



Coping with Stress at Work

LifeWorks

Most of us find our jobs stressful at times. Often these feelings are temporary, but sometimes negative emotions linger and may begin to affect your job performance, your relations with others, or even your health and well-being. Learning to manage challenging emotions at work takes effort, but the payoff is big. When we deal with problems before they overwhelm us, we can contribute more to our team and gain a greater sense of control and effectiveness -- both at work and outside of work. You can take steps to become more aware of your emotions and to manage them more effectively. If you are feeling stressed at work, the following tips can help you cope:

- *Recognize your emotions in their early stages, before they feel out of control.* By reviewing your day's activities and the feelings they caused, you may discover the source of difficult feelings at work. But it may take practice to recognize your real feelings. There's a strong body of research that shows the ability to be recognize and name your feelings will protect you from having outbursts in the future and will improve your relationships. Ask trusted friends and mentors for help learning to recognize and name your feelings.
- *Learn to express your emotions in healthy ways.* Have strategies for dealing with difficult feelings in ways appropriate for work.
- *Think about how you managed a problem in the past.* If an event at work -- like a conflict with a co-worker or an unusually stressful workload -- is triggering an emotional challenge, consider how you overcame a similar problem in the past. What worked? What didn't?
- *Write it down.* This can be especially helpful if a problem is keeping you awake at night. If you are having an ongoing conflict with a co-worker, you might write: "Every time we talk, even about unimportant things, we end up arguing. Maybe I did something to offend him once but don't know it. Maybe ask him out for lunch and find out." This can help you come up with strategies and keep the problem from distracting you.
- *Build your emotional resilience.* Pay attention to your physical and mental well-being. Eat well, get enough sleep, and exercise regularly. All of these will help you find the energy you need to meet emotional challenges. This will help to keep you emotionally resilient and to feel more in control of your emotions and your life.
- *Use your vacation time.* Taking time off helps to buffer job stress, research has found. A vacation can also allow you to pull back and gain a fresh perspective on work stress and possible ways to ease it.
- *Maintain support systems outside of work.* Talking about your concerns with close friends or your partner can reduce your anxiety and help you keep problems in perspective. Choose someone you trust who knows you well enough to give you honest feedback.
- *Cultivate interests outside of work, including activities with good friends.* Remember, not all satisfaction comes from work accomplishments.

For support and more ideas on managing stress and other emotions at work, get in touch with LifeWorks—call to speak with a caring, professional consultant anytime, 24/7. LifeWorks is completely confidential and it's provided to you at no cost. You can also go to www.lifeworks.com to explore our online resources—short videos, podcasts, and a wide range of articles including:

- [Stress and Depression at Work](#)
- [How to Use the Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\)](#)
- [Choosing a Counselor or Therapist](#)
- [Are You Using Drugs or Alcohol to Cope with Depression or Anxiety?](#)
- and many more!

Call LifeWorks at 888-267-8126 or visit www.lifeworks.com (username: theaaa; password: lifeworks)