

Tip Sheet: Coping with Stress

Learning ways to cope with stress can be difficult any time, but it may be extra challenging during a pandemic. There is so much uncertainty now, especially around what school will be like in the fall. Maybe you can't do what normally relaxes you, or maybe you are more stressed than you normally are.

Here are several coping strategies that have helped others, and could be useful for you and your family!

Take a break:

- Take a nap or go to bed early. Sleep helps put your problems on hold, and time relaxes you to feel better prepared when you wake up.
- Meditation and Yoga help relax the mind. There are different types of meditation for everything, e.g. to improve productivity, to relax, etc.
- Take a shower. A hot shower can help relax you and a cold shower helps you cool down and clear your mind.
- Take a break from social media because it tends to add onto stress.

Get organized:

- Write a to-do list. You can prioritize what is overwhelming you, and feel a sense of satisfaction when you can cross something off (even put small tasks like eating breakfast or walking your dog to feel more productive)
- Reward yourself for being productive and getting something done.
- Prioritize fun. If you have a very busy day scheduled, spend a few hours on the previous day doing something you enjoy.

Choose a positive activity:

- Read a book. It will help you feel productive and distract your mind from racing thoughts.
- Listen to music that calms the mind and relieves stress.
- Go for a walk or work out. Exercise helps your physical and mental health, and strengthens your mood because you feel productive and healthy.
- Call, talk, or hang out with friends Being in contact with friends can help boost your mood, and it relaxes you to be around people that bring you joy.
- Play a game. Competition can take your mind off what is overwhelming you.

Change your mindset:

- Don't blame yourself for things that are out of your control.
- Learn to prioritize what's important and understand that it's not failing if you choose to leave tasks for later.
- Acknowledge unproductive vs. productive worries. Choose what to spend your time thinking about, and don't get overwhelmed by unnecessary distractions.
- Be positive. Know that you're going to get through it because you have before.

Let it out:

- Journal or keep a diary. Writing it out feels great--whether you keep a physical journal, something in the Notes app, or just rant through texts.
- Talk about what's bothering you with trusted friends or family.