



STRESS: HOW TO MAKE IT WORK FOR YOU

Source: Center for Parent & Teen Communication (Stress management)





**STRESS
MANAGEMENT
PLAN FOR
TEENS:
INTRODUCTION**

Source: Center for Parent & Teen Communication
(Stress management)



What is stress?

Stress is caused by the release of certain hormones in response to feeling threatened, afraid, or nervous.

When stressed the body floods with hormones that lead to physical symptoms such as sweating, increased heart rate, or difficulty thinking clearly.

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How can Stress be Positive?

- Some stress can be a good thing. A small amount of stress focuses attention and enhances our performance. Examples of positive stress are
 - Driving safe - we want to drive safely. This kind of stress is good to think about others around who are driving around us and keeping everyone safe.
 - Completing homework – enhances knowledge, critical thinking, and reinforces material you learned to prepare for tests, quizzes, or projects.
 - Take time to find the perfect prom dress – Finding the perfect dress that you love can be stressful, but once you find it you feel confident with friends at prom.
 - Studying for a quiz/test– as mentioned with your homework above, this can be stressful but the positive is passing the quiz/test!
 - Excel at a sport – stress is inevitable with a sport, but athletes experience positive outcomes with they work hard at what they love.
 - Get a job – balancing a job with school can be stressful but the positive outcome is you earn money and learn life skills.



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Chronic Stress

- While Stress can be a positive response, chronic or continual stress can wear us out.
- It is not good for your body to be in a continual flight or fight response.

So...what is in your control to lessen chronic stress?



Sometimes we cannot control stressful events in our life, such as parents, homework, teachers, bills, our friends etc...but sometimes there are things within our control. You have the power to **CHOOSE**.

Learning to set boundaries and say NO.

Sometimes we bring more stress on ourselves by **overcommitting**. We have a hard time saying "no". Setting boundaries doesn't mean you are selfish or mean, it just means you are smart.

You don't have to commit to every club or organization at school. You don't have to be at every social event. You don't have to post every move you make on social media, and you don't have to comment on every post!

Stop Choosing to Procrastinate! You have the power and the control to stay on top of your assignments.

Stress vs Anxiety: Contrary to popular belief, there is a difference between anxiety and stress.

Stress

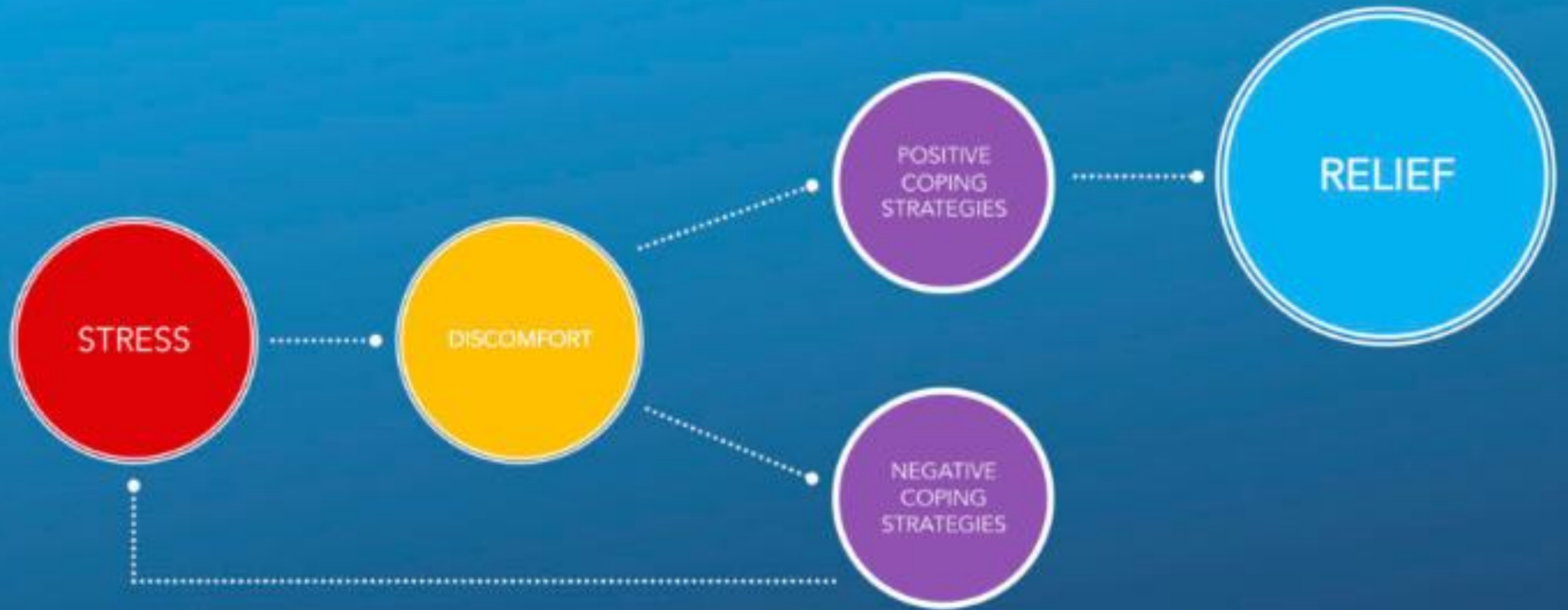
- The stress response goes away when the challenge or pressure has passed
- Stress is an immediate response to life's pressure or challenges. Feelings produced can be anticipation, worry, frustration, and sometimes even excitement.
- Stress is a response that helps motivate us and calls us to action.

Anxiety

- Anxiety, while also normal and helpful at times, can be ongoing and lingers even when the challenge or pressure has passed.
- Anxiety mainly produces the emotions of fear and dread.
- Anxiety is a survival response that keeps us safe.



STRESS AND COPING CYCLE



Making the Right choices

- Most positive strategies when dealing with stress take proactive and work
- Negative coping strategies offer instant relief making them appear attractive. These include drinking, drug usage, self-harm, thrill-seeking behaviors, and unhealthy eating patterns to name a few. While these choices offer temporary relief, they are not healthy choices and are not a permanent option only placing a band-aid over the issue.
- Choosing negative coping skills can lower your self-esteem, cause conflict in relationships, and create poor performance at school or work. By choosing negative strategies for coping, you create additional stress and additional problems.



Positive Strategies

- Create and build a stress management plan using this link:
<https://parentandteen.com/stress-management-for-teens-identify-and-then-tackle-the-problem/>
- Identify and tackle the problem - identify the source of the stress. Start to break it down into smaller pieces and manage one piece at a time. Make a checklist of what needs to be done first or a timeline, and then start a plan to address these problems
- Avoid what stresses you out if possible – Try to bypass the problem if you know it's a trigger for you. Avoid people, places or things that trigger your emotions if possible.
- Instead of worrying, focus your energy on problems that can be fixed!



Positive Strategies

- When you stress, the hormone of “fight or flight” is released. This hormone puts your mind into a survival-only mode and makes it hard to focus. When your body is stressed and doesn't get exercise, its left feeling it needs to run from danger. When you exercise, you literally get rid of the stress hormone. Exercising also links to better physical health and mental health.
- Learn to relax – learning to relax takes time and effort. Learning to relax contributes to mental and physical health.



Positive Strategies



Positive Strategies



- Eat healthy foods – this is essential to a healthy body, clear mind, and managing stress
- Get enough sleep. People who are exhausted have a difficult time solving problems effectively. Lack of sleep may come from poor sleep habits. Be sure to set a time to go to bed every night and get into a routine, turn off all electronics 30 minutes prior to going to bed, and be sure you are getting at least 8 hours of sleep every night.
- Release your emotions – talk to a parent, friend, neighbor, coach, counselor, or trusted adult about your stress. Too much stress can be paralyzing and learning to express your feelings and emotions before they build can help release your stress.
- Consider giving back to your community – it feels good to serve and is empowering when you know you are making a difference. Giving back to your community also makes it easier for you to ask for help from others when you need it because you learn that people generally find joy in helping others, and they don't do it out of pity.

Positive Ways to Release Stress



- Meditate
- Yoga
- Reading
- Writing
- Art
- Exercising
- Listening to music
- Coloring
- Taking a walk
- Talking to a friend or parent
- Exercise
- Avoid intrusive thoughts
- Make a stress management plan
- Set healthy boundaries
- Find a quiet space to think
- Practice mindfulness
- Find a hobby you enjoy
- Dance
- Cook or bake
- Take a hike
- Experience nature
- Take a shower or bath
- Play a game
- Volunteer
- Laugh with others
- Plan an instrument
- Play a sport
- Journal your thoughts and feeling

Resources

<https://parentandteen.com/teen-stress-management-plan/>

