

## Top 10 Self Care Strategies

1. **[Develop a plan](#)** – and monitor how you are doing on a regular basis!

You can't always control the circumstances that life throws your way, but you *can* control how well you take care of yourself. Taking proper care of your body, soul and mind can keep you in optimum shape for handling stress.

2. **[Get Enough Sleep](#)** - Sleep is very important for your emotional and physical wellbeing. Lack of sleep can negatively impact your ability to handle stress, be productive, and function properly. Busy schedules and stress can make sleep more elusive.

3. **[Maintain Proper Nutrition](#)** - Many people aren't aware of this, but a poor diet can actually make you more vulnerable to stress! While hectic schedules can make it harder to get proper nutrition, a poor diet is not inevitable!

4. **[Exercise Regularly](#)** - Exercise can be great for you physically and mentally. It provides a stress release and keeps your body healthy. It also helps your body release endorphins, which increase your feelings of overall wellbeing. Read more on the positive effects of exercise, and find resources for getting started with an activity that suits you.

5. **[Maintain Social Support](#)** -Social support can keep you healthier and happier, creating a buffer against stress. Friends can pick you up when you're sad, provide insights when you're confused, and help you have fun when you need to blow off steam.

6. **[Find Hobbies](#)** Having some "down time" is important, and hobbies can provide a nice distraction from stress and help you stay 'in the moment', which is also a great way to relieve tension.

7. **[Keep Your Mind Sharp](#)** If you maintain the attitude that stress is a challenge—rather than a threat, you are better able to handle it. And by keeping your mind sharp, you are more equipped to solve the problems and take on the "challenges" that life presents. Fortunately, games like [The Stress Relief Memory Game](#), [Affirmations Hangman](#) and [The Inspirational Quote Daily Cryptogram](#) can be fun to play, and also provide you the tools to manage stress in your life!

8. **[Have The Right Attitude](#)** -Much of what you experience in life can feel more stressful or less so depending of your point of view. Looking at things from an optimistic frame of mind can not only decrease your stress level, but bring you more success in life. You can even change ingrained [negative thought patterns](#) to more positive ones by using [positive affirmations](#).

9. **[Process Your Emotions](#)** - Keeping your emotions bottled up usually leads to an emotional explosion later on. It's generally healthier to listen to your feelings, process them and try to understand them. Consider them 'messengers' that tell you when something is not right with your world. A great way to process emotions is the act of [journaling](#). When you write about your feelings and potential solutions to your problems, you can reduce stress in your life and even see some [health benefits](#)!

10. **[Maintain a Spiritual Practice](#)** - Research shows that a lifestyle including [religion or spirituality](#) is generally a healthier lifestyle. You can use prayer to enhance your spiritual side, or use [meditation](#) if you don't feel comfortable with prayer. Spiritual practice is deeply personal, and whatever your practice, it should nurture your soul.  
<http://stress.about.com/od/funandgames/tp/games.htm>