Stress is a normal part of our lives, and as college students, it is important to learn how to appropriately cope with the stress of everyday life. When we have a healthy response to stress, we feel better and are more productive. Use these tips to change your attitude towards stress and cope in a healthy way!

Why We Experience Stress

- Stress is our body’s natural response to a perceived threat or emergency
- A little bit of stress can help us be productive and get things done
- Too much stress, or responding to stress in an unhealthy way, can lead to a feeling of being overwhelmed or out of control.

What Are Your Stressors?

- Identifying the stressors in your life can help you find ways to cope in a healthy way.
- Take the Daily Stressors Survey for College Students (opposite side of this page).
- Be consciously aware of which areas of your life cause you stress.
- Change the things that you can; respond in a healthy way to the things you cannot change.

Stress Management Techniques

Breathing Exercise

- Calms you down in any stressful situation; can be used anytime, anywhere.
- Follow these steps:
  - Inhale very slowly through your nose, reaching your full lung capacity
  - Hold for three seconds
  - Exhale very slowly
  - Repeat several times
- This technique lowers your heart rate and blood pressure. Use it anytime you feel overwhelmed, angry, panicked, or anxious.

Grounding Exercise: The 5-4-3-2-1 Technique

- Good for getting you out of a “negative spiral”
- In your immediate surroundings, find: 5 things you can see; 4 things you can feel/touch; 3 things you can hear; 2 things you can smell; 1 thing you can taste.

Meditation

- A way to calm your mind and relax
  - Sit in a comfortable position, close your eyes
  - Focus on your breath
  - Try to clear your mind of any thoughts
  - Start with five minutes; increase with practice
- YouTube has many guided meditation videos

Other Tips:

- Avoid catastrophizing – Keep things in perspective!
- Pay attention to your alcohol and caffeine consumption
- Reach out for help
- Eliminate multitasking
Daily Stressors Survey for College Students

Being a college student comes with its own list of stressors, big and small. The following worksheet invites you to rank these typical daily student stressors (from 1 being low stress to 5 being high stress). In doing so, you take the first step in recognizing what issues need to be addressed in your current life situation.

How do these typical college student stressors rank in your life?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Low</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Coping with roommates, living conditions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Balancing schoolwork with job hours</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Making ends meet financially</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Academic load (credits, exams, papers)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Social needs (friends, family, etc.)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Health status, health issues</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Food, body image, and weight issues</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Transportation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Parental issues, child care issues, etc.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Girlfriend, boyfriend issues</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Technology issues (Social media, texting, etc.)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Purpose-in-life issues</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Other: ________________________________</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: Baylor University - https://www.baylor.edu/content/services/document.php/183822.pdf