

Managing Stress

Managing stress can make you feel better and can also help you control psychosis.

Let's take a look at two things that you can do to better manage your stress:

1. Relaxation – learning how to relax your mind and body
2. Preparation – anticipating possible stressful situations and preparing yourself to deal with them

Relaxation

There are lots of rewards to feeling relaxed and calm. You will feel less stressed, you will enjoy yourself more, you will think more clearly, and you may be less bothered by symptoms of psychosis too.

There are also lots of different ways to relax.

You can engage in **calming activities** that you enjoy. Here are some ideas.

- Reading a good book
- Taking a warm bath
- Doing yoga or gentle stretching exercises
- Going for a walk in the park

You can also **learn methods for deep relaxation.** There are methods such as:

- Imagining that you are in a different place that is relaxing (such as relaxing on a beach)
- Tensing and then relaxing different muscles in the body.
- Focussing on your breathing

All these methods for deep relaxation take practice to work effectively. Your EPI Clinician can help you learn these methods for deep relaxation. There are CDs of relaxation methods that you can take out from the library or buy at many bookstores. These can be listened to for more practice.

List three things you can do to relax.
1.
2.
3.

Preparation

There may be upcoming situations that you know will likely cause you stress. This might be something like a job interview or a social situation where you won't know anybody. We can't avoid all the things that cause us stress but we can prepare ourselves for these things so we can manage them effectively.

Strategies such as **problem solving** can help you prepare for stressful situations. There's a handout you can get from your EPI Clinician that will go over this technique in more detail.

Rehearsal is another useful strategy for any upcoming event that you are worried about. Go over the event in your mind and practice what you will say or how you will act. You can try rehearsing situations with your EPI Clinician.

Think of what is happening over the next couple of months. Is there anything coming up that makes you feel worried or anxious? Write down anything that comes to mind.

Stressful situation coming soon...

Things I can do to prepare for this...