

A Guide for care partners

Stress Tracker and Coping Strategies

Use the Stress Tracker to explore stressful events, your reactions, and your response to them over the course of ten days. The stress tracker is designed to help you identify situations that are stressful for you and provide some helpful ways to cope when they occur.

Example:	
How do you feel?	Day 1
Situation	Late for a meeting with my boss.
Reaction to situation (Physical & Emotional)	Felt sad and like I was letting the team down. I got a headache.
Response	I apologise and listened to relaxing music.

How do you feel?	Day 1
Situation	
Reaction to situation	
Response	

How do you feel?	Day 2
Situation	
Reaction to situation	
Response	

How do you feel?	Day 3
Situation	
Reaction to situation	
Response	

How do you feel?	Day 4
Situation	
Reaction to situation	
Response	
How do you feel?	Day 5
Situation	
Reaction to situation	
Response	
How do you feel?	Day 6
Situation	
Reaction to situation	
Response	
How do you feel?	Day 7
Situation	
Reaction to situation	
Response	
How do you feel?	Day 8
Situation	
Reaction to situation	
Response	
How do you feel?	Day 9
Situation	
Reaction to situation	
Response	
How do you feel?	Day 10
Situation	
Reaction to situation	
Response	

How to cope with stress

Everyone experiences stress at some point in life. While being a care partner can be very rewarding, added demands can sometimes make small problems feel huge.

You can't avoid stress completely, but you can use different techniques to minimise it and help you relax.

First, keep track of your feelings over a period of time with a Stress Tracker. This will help you notice patterns or certain events that trigger your stress. You may recognise that you are especially irritated by your morning commute or meetings with your boss. Or maybe you get easily annoyed waiting in line for coffee.

Once you know what things set you off balance, you can use different methods to calm yourself before, during, and after the situation.

Tips for reducing stress

Before a Stressful Event

When an event is coming up that you know makes you uncomfortable, minimise your stress by doing one or more of the following:

- Get up 15 minutes earlier than usual so you don't start the day feeling rushed.
- Prepare what you need the day before.
- Get enough sleep.
- Visualise the stressful situation beforehand and how you plan to address it.
- Keep a journal and write about how you will tackle the situation.
- Take a morning yoga or meditation class.
- Take a walk before the event.
- Talk to a friend about your feelings.
- Practice positivity (keep replacing negative thoughts with positive ones).

During a Stressful Event

If you are in the middle of a difficult task or assignment that causes you stress, practice some of these techniques to help you stay cool as a cucumber under pressure.

- Take big deep breaths.
- Stretch your body if you can to help relax your muscles.
- Roll your shoulders and sit up straight.
- Say or repeat positive words or phrases to yourself.
- Smile.

After a Stressful Event

Once the stressful event has passed it is a great time to readjust and regain your sense of balance. You made it through the event and now you can take the time to reflect.

- Take a bath.
- Get some exercise.
- Laugh.
- Call your support system to discuss your day.
- Watch a favourite movie or show.
- Lie down and listen to some calming music.
- Take a yoga class.
- Practice meditation.

Try some of these tips and find the solution that works best for you.