

# Ten Top Tips



## When you need to manage stress

1. **Lower your expectations** of yourself until things improve. Remember stress is a normal and healthy response, and not something to fight against. Stress is an invitation to consider our priorities, and at times make different choices.
2. **Develop small, achievable goals.** People experiencing stress tend to remind themselves of what they are not managing and can begin to “awfulize”. Focus on small things you are managing or can impact on everyday.
3. **Structure your time** in accordance with your priorities. Reflect on the possible causes of stress and how you can prevent them from spilling over into all areas of your life.
4. **Be prepared.** Notice the early signs that indicate stress for you, and develop an action plan that will help you know what you need to do before things escalate.
5. **Reflect on previous times** in your life you may have experienced significant stress and managed to survive. All of us have experienced stress in the past, in one way or another. Reflect on what it was that was helpful for you then, be it internal or external resources, lowering your expectations for yourself, or reminding yourself it is not forever.
6. **Be proactive in dealing with your stress.** Think of the big picture. Make use of your resources and talk to supportive family members, friends or colleagues.
7. **Look after yourself.** Exercise, a healthy diet, reduced alcohol and caffeine and sleep, can all help with managing the physiological symptoms of stress.
8. **Find someone or something** that will make you laugh. Humour diffuses that which seems to be so serious.
9. **Seek further support** when you need it. If stress persists, is accompanied by strong physiological symptoms, or begins to impact on personal and workplace relationships, do yourself the honour of talking to a counsellor, GP or workplace support.
10. **Be gentle with yourself.** Stress is not a life sentence and for most people is a transitional event that passes.