



MANAGING STRESS





How to keep work stress from taking over your life

Work-related stress can get the best of us all. Emails, Slack messages, phones ringing off the hook, your co-worker dropping by for an impromptu meeting — it's enough to make anyone frazzled. Feeling some tension is normal, especially if you're facing a looming deadline or challenging assignment. But when work stress becomes chronic, it can end up affecting both your physical and emotional well-being. Experiencing work strain is unavoidable — even if you love what you do — but there are steps you can take to keep job stress to a minimum.

1. Be aware of how it affects you

Signs of stress:

- low energy or fatigue
- headaches
- insomnia
- changes in appetite
- digestive issues
- rapid heart rate
- sweating
- low self-esteem
- loss of sex drive
- frequent illnesses

2. Take time to recharge

Taking even a few minutes of personal time during a busy day can help prevent burnout, for example listening to an interesting podcast in between meetings or going on a walk during your lunch break. It's also important to take breaks from thinking about your job by not checking work-related emails on your time off or disconnecting from your phone in the evenings.

3. Improve your time management skills

Sometimes, feeling overwhelmed by work comes down to how organized you are. Try setting up a priority list at the beginning of your work week by preparing tasks and ranking them according to importance. You can also beat procrastination by setting aside specific time blocks for deep concentration work.

4. Work life balance

Being available around the clock will easily burn you out. It's important to create clear boundaries between your work and home life to help you avoid potential stress. Part of this means setting aside time for socializing and establishing rules for when you'll check emails or take phone calls.



5. Re-evaluate negative thoughts

When you've experienced worry and chronic stress for an extended period of time, your mind may tend to jump to conclusions and read into every situation with a negative lens. For example, if your boss doesn't say hi to you first thing in the morning, you might react thinking "they're mad at me." Instead of making automatic judgements, try distancing yourself from your negative thoughts and simply observe.

6. Rely on a strong support network

Keep in touch with trusted friends and family members to help cope with stressful work situations. If you're struggling with an especially challenging work week, try asking friends or family for support. Having people you can rely on during the tough times can alleviate some of the built-up tension.

7. Take care of yourself

Setting aside time for self-care is a must if you regularly find yourself feeling overwhelmed by work. This means prioritizing sleep, setting aside time for fun, and making sure you're eating throughout the day.



8. Approach your supervisor

Getting support from your boss can significantly alleviate feelings of burnout. Set up a quiet time to talk with them and calmly discuss feeling overwhelmed by challenging tasks. Approach the conversation from a place of problem solving, rather than listing out complaints. For example, you could say that you want to revisit what's expected of you outside of working hours because things feel a bit overwhelming right now. The point is to find a resolution that helps reduce strain.

Questions to Consider

1. What's the most stressful situation you've faced at work so far?
2. How did you handle it?
3. How do you prevent a situation from getting too stressful to manage?
4. What advice would you give to calm down a colleague who's stressed out about a deadline?



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