



# 7 WAYS TO IMPROVE STRESS MANAGEMENT & MENTAL HEALTH

Stress and mental health are often connected. Apply some or all of these tips to your daily life to help manage stress and improve your mental health.

## Keep a Positive Perspective

Keeping a balanced, positive perspective can help us through challenging times. Our brain responds more intensely to negatives than to positives. When we express thankfulness for what we have and when we re-frame negative thoughts, our overall perception of a situation can change. A positive perspective can help ease distress, hopelessness, or other not-so-positive emotions and feelings.

## Positivity

Positivity further facilitates optimal management of stress and promotes mental well-being. What does it mean to be positive? Focus on your strengths, have good thoughts, and practice resilient self-talk.

Health experts at the [Mayo Clinic](#) suggest focusing on positive thoughts and being hopeful. Consider starting your day by listing things you are thankful for that help you keep a hope-filled perspective.

## A New Routine

Routine and consistency over that which we can control, helps us manage our physical, mental, and emotional health during trying times. Routine can be particularly helpful for children, so be intentional and schedule your family's priorities accordingly.

When building your routine, start with sleep. By keeping your sleep and wake schedule consistent, you automatically get the day off to a good start! Healthy practices such as proper nutrition and exercise are two other areas that many of us have control over that we can build a routine around.

Whether you find yourself more or less busy, be deliberate and intentional with how you spend your time each day. Scheduling your time will also make the transition back to our old routines much easier.

## Set Priorities

Do not become overwhelmed by creating a life-changing list of things to achieve while you are home. Set reasonable goals each day and outline steps you can take to reach those goals.

Give yourself credit for every step in the right direction, no matter how small and recognize that some days will be better than others.

## Self-Care

Beyond your routine, self-care is crucial. Self-care can be anything from brushing your teeth regularly, to taking a short nap when feeling tired, or reaching out to a friend or family member if you feel sad or lonely. By practicing self-care and staying in tune with personal needs, your well-being routine begins to take shape: for more information on self-care, visit [GoodTherapy.org](https://www.goodtherapy.org).

If you feel self-care is not enough, contact your primary physician and check out the following mental health well-being [assessment](#) from Mental Health America (MHA). In the case of a medical emergency call 911 or for mental health emergencies, call the [National Suicide Prevention Hotline](#) at 1-800-273-8255.

## Time Management

As home and work collide for many, you may find yourself wearing multiple hats. Are you managing to be an employee, cook, caregiver, parent, teacher, spouse, friend, and neighbor? Chances are, you're juggling a combination of these roles.

To maximize the results of your effort, having effective time management strategies in place will help you find the necessary balance. By prioritizing and scheduling your time based on you and your family's priorities, you will feel more balanced in your day to day routine. Check out the resources below for more information on time management.

## Make a Positive Impact

Find purpose in helping the people around you. For example, email, text, or call to check on your friends, family members, and neighbors — especially those who are elderly. If you know someone who cannot get out, ask if there is something needed, such as groceries or a prescription picked up, for instance. But be sure to follow the [Center for Disease Control](#), the [World Health Organization](#), and your state government recommendations on social distancing and group meetings.

## Resources on Stress Management and Mental Health

### GoodTherapy

- [GoodTherapy.org](https://www.goodtherapy.org) has many resources on self-care, the power of positivity, and time management.
- You can also search for a therapist near you based on your needs.

### Mental Health America

- [Mental Health America](#) has an abundance of resources that can help you work through stress and change.
- They also have a variety of [self-assessment tests](#) for you to take.

### Time Management

- [Managing Your Time](#), by University of Illinois Extension
- [Time-Management Hacks to be More Efficient and Procrastinate Less](#), at GoodTherapy.org

### American Psychological Association

- The [American Psychological Association's](#) resource library is full of information on a variety of topics, as well as resources specifically on COVID-19.
- Check out their video '[Coping With COVID19: 7 Findings from Psychological Scientists](#)' to learn how you can cope and better analyze the flood of information on the virus.