

Strategies to reduce stress and boost well-being

1. Be aware of your strengths and apply them positively. This will help you be the best you can be. Skype a friend or colleague and help each other see and celebrate your strengths and feel your positive emotions flourish.
2. Each of us has an invisible bucket. It is emptied or filled depending on what others say or do. Use your strengths to fill your own and others' buckets.

For example, if you love to solve problems, invite others to reach out when they need help. If you are strong on empathy, check in on your families, friends and colleagues. If you are a disciplined, organised person, help others set up a routine. Your wins will fill your bucket, fortifying you against the times that something empties your bucket slightly.

3. Set yourself a meaningful goal for the day. Achieving it will improve your psychological well-being, enable creativity and enhance your performance because it will activate your brain's reward system and increase not only your next efforts but how positively you feel about what you are doing.
4. If you need to learn something new, frame it as a mastery goal and reward yourself when you have accomplished it. Celebrate the accomplishment and acknowledge your cleverness.
5. Write down your achievements and place them somewhere that you can see them. For instance, on the fridge, next to your bed. Reflecting on them will validate your capabilities and give impetus to strive for future accomplishments.
6. Make time to do something you enjoy, eat well and exercise
7. Watch your self-talk. For example, focus on "I can"; try to avoid "I can't". Keep taking care of yourself and each other through this uncertain time

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8. Reach out if you need support. Be aware of signs that you are becoming over-challenged and have a strategy such as reaching out to somebody, taking a break or doing an activity you enjoy.

Seek support

- Some people feel as though they have a lack of support: No one will understand, no one to download or pour your heart out to. This is not true there is always someone to help and listen! They don't have to have experienced exactly the same stress as you to be a good support.
- Talk to your friends, family other support services.

Interrelate are here to support – [contact us](#) to have a chat about how we can help

Activities to reduce stress

Time management

- Use a planner/ diary to set out each day, week and month
- Schedule in self-care time – time only for you
- If possible, seek support to manage busy times – school drop off, dinner times
 - Allocate tasks to other members of the family

Role conflict

- Clashes between work and family commitments can cause stress
- Prioritise things that are most important to you
- Don't be afraid to say no. Be assertive and let people know your priorities
- If you already feel as though you have a lot on your plate, don't take on anything extra.

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Embrace uncertainty

- No one knows what is going to happen in the future, instead look to the things you can control.
- If it helps write down the things you can control and work on those. These might include –
 - Your attitude towards something
 - Your thoughts and perspective
 - Who you chose to spend your time with and how much time
 - How you look after your mental and physical health
 - Whether or not you ask for help
 - How often you practice gratitude
 - How many times you smile
 - The amount of effort you put forth

Set goals

- Don't over think your future, instead set small goals to achieve something bigger. For example: the amount of time you are going to dedicate to self-care this week.
- How many hours you are going to work each week
- How much money you are going to save each pay to reach a savings target.

Develop rituals

- Every morning I have a set routine to get the most out of my day
- During the day I do certain things to ensure I am working at my best
- In the afternoon I come home and do something to help me relax and unwind
- I will make sure I exercise 3 times a week
- Schedule down time

Relationships matter

- Mealtimes are a great time to enjoy each other's company
- Enjoy a television show together – without devices

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- Take dog for a walk or go for a walk together
- Try not to miss special events and important times - make an effort to attend gatherings and special events
- Manage strong emotions - be aware of how you're feeling, take time to breathe or take 5 minutes to yourself if you need
- Look after your relationship with self by making some time for yourself
- Have compassion for yourself
- Try not to be critical of yourself
- Think about whether you would say or criticise someone else the way you do to yourself
- If you find yourself focusing on the negatives, stop and refocus on a positive, even if you can only find one
- If you find yourself focusing on all the things you haven't done, stop and look at the things you have done

Activity: What is in your stress cup?

- Start with an empty cup and some post it notes
- Think of something that causes you stress and write it on a post it note.
- Place the post it note inside your cup
- Read through Interrelate tips for managing stress/ complete [Creating Positive Relationships](#) program
- Once completed take one thing out of your cup and write a way you can manage that stress on the post it
- Stick it to your fridge or somewhere you will see it often
- Give yourself time to work on managing that stress
- Once you feel you can confidently manage that stress take another one out of your cup and do the same
- Repeat this until your cup is empty