Struggling with Stress?

How do you handle daily stress? From jobs and relationships to unexpected trauma, stress can quickly creep into each area of our lives.

Not all stress is bad; it is our brain's normal response to change. But over time, if not properly managed, stress can take a toll on our health and mood. It is important to learn your limits and what kinds of situations make you feel overwhelmed.

If there are stressful situations in your life that are too difficult to handle, you might experience physical and mental changes. Check yourself for some of the following symptoms:

- memory problems
- nausea/digestive trouble
- moodiness
- nervous habits

- poor judgment
- aches and pains
- sleeping problems
- abusing alcohol or drugs to relax

As days and weeks of consistent stress continue, these symptoms can worsen and lead to depression, anxiety disorders, and other illnesses. Additionally, if you're already living with depression or other mood disorders, consistent stress can make these conditions worse.

There are things you can do to manage your stress and control potential negative effects.

- When possible, take charge of a stressful situation and make the necessary changes to calm your environment.
- In situations that you cannot change, work on adjusting your response in a healthy way.
- Don't be afraid to ask for help from family members and friends to reduce burdens.
- Practice mindfulness by focusing on how you are feeling and what you are doing in the exact moment.
- Deep breathing exercises, light yoga, and meditation can help alleviate the physical effects from stress.
- Be sure to make time for yourself to rest, relax, or exercise.

If you believe stress is negatively affecting your health, it is important to visit your doctor for a full evaluation. Don't be afraid to seek professional help! A mental health screening can also indicate if what you are feeling is a normal response to stress or something more serious.

Take an anonymous self-assessment anytime at:

HealthyMindsPhilly.org

SMH Screening for Mental Health®