



😓 Stress Management Guide for Young Adults

Because stress is real—but so is your ability to handle it

🧠 What Stress Looks Like

Stress isn't just feeling "busy" or "overwhelmed." It can show up as:

- Headaches, stomachaches, or fatigue
- Irritability or emotional outbursts
- Trouble sleeping or concentrating
- Avoiding tasks or people
- Feeling stuck, anxious, or "off"

💡 *Reminder:* Stress is a signal—not a failure. It means something needs attention.

🔧 Coping Strategies That Actually Help

🧘 Calm Your Body

- Deep breathing (4 in, 4 hold, 4 out)
- Stretching or yoga
- Progressive muscle relaxation
- Taking a walk or dancing it out

🧠 Calm Your Mind

- Journaling: "What's stressing me out and why?"
- Reframing thoughts: "I'm doing my best, and that's enough"
- Break big tasks into small steps
- Use a planner or checklist to reduce mental clutter

🎨 Calm Your Heart

- Listen to music that matches or shifts your mood
- Talk to someone you trust

- Create something: doodle, write, build, bake
- Practice gratitude: 3 things that went okay today

Stress SOS Plan

When I feel overwhelmed, I will...

- ☐ Pause and breathe
- ☐ Name what I'm feeling
- ☐ Choose one small action
- ☐ Use a calming tool
- ☐ Ask for help if I need it

Tips for Long-Term Stress Management

- Build routines that include rest and joy
- Say "no" when you need to—boundaries are brave
- Fuel your body with sleep, movement, and food
- Celebrate effort, not just results
- Check in with yourself weekly: "What's working? What's not?"

Printable Ideas to Pair With This Guide

- "My Stress SOS Plan" worksheet
- "Mood Tracker" with coping strategy menu
- "Brain Break Bingo"
- "Calm-Down Cards" with visual cues
- "Stress Decoder" scroll: What triggered it, how it felt, what helped

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