

Tips For Better Stress Management

With many restrictions during the COVID pandemic, university life is more stressful than ever. It is, therefore, very important to understand your stress and acquire coping strategies.

Follow the steps below – 1. Become aware of your stress, 2. Your current coping strategies, 3. Your stress level and recommended stress strategies.

1. Become aware of your stress

Stress reactions are manifested in body, mind and behavior. Check your stress level with the assessment in the box below.

Stress Check

How often have you experienced the conditions below in the past month?

	Almost never	Sometimes	Often	Almost always	Total
1. Extremely tired	1	2	3	4	I :
2. Exhausted	1	2	3	4	
3. Weary or listless	1	2	3	4	
4. Feel tense	1	2	3	4	II :
5. Worried or insecure	1	2	3	4	
6. Feel restless	1	2	3	4	
7. Feel depressed	1	2	3	4	III :
8. Doing anything is a hassle	1	2	3	4	
9. Unable to concentrate	1	2	3	4	

*Excerpt from “The Brief Job Stress Questionnaire English version” recommended by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.

https://www.mhlw.go.jp/bunya/roudoukijun/anzenisei12/dl/stress-check_e.pdf

Tally the numbers :

- ◇ I . . . Level of “Fatigue” – if your total is 12, seek care!
- ◇ II . . . Level of “Anxiety” – if your total is 11 or over, seek care!
- ◇ III . . . Level of “Depression” – if your total is 10 or over, seek care!

2. Stress Coping Strategies

How are you coping with stress? The more coping strategies that you have, the more resistant you are to stress.

Let's check the strategies that you are using.

Stress Coping Checklist

What do you do when you are stressed, e.g. when things don't go well, you are feeling down, or pressured?

	Almost never	Sometime s	Often	Almost always	Total
1. Talk to your friend or someone close	1	2	3	4	A:
2. Consult someone	1	2	3	4	
3. Think of other solutions	1	2	3	4	B:
4. Try another way to solve	1	2	3	4	
5. Focus on what you have done	1	2	3	4	C:
6. Try to think that you've learned from your mistakes.	1	2	3	4	
7. Relax (Take a bath, lie down)	1	2	3	4	D:
8. Do something you like	1	2	3	4	
9. Try to act positive, not showing your real feelings	1	2	3	4	E:
10. Try to forget	1	2	3	4	
11. Binge eating/drinking	1	2	3	4	F:
12. Break things / act violently	1	2	3	4	

Tally the numbers:

A: Add 1 & 2 _____ B: Add 3 & 4 _____ C: Add 5 & 6 _____
 D: Add 7 & 8 _____ E: Add 9 & 10 _____ F: Add 11 & 12 _____

The largest number reflects the most common strategies that you use:

A: Social support / Consulting	The more strategies of A-D that you
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B: Problem solving	have, the better you handle your stress. There are some ways to cope with your stress described below.
C: Reevaluating cognition	
D: Relaxation / Activation	
E: Oppression / Denial	Too much of it may cause physical/mental distress
F: Destructive stress relief	Find strategies that you don't regret or harm anyone/anything.

The followings are some of the ways to cope with your stress. Try any that fit your circumstance or your style!

- Getting rid of the stressor – There are situations where this is not possible.
- Behavioral activation: releasing stress by engaging in healthy activities
Ex: chat with friends, sing, exercise
- Relaxation: Calm your nervous system
Ex: sleep, take a bath, do a breathing technique, drink herb tea



3. Your stress levels and coping strategies

What follows are suggested coping strategies organized by current stress reactions from stress check.

◇If your highest score is "Fatigue," relaxation and resting (D) are recommended. You can find relaxation techniques on the "Mental Health Tips" on the Student Support Room - <http://www.ritsumei.ac.jp/ssr/en/kokoro/>

Also, you can join weekly online "Hokkori Relaxation Time" by the Student Support Room to practice the relaxation techniques. <http://www.ritsumei.ac.jp/ssr/en/event/>

◇If your highest score is "Anxiety" or "Depression," social support/consulting(A), problem-solving(B), reevaluating cognition(C) are recommended.

It is not easy to work through this on your own, especially, problem-solving and reevaluating your cognition. There are various types of support available for students.

Please refer to pages 35-41 for the student support network on campus:

<http://www.ritsumei.ac.jp/file.jsp?id=493008>

4. Tell us about your coping strategies!

Share your coping strategies with us! Fill the form below and send it- the answers will be posted anonymously on the Student Support Room Website. **For security reasons, this form is only accessible within the Ritsumeikan Office system, so please sign in when you access the form.**

<https://forms.office.com/r/Jj659LNbeP>

- * For more information on stress and stress reactions, please refer to “How to cope with stress” on the Student Support Room website -

<http://www.ritsumei.ac.jp/ssr/en/kokoro/article.html?id=33>

- * If you want to understand your own stress better, please click the link below for self-analysis.

<http://www.ritsumei.ac.jp/ssr/en/kokoro/article.html?id=57>