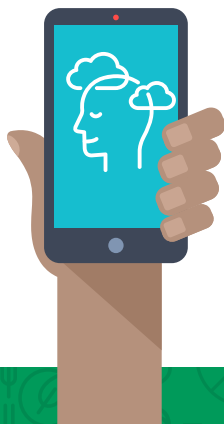


## Tips to manage stress

- ✓ **Get active.** Even just a simple walk around the block can lift your mood. Get outside every day.
- ✓ **Spend time reflecting, praying, or meditating** to clear your mind and recharge.
- ✓ **Ask yourself a simple question: IS IT WORTH IT?** If the stressor is really important, use the coping tools listed inside this pamphlet. If not, can you let it go? How freeing might that feel?
- ✓ **Distract yourself.** When things feel out of control, get your mind off of the stress by doing a fun activity.
- ✓ **Ask someone you trust for support.** Tell them specifically how they can help you with your stress (for example, a hug, a walk, movie night).
- ✓ **Consider therapy.** Having a professional listen and help you manage stress can be very helpful.
- ✓ **Use relaxation and deep breathing strategies to calm your mind and body.** Many phone apps and online videos can guide you through activities such as progressive muscle relaxation, guided imagery, or meditation.



### MY GOAL FOR THIS WEEK

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**Stress can take a toll on your health and wellbeing. Try these skills to manage your stress!**



[www.ChangethatMatters.UMN.edu](http://www.ChangethatMatters.UMN.edu)

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**CHANGE** that *MATTERS*

*Promoting Healthy Behaviors*

# My plan to manage stress

Stress is part of life, and most of the time we manage it pretty well. However, sometimes many small stressors pile up; other times a big life event feels overwhelming. The following three steps can help you to manage stress effectively:

**CATCH**    **CHALLENGE**    **CHANGE**



**CATCH yourself. Be aware of how you feel when you're under stress.** Everyone experiences stress differently. What do you notice about your...

Body (e.g., headache, nausea)?

Feelings (e.g., anger, sadness)?

Thinking (e.g., worry, racing thoughts)?

Behavior (e.g., changes in sleep or eating, drinking/drug use)?

Relationships (e.g., isolating, snapping at others)?



**CHALLENGE yourself. Ask "What is in my control and what is not?"** Think about one stressful issue in your life. Write on the lines below what factors are "controllable" and which are "uncontrollable." The example below is about being late for an appointment.

## Controllable (I can impact this)

*Examples: what time you wake up, what time you scheduled the appointment*

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## Uncontrollable (I cannot change the situation)

*Examples: the weather, how other people drive, construction*

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**CHANGE how you cope. Sometimes we waste time and energy on things we cannot change.** Think about the stressor you listed above. Circle a couple approaches below that might be helpful, or write in some of your own.

## For controllable stressors, MAKE A CHANGE. Do something!

*Example: Set alarm for 10 minutes earlier. Give yourself plenty of time to get to the appointment.*

- |                      |                        |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| Make a decision      | Ask for advice or help |
| Make an action plan  | Set a goal             |
| Get more information | Resolve a conflict     |

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## For uncontrollable stressors, MANAGE YOUR EMOTIONS.

*Example: "I can't change the weather – I will get there when I can."*

- Change the way you think about the situation
- Do fun, relaxing activities
- Talk with friends and family
- See back of handout for more tips

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**Set a goal.** From the coping tools listed above, what strategy will you try in the next week to manage stress?

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**Relationships can be a big source of stress or comfort.** Are there people you need to set limits with or distance from for a while?

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**Who helps you manage stress?**

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