

# **NO LiMiTS**

**Helping Young People  
Help Themselves**

## **MANAGING STRESS**

**Information and tips to help if you are  
feeling stressed and under pressure**



# What is stress?



Stress is a natural response to feeling under pressure or feeling overwhelmed. Everyone feels stressed from time to time and that's okay. We will all come across stressful situations in our lives. They can't be avoided, but it's how we deal with those events and the feelings we get that have the lasting impact.

It's easy to bottle up stress, whether that's because you don't recognise it, or don't feel you have anyone to talk to about it, but keeping it all inside you can build it up and make it worse.

## Burnout

Burnout is not the same as stress, but it is related. It's when people have been stressed or very busy for longer than their body can physically or mentally take. It can lead to you feeling run down and mentally drained, and even getting ill. If you feel you are getting burnt out, it's important that you tell someone at your work, school or college so you can get support.

# What does stress feel like?

Signs of stress will be different for everyone and there are lots of different things that can happen - physical and mental - but some common signs include:

- Feeling like you can't concentrate or you have brainfog
- Feeling like your body is tense and tight
- Headaches
- Tiredness, from general low energy or lack of sleep
- Feeling on edge or angry
- Anxiety
- Low mood
- Feeling a sense of dread
- Feeling sick, fainting and vomiting
- Sweating

# What can cause stress?

Stress may come about because of high pressure situations, or times when you feel uncomfortable or not in control. There are lots of causes, but here are some common ones:

## Education and exams

Education, whether that's school, college or university can be a lot of work, especially when it comes to exam period. If you're struggling with exam stress, check out our separate resource:

[nolimitshelp.org.uk/resource/exam-stress](https://nolimitshelp.org.uk/resource/exam-stress)



## Work

People often feel a lot of pressure around work, whether that's because of things happening in their job, like having big responsibilities or issues to deal with, or if they are feeling pressure to find a job. Many people say that a job interview is one of the most stressful things they have done.



## Other life situations

Other events that you have to deal with in life, like housing, money and relationships can cause you a lot of stress if you don't feel in control or are going through changes, for example, if you don't have a permanent place to live, if you are in debt, and if you are going through a break up.



## Current events

People can get stressed about things going on in the world and what the future will look like. These can be things like national or global economic situations, the environment, conflict and wars.



## Other mental health issues

Stress is one of a number of signs and symptoms of other mental health issues like anxiety and depression. For example, if you struggle with anxiety, stress may be one of your body's responses to situation that make you feel anxious.



# What can I do if I feel stressed?

## Talk to someone you trust

Talking to someone you trust about feeling stressed can help to lift the weight off your shoulders. If you choose someone who you think will understand, they might be able to help you work out what is causing you to feel stressed and how you can begin to take control of the situation.



## Accept and acknowledge your stress

Everyone will feel stressed at some point and the reason for it will be different for everyone, but it's always okay to feel that way and you should try not to be unkind to yourself about it.

Some people might feel stressed, then feel stressed about feeling stressed, which just makes things worse. Accepting that you feel that way and working with it is the first step to solving the issue you have.

## Try to work out what exactly is making you feel stressed

This might be really obvious for some people - it might be one big thing that they need to overcome - but for others, it might be a few little things that are building up.



If you aren't sure what is triggering it, try to list all the possible things that it could be, like different situations at school or work, or different life events. Work out how you feel about each thing and what you would have to do to start to feel in control of each situation, like who you need to talk to, or what you need to do.



## Fresh air can help

Taking a walk to get some fresh air can help you let off steam and think clearer. It doesn't have to be a slow, relaxing walk, you might find going for a fast, powerful walk, run, or playing sport gets rid of some energy built up from stress.

### Activities inside

If stress is taking over and you need to escape, doing simple self-care activities like reading a book or watching a film can help you switch off from the world. Trying something like mindfulness colouring or meditation might help soothe your mind.



Cleansing can also help you to have a bit of a mental reset. Taking a bath or shower, or even just washing your face might help you to feel refreshed and ready to go again.



### Plan for the future

When you get through your stressful situation, you'll be better equipped to deal with the next one. Think about what triggers stress for you and make a plan for what you will do if you feel stressed in the future - who you're going to talk to, what actions you will take to gain control and so on.

## How can I help someone who is feeling stressed?

### Talk through their stresses with them

If you think someone is stressed, ask them if there is anything you can help with but don't pressure them to say more than they're comfortable with.



If someone tells you they're stressed and they know what's making them feel that way, work through the situation with them and how they can sort it out and feel on top of it. If they don't know what's making them stressed, see if you can work out together what it is and what actions they could take.



### Reassure them that their feelings are valid

They may feel embarrassed or silly for feeling stressed, like they shouldn't be getting so worked up, but their feelings are completely normal. Telling them that it's okay to feel that way may help them to start taking action.

### Work out their triggers with them

If you have talked to them about what's making them stressed, you could then help them to understand and work out what sort of situations and events trigger stress for them. It may not be obvious at first, but if you identify anything, you can help them start to make a plan for how they can control the situation next time, like who they can talk to and what they can do to reduce stress. Helping them to recognise their signs of stress can be helpful, too.



### Check in on them

Regular contact means that they have someone to share how they're feeling with and asking them how they are tells them that you're there for them. You might also want to ask if there's anything you can do to help them feel less stressed.

### Help them to relax or have a change of scenery

What might help them is to just get out of their situation for a bit. You could see if they want to go for a walk, get some food, go see other friends or watch a film or play games together. Having a distraction for a little while might give them more energy to face what's making them stressed and it might give them an opportunity to talk about it as well.



### Support them to get further help

If you think they need more support, try and help them to reach out for further help from a professional, like their GP or a No Limits worker. Helping them with practical things like making contact or booking appointments can be a big help.

## I want to find out more



**Mind**

[mind.org.uk/information-support/  
types-of-mental-health-problems/  
stress](https://mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/stress)



**The Children's Society**  
[childrenssociety.org.uk/  
information/young-people/well-  
being/resources/stress](https://childrenssociety.org.uk/information/young-people/well-being/resources/stress)



**NHS Better Health**

[nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/  
mental-health-issues/stress](https://nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-health-issues/stress)



**CALM**

[thecalmzone.net/search?q=stress](https://thecalmzone.net/search?q=stress)

## Other organisations

If you want to talk to No Limits, our information is on the back, but you can also contact these organisations for support.

All support is available 24/7, 365 days a year.

### **Papyrus**

Phone service for people under 35 experiencing suicidal thoughts. Call the Hopeline on 0800 068 4141.

### **Samaritans**

Phone line on **116 123**. This is a listening service and they won't offer you advice or information.

### **Shout**

Anonymous text service for people experiencing a mental health crisis. Text 'HANTS' to 85258.

# Want to talk to No Limits?

We offer free, confidential information, advice and support to young people under 26 in Southampton, Hampshire, Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight.

## Advice Centre

Open six days a week, come down and talk to a trained youth worker about any issue you have, without needing to make an appointment.

### Address

13 High Street  
Southampton, SO14 2DF

### Opening times

Mon 10am-5pm | Tue 10am-5pm  
Wed 1:30pm-8pm | Thu 10am-8pm  
Fri 10am-5pm | Sat 10am-1:30pm



Advice Centre

[nolimitshelp.org.uk/advice-and-wellbeing-hub/advice-centre](https://nolimitshelp.org.uk/advice-and-wellbeing-hub/advice-centre)

## Mental Health Support

We offer a broad range of mental health and wellbeing support, covering our whole area.

### Support includes:

- Counselling
- One-to-one or group work with a youth wellbeing practitioner
- Three out-of-hours Safe Havens across our area
- Mental health transition support for 16-25 year olds
- Social prescribing



Mental Health Support  
[nolimitshelp.org.uk/mental-health-and-wellbeing](https://nolimitshelp.org.uk/mental-health-and-wellbeing)

## Find out more

[nolimitshelp.org.uk](https://nolimitshelp.org.uk) | 02380 224 224 | [enquiries@nolimitshelp.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@nolimitshelp.org.uk)