

Changing the way you think



The way that we think really effects the way we feel, and it is often the way we think about life and that makes us stressed.

**"I can't cope", "I can't do this",
"my life is out of control".**

Start challenging those thoughts, in other words stop and think about what you are thinking.

Think about how you coped in the past, how realistic you are being, and whether you are exaggerating.

Asking yourself these questions can really help to stop you giving yourself a hard time. A little bit of positive thinking can also help a whole lot.

**"I can cope", "I can do this",
"I am in control of my life".**

Useful websites

- www.thesite.org.uk
- www.youngminds.org.uk
- National Sleep Helpline - The Sleep Charity
www.thesleepcharity.org.uk
Helpline: 03303530541
- Sleepstation - sleep improvement & insomnia course
www.sleepstation.org.uk
Helpline: 033308009404



For More Information:



If you would like more information, please visit our website.

If you have been affected by any of the issues described in this leaflet you can talk to a Counsellor or a Youth Worker at a Streetwise drop-in.

Advice is FREE and CONFIDENTIAL.

Produced by: Streetwise
Young People's Project:

Young People's Information,
Advice, Counselling, Sexual
Health and Support Service
for 11-25 year olds.


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The Streetwise guide to Stress



Streetwise

YOUNG PEOPLE'S PROJECT

Everybody is talking about stress



Stress affects most of us at some point in our lives, it is our bodies response to situations we find difficult or tough. A little stress can be good and help us get through some challenging situations.

But too much stress or being stressed for a long time can really affect our health so here are a few ideas about how to let go, unwind, slow down, take a breath and chill out.

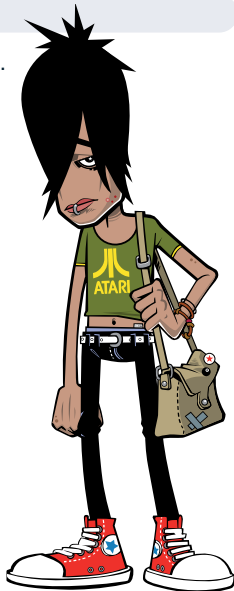
The first step is to recognise stress, which can be tricky if you are running round at a hundred miles an hour, or you feel like your head is about to burst.

Some clear signs of stress

- Getting irritated easily.
- Feeling tired all the time.
- Not feeling able to relax even when you have the time and space.
- Difficulty concentrating.
- Sleeping or eating problems.
- Headaches.
- Becoming quiet or withdrawn.

What if I don't get enough sleep?

This could impact on your ability to study or work, causing you to have difficulties concentrating. Please read Streetwise guide to Sleep.



Relaxing to combat stress



Breathe it away

Breathing, ok we do this all the time, but if you can just stop and take a few breaths down into your stomach your body naturally chills out.

If you get the chance it is good to rest one hand on your chest and one on your tummy and then take a deep breath. Your hand on your tummy rising is a good sign of really breathing deeply.

Physical relaxation

This is best done when lying down but can work okay when sitting. Starting with the muscles on the top of your head and going all the way down your body to the tips of your toes just gradually relax your body. Focus on each part of your body as you let the tension go.

Imagine yourself away

Use your imagination to take yourself away somewhere cool and relaxing, or maybe warm and peaceful. Find what works for you. It could be somewhere you went on holiday, maybe a beach, a walk through the woods, swimming in the sea or a place you just make up for yourself.

You could also try imagining yourself with somebody who helps you feel relaxed.

Allow your senses to take you there, see the place, hear it, touch it.



Looking after yourself



Think about what you are eating and drinking. Too much salt, sugar, alcohol and caffeine can drain your energy and leave you feeling 'wired'.

Try to get enough sleep. Maybe try some of the relaxation exercises suggested before if you are having difficulty sleeping.

Talking to somebody can really help. This maybe to a friend or family member, a teacher, counsellor or youth worker.

Set aside at least 30 minutes each day to just switch off from the world and unwind.

Have a laugh. It will relieve stress, improve your immune system, and make you feel good.

The right kind of exercise will help you feel energised and relaxed. If you have not found it yet try something new.

Keeping a diary or journal to write down how you are feeling is a good way of letting go of some of the stress.

