

Brain on Fire: Strategies to Cool Down Stress



Understanding Stress



Tolerable Stress (support):

Intense stress that you can recover from, as long as you have support and coping resources to help you through it.

Acute Stress (duration): Short burst of stress in response to a specific situation, like a deadline, a job interview, or a close call. It usually fades quickly and doesn't cause lasting harm.



Toxic Stress (support): High levels of stress without enough support or coping resources to manage them.

Chronic Stress (duration): Ongoing stress over a long period, like financial hardship, work pressure, or caregiving, whether or not there's support.



Physical Stressors: Put strain on the body, such as pain, injury, lack of sleep, sensory overload, and extreme temperatures.

Psychological Stressors: Challenge your emotional, mental, or social well-being, such as work pressure, relationship conflicts, financial worries, loss, social isolation, inner critic, fear, major life transitions, discrimination, and perfectionism.



Physical & Physiological Stress Response:

Headaches, muscle tension, upset stomach, low energy, sweating, trouble sleeping, oversleeping, increased heart rate, elevated blood pressure, and faster breathing.

Psychological Stress Response:

Feeling anxious or overwhelmed, trouble concentrating, sadness, fear, irritability, isolation, and negative self-talk.

Stress Management and Coping Strategies

- ✓ Gratitude and Affirmations
- ✓ Planning and Prioritization
- ✓ Mindfulness
- ✓ Journaling for reflection and exploration
- ✓ Deep breathing exercises
- ✓ Meditation
- ✓ Walking, stretching, and other gentle movements
- ✓ Listening to a curated music playlist
- ✓ Watch a curated video playlist

- ✓ Practicing setting boundaries
- ✓ Digital detoxing
- ✓ Find one vent buddy that you trust
- ✓ Find your tribe
- ✓ Set up a consistent sleep schedule
- ✓ Practice balanced nutrition
- ✓ Hydrate
- ✓ Talk to a professional
- ✓ Reframing

