





# I'M SO STRESSED!



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STUDENT COUNSELLING AND  
DEVELOPMENT (SCD)

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Lize van den Bergh

*Stress will always be part of life, but luckily there are many things you can do to manage it. It is important to compile your OWN personal toolkit, as people deal with stress differently.*



1

## Identifying your stressors

We often feel overwhelmed, but don't even know why. By writing down the stressors that could be leading to your anxiety, you have started the process of coping with them. Another vital step is to divide your stressors into controllable and uncontrollable ones.

2

## Dealing with controllable stressors

It often feels as though you cannot change something, but there is often a lot you **can** do to change a situation. The important part is figuring out what you can and cannot change. Some ways in which you can change your situation would be:

- Time management
- Learning to be assertive
- Stop procrastinating

3

## Dealing with uncontrollable stressors

If you cannot change the situation, such as the fact that you **HAVE** to write exams, you will need to change how you **REACT** toward it. The fact that some people are afraid of lightning while others love it, just shows how it is **NOT** the situation itself that causes anxiety, but the way we respond to it. The section on "hurtful thinking" will go into more depth on this subject.

“

*I will breathe.*

*I will think of solutions.*

*I will not let my worry  
control me.*

*I will not let my stress level  
break me.*

*I will simply breathe and it will be  
okay because I don't quit.*

Shayne McClendon

”





#### 4 Make time for daily relaxation

Yes, time is limited, but students who find a balance between their studies and relaxation are often the ones who are able to cope better with stress. Also remember that relaxation activities don't have to cost money.

#### 6 Finding meaning

It is easy to forget why you decided to study when you get caught up in all the demands of university. Remembering why you are doing this will remind you why it is worth it. Keep your end goal or dreams in mind when it all just feels too much.

#### 5 Physical & lifestyle strategies

This aspect of coping with stress is often underestimated or forgotten. Our bodies are connected to our emotional wellbeing and we cannot emphasise the importance of taking care of your health enough. When we are in good physical health we are able to cope with stress better.

Did you know?



*The benefits of breathing: When we become anxious, we often forget to breathe properly. When we pause to take a couple of slow, deep breaths, we can feel the immediate relaxing benefits. Take a moment to practise mindful breathing.*

# STRESS MANAGEMENT STEPS:

## STEP 1

How do you know you are stressed?  
What are your "warning signs"?

Physical

Emotional

Cognitive

Other



## STEP 2

What are you stressed about? List it below

## STEP 3

Divide the above into two areas:

Controllable

Uncontrollable

## STEP 4



Examples of solutions:  
Time management,  
Assertiveness



Examples of solutions:  
Acceptance / Letting  
go / Reframing

Now come up with solutions for the above:



# RESOURCES



## WEBSITES

[www.helpguide.org](http://www.helpguide.org)

## APPS

Breathe2Relax

Pacifica

GPS for the Soul

Happify

Personal Zen

Finding Optimism

Calm

## CONTACT US AT:

+27 51 401 2853 (BFN)

+27 58 718 5032 (QQ)

+27 51 505 1298 (SOUTH)

[scd@ufs.ac.za](mailto:scd@ufs.ac.za)

[scdqq@ufs.ac.za](mailto:scdqq@ufs.ac.za)

[scdsouth@ufs.ac.za](mailto:scdsouth@ufs.ac.za)

## BOOKS

"The Anxiety and Phobia Workbook" by E.J Bourne

"Calm" by Michael Acton Smith

"The 10 Best-Ever Anxiety Management Techniques" by  
Margaret Wehrenberg

"Stress Management for Dummies" by Alan Elkin