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# MOSAIC MENTAL HEALTH TIPS

THE OFFICIAL EAP NEWSLETTER FROM MOSAIC COUNSELING

## APRIL IS STRESS AWARENESS MONTH THREE TIPS TO MANAGE STRESS

BY THE AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION  
[HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/2SHR5Z7Z](https://tinyurl.com/2SHR5Z7Z)

**We all have stress** – at work, at home and on the road. Sometimes we can feel especially stressed because of a bad interaction with someone, too much work or everyday hassles like getting stuck in traffic.

Chronic stress can keep you from feeling and performing your best – mentally, physically and emotionally. But no one's life is completely stress-free. It's important to know how to manage the stress in your life. These three simple techniques will help you deal with stress.

### 1. POSITIVE SELF-TALK

According to Peter Walschburger, Professor Emeritus of Biopsychology at the Freie Universität Berlin, "Human beings are programmed to rest when it's dark, and to be active and in high spirits when it's light". He further explains that humans "react massively to light". That is why conscious experience and human behavior change radically on fine spring days.

Now that it's getting warmer, the layers of clothing start to come off, and we can start doing outdoor activities once again. Indeed, the feeling of warm sun on our skin makes us feel generally upbeat. So, we can rely on spring to make us feel energized, without having to rely too much on caffeine.

### Negative to Positive

- Instead of saying, "I feel helpless and alone," say, "I can reach out and get help if I need it."
- Instead of saying, "I can't believe I screwed up," say, "I'm human, and we all make mistakes. I can fix it."
- Instead of saying, "I can't do this," say, "I'll do the best I can. I've got this."
- Instead of saying, "I hate it when this happens," say, "I know how to deal with this – I've done it before."



## 2. TOP 10 EMERGENCY STRESS-STOPPERS

Emergency stress-stoppers are actions to help you defuse stress in the moment. You may need different stress-stoppers for different situations, and sometimes it helps to combine them.

### Here are some emergency stress relievers:

1. Count to 10 before you speak or react.
2. Take a few slow, deep breaths until you feel your body unclench a bit.
3. Go for a walk, even if it's just to the restroom and back. It can give you a chance to think things through.
4. Try a quick meditation or prayer to get some perspective.
5. If it's not urgent, sleep on it and respond tomorrow. This works especially well for stressful emails and social media trolls.
6. Walk away from the situation for a while, and handle it later once things have calmed down.
7. Break down big problems into smaller parts. Take one step at a time.
8. Turn on some chill music or an inspirational podcast to help you deal with road rage.
9. Take a break to pet the dog, hug a loved one or do something to help someone else.
10. Work out or do something active. Exercise is a great antidote for stress.



## 3. STRESS-BUSTING ACTIVITIES

Doing things you enjoy is a natural way to relieve stress and find your happy place. Even when you're down, you may find pleasure in simple things like going for a walk, catching up with a friend or reading a good book.

When stress makes you feel bad, do something that makes you feel good – even if only for 10 or 15 minutes.

### Some of these daily stress-relieving activities may work for you:

- Play with your kids or pets – outdoors, if possible.
- Take a walk in nature.
- Meditate or practice yoga.
- Work in the garden or do a home improvement project.
- Go for a walk, run or bike ride to clear your head.
- Read a book, short story or magazine.
- Meet a friend for coffee or a meal.

The key is to find your groove and make it a practice. You'll be amazed at how quickly you may start to feel better once you disrupt the cycle of stress. If you feel like talking to a professional about your stress, using your Employee Assistance Program benefits to be connected with a specialized therapist may be just what you need. Call Mosaic Counseling at 616-842-9160 to start the process. 