

# Managing the Stressors of Life

Mara B. Edmunds, MA

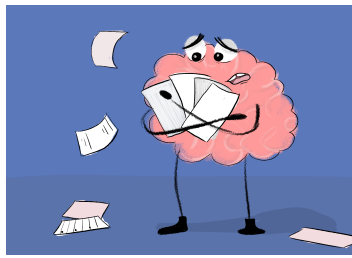


Image: dlpng.com

## Process Questions:

1.) What are your top 3 stressors right now in life?

---



---



---

2.) How and where does stress show up in your body? How do you experience it? Does it impact your appetite, breathing, sleep, muscles, or anything else?

3.) How did you observe the adults in your life manage stress when you were a child? Did you acquire any of their tendencies?

4.) The 3 primary healthy ways we can respond to stress are through:

**Organizing** Changing or eliminating certain priorities, using a schedule or planner app, creating lists, playing “beat the clock,” breaking tasks into smaller steps or delegating tasks to others.

**Distracting** Taking a break, watching a show/movie, pacing, playing a game, talking to friends, researching an interest, reading, listening to white noise, or choosing any activity to distance you from the stress.

**Calming** Sleeping, mindfulness activities, listening to music, creating art, breathing techniques, tapping, praying, being in nature, bathing, meditating, stretching, yoga, or drinking warm beverages.

Circle the approach you gravitate toward → **Organizing** **Distracting** **Calming**

5.) What have been your top go-to’s to relieve your stress in the past? List them below. Circle the helpful ones. Cross through your unhelpful coping strategies .

### Interventions for Stress Reduction

- 1.) Be present in the moment and accept how you feel without judgment.  
Identify your feelings, feel them, and then let them pass. Visualize them floating down river. If you recognize a higher power, ask that entity to take control of that which is outside of your control. Inhale/exhale 4 times.
- 2.) Identify your current **NEEDS**. Examples:
  - Physical** Sleep, food, water, exercise, a check-up, medications, a bath.
  - Practical** Employment or time off, housing, transportation, funds, training.
  - Emotional** Time to cry, a hug, a loved one's support, a therapy session.
  - Spiritual** A space for prayer, meditation, time in nature, journaling.
- 3.) Consider someone who has faced a similar challenge as you.  
Was their response to the challenge an inspiration or a warning to you?
- 4.) What practical obstacles are you facing in your life right now? What are your options?  
Who can you consult for sound advice? What makes them qualified?
- 5.) What might success look like for you in the future? How are your daily choices currently propelling you toward your goals?
- 6.) Who/what/where makes you feel safe and calm? Can you be intentional in spending time regularly in the environments that align with your life priorities?
- 7.) Which tasks in your life are most urgent right now and which ones can wait?
- 8.) Which aspects of your life do you find most draining right now? How will you recharge yourself along the way so you will not burnout?
- 9.) In what ways might you alleviate your stress through physical activity?  
Have your activities been approved by your doctor? Do you have a workout partner?
- 10.) How can you love yourself and forgive yourself for the ways you feel you have fallen short? Zap negative self-talk. How can you encourage yourself?

### Calming & Empowering Thoughts

- “I am not alone and others are facing similar fears.”
- “It is normal to need a break and it is ok if I need to pause.”
- “I celebrate my positive qualities and choose not to dwell only on my shortcomings.”
- “My success depends on how many times I am willing to pick myself up, not perfection.”
- “This situation is not my final destination. I am a work in progress.”
- “One small promise I will make to myself and complete today is \_\_\_\_\_.”
- “I will tell myself: ‘You matter. You deserve peace. You are worth fighting for!’”