

# TOP TIPS FOR MANAGING STRESS

We all experience stress in different amounts, different ways and at different times. Sometimes a little stress can motivate us to take helpful actions towards our goals. But when stress is too intense, or goes on for too long, it can overwhelm our minds and bodies, and challenge our ability to cope - physically, mentally, and emotionally. **Here are five tips to manage the impact of stress.**



## Lay down healthy foundations

You can establish a healthy base by meeting your essential needs: **food, water, oxygen, and rest.** Eating, sleeping, staying hydrated and conscious breathing help to increase our capacity to handle ongoing stress.

### Solid steps to building inner strength



A balanced, nutritious diet with regular meals



Getting enough good-quality sleep

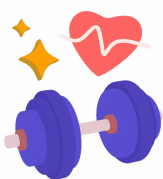


Staying hydrated throughout the day



Practising intentional breathing

Exercise is also a foundational part of a healthy routine. It aids good sleep and a healthy appetite



high-intensity movement can release pent-up frustration



slow, gentle movements can ease built-up tension

## Name it to tame it

Seeing your thoughts, emotions and sensations as one part, not all, of your experience, and naming what you notice, can reduce their intensity, letting you hit the pause button on reactions and activate cognitive processing. You can then think through and make sense of what is happening in the moment. When words are hard to find, imagery can help. Try describing the colour, shape, size, and texture of your feelings.



Try using statements like

- *I'm noticing \_\_\_\_\_*
- *I'm having the feeling/thought that \_\_\_\_\_*
- *This feels like \_\_\_\_\_*

or use this emotion-sensation wheel as a guide.



## Engage your senses

Mindfully observing your surroundings to **connect your mind and body** when you feel overwhelmed can help to soothe your internal alarm system and ground you in the present moment.

- ✿ *What objects do you see around you?*
- ✿ *What's nearby that feels calming to look at or hold?*
- ✿ *What feels comforting to smell, hear, or taste?*



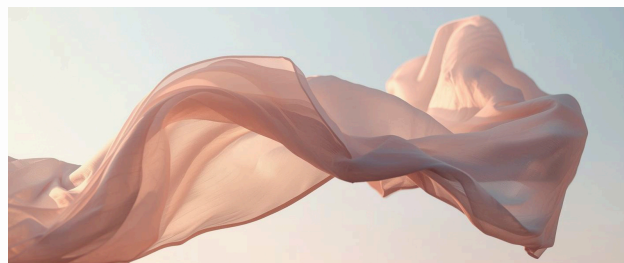
We can also use our imagination to visualise a safe, peaceful place with each of our senses - that we can return to anytime by looking at a picture or closing our eyes to recall.

## Find your flow

Regularly getting yourself into **a state of 'flow'** decreases stress: it puts a pause on what's bothering you and shifts our attention away from our internal self.

Creative, physical, and social activities can all create flow. Ideally, these activities mix **a sense of pleasure and mastery**: something we're interested in that requires concentration to do, and is neither too easy nor too difficult.

To help stress flow away, **focus on enjoying the process and just giving it a go**, rather than setting a goal to achieve a fixed outcome. Learn more about flow and activities you can use to achieve it [here](#).



## Talk it out

It can be difficult to carry the weight of challenges on our own. Sharing those parts of our experience that we're able to talk about, with people we trust, can lighten our mental load and help us feel less alone.



Is there a colleague, friend, or family member you can confide in? Or is there a community forum or peer support group you can reach out to?

If there's no one suitable in your network, or you prefer to speak to someone impartial, you can make an appointment with a counsellor or psychologist for talk therapy. **You don't have to be in crisis to receive compassionate support.**

## Resources

- ▶ [Samaritans Hong Kong - 2896 0000](http://www.samaritans.org.hk)
- ▶ [The Samaritan Befrienders Hong Kong - 2389 2222](https://sbhk.org.hk/)
- ▶ [Shall We Talk - 18111](http://www.shallwetalk.com.hk)

## About Us



City Mental Health Alliance Hong Kong (CMHA HK) is a not-for-profit membership organisation. We are an alliance of businesses, working together with mental health experts and partner organisations, to achieve our vision that every workplace will protect, support and create positive mental health for their people. We provide training, events, resources, research and practical support for companies wishing to create mentally healthy workplaces.

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