



Wellbeing

Stress

Losing Rhythm, Feeling Stressed?

Have you ever done something that pushes you out of your comfort zone? A roller coaster? A presentation to a large number of people? An extreme sport? In these situations, we may find ourselves under stress – not feeling comfortable and even being a little out of control. These experiences activate stress responses that cause the body to release several stress related hormones (e.g., cortisol and adrenaline) into the bloodstream. These hormones intensify our concentration, our ability to react, our heart rate and blood pressure increase, and our memory is sharper. This is the good side of feeling stressed! Stress improves our performance and makes us pay attention to how we are thinking and feeling.

In these [articles on wellbeing](#), we've been seeking to find rhythm and flow that help us flourish. Sometimes this is a real struggle - life can feel like it's spinning out of control. We may feel agitated, sluggish, unhappy, irritable or angry. Maybe we experience some of these things, some of the time, or we're facing some of them now? These are the unhelpful signs of stress and can be debilitating; we can see our horizons shrinking and perhaps lose our perspective. Feeling like this is tough.

The causes of stress are many – including workload, difficult family relationships or tricky friendship issues, ill health, negative news or social media. The crucial thing is trying to identify the thing or things that are making us feel this way and addressing them, seeking and trying to look for solutions. A really close friend can be very helpful with this. Not taking the time to discover what's causing you stress and doing nothing often makes things worse. We can quickly lose our way, sometimes becoming isolated and withdrawn. If any of this is really difficult for you at the moment and you just aren't coping – please make sure you speak to your Line Manager about seeking appropriate help and support.

Managing stress begins by being compassionate to ourselves. This might look like taking regular breaks, making space for exercise and spending some time outdoors. In the longer term, stress can be reduced by paying attention to our workloads and working hours, using our annual leave, building emotional strength through keeping in touch with good friends and family, and looking out for others, and by being hopeful.

The NHS has some good resources to help with this – click on the NHS logo to be taken through to: **10 helpful ways of dealing with stress.**

