stress Management
  - Positive Attitude, Relaxation, Nutrition & Exercise, Time Management, Personal Time, Social Support
Help is here if you need it…

…and it’s free.
stress
depression
anxiety
relationship problems
academic coaching/testing

HSC Student
Counseling Services - OKC
(405) 271-7336
e-mail:counselors@ouhsc.edu

Tulsa – (918) 660-3109