

Managing Stress

Self-help Tips for People Living in the Pacific Islands



**World Health
Organization**

Representative Office
for the South Pacific

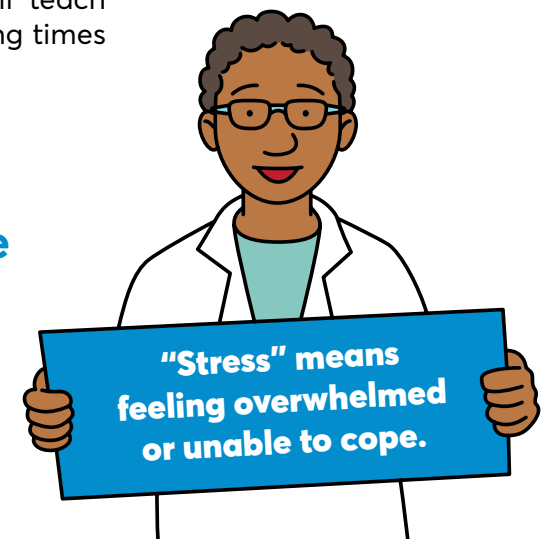
If you are experiencing stress, you are not alone.



Right now there are many people in your community and all around the world who are also experiencing stress. Everyone experiences stress at some point in their lives.

We will help you learn practical skills for dealing with stress. Your journey throughout this booklet will teach you the skills you need during times of STRESS.

**This guide is to
help you manage
STRESS.**



CAUSES OF STRESS

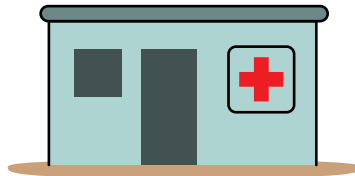
● Family violence



● No school



● Sickness



● Worrying about the future



● Unable to provide for the family



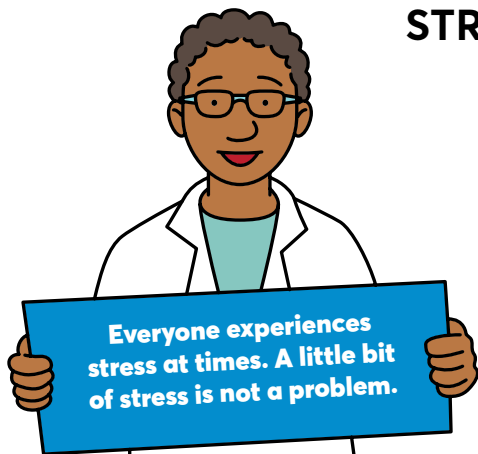
● Family arguments



● Displaced from home

STRESS AFFECTS THE BODY

Many people get unpleasant feelings...

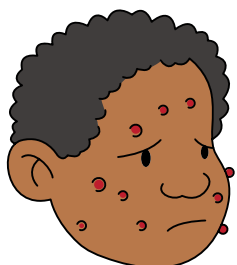


● Neck & shoulder pain

● Back Pain

● Upset stomach

Other people find their body gets sick with skin rashes, infections, illnesses or stomach problems



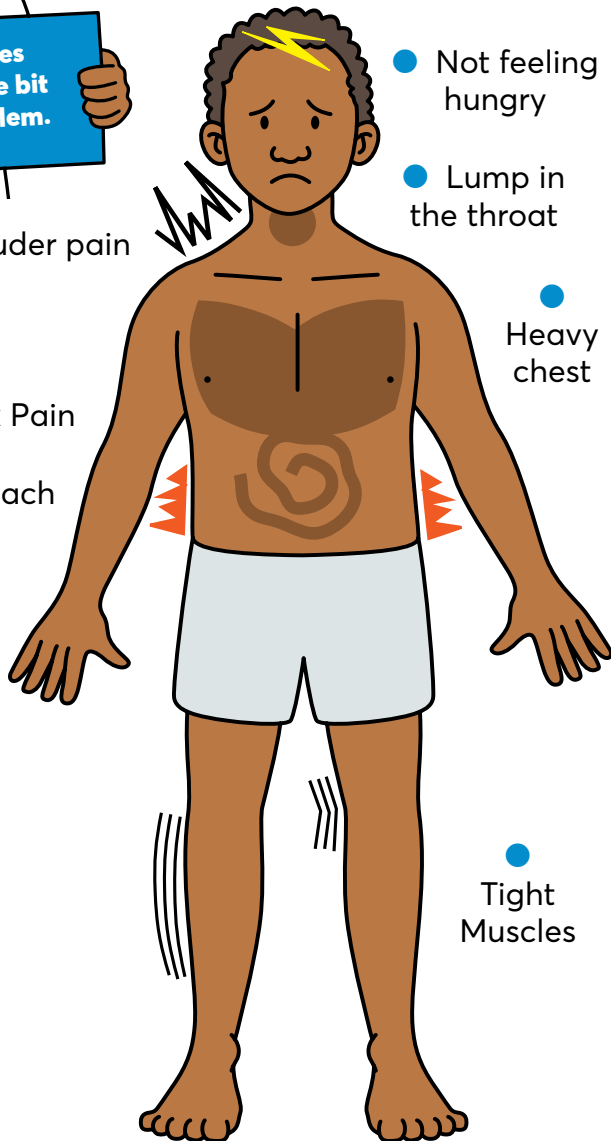
● Headaches

● Not feeling hungry

● Lump in the throat

● Heavy chest

● Tight Muscles



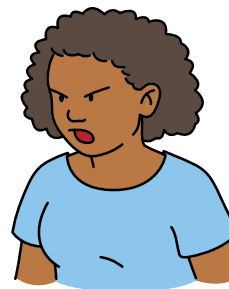
When they are very stressed, many people...



Cannot focus



Cannot sit still



Get angry easily



Cry



Feel sad or guilty



Have changes in appetite



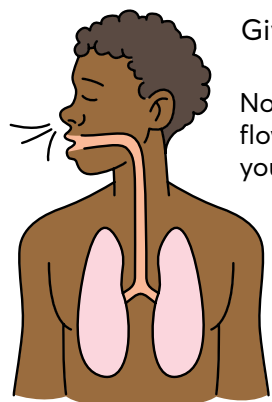
Worry



Have difficulty sleeping

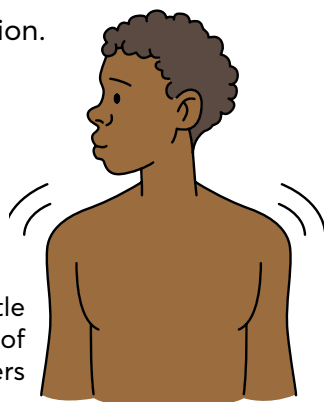
FOUR WAYS TO MANAGE STRESS

1. FOCUS ON YOUR BREATHING

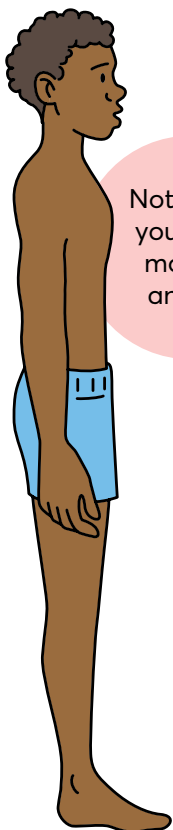


Give it your full attention.

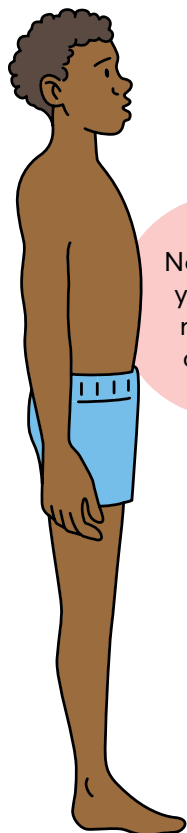
Notice the air as it flows in and out of your nostrils.



Notice the gentle movements of your shoulders



Notice how your chest moves in and out.



Notice how your belly moves in and out.

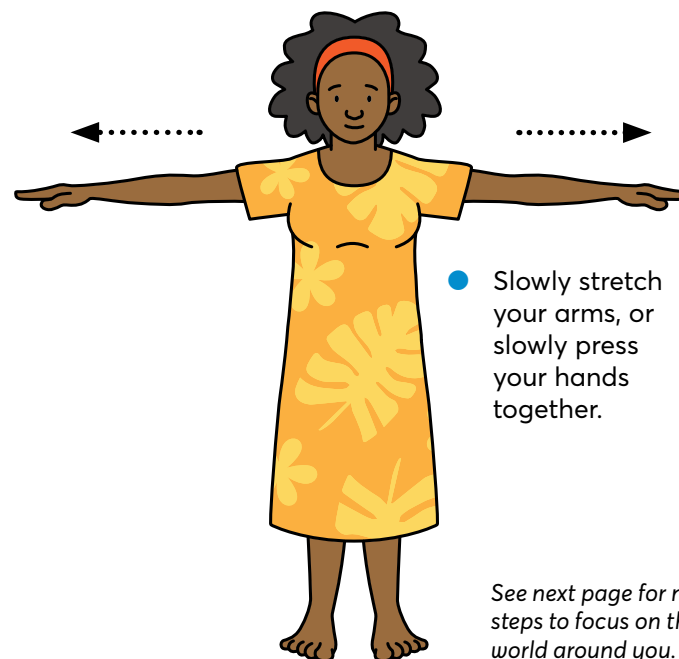
Repeat this 3 times and notice how you feel.

2. FOCUS ON THE WORLD AROUND YOU



- Slow your breathing
- Empty your lungs completely
- Then let them refill as slowly as possible
- Take 3 slow breaths

- Slowly press your feet into the floor



- Slowly stretch your arms, or slowly press your hands together.



See next page for next steps to focus on the world around you.

FOCUS ON THE WORLD AROUND YOU *(continued)*

Notice where you are
and what you are doing.



What are 4 or 5
things you can see?



What are 2 or 3
things you can hear?



What are 2 or 3 things
you can smell?



Touch your knees, the surface
beneath you or an object. Notice
what it feels like under your fingers.
Focussing on the world around you
can help clear your mind.

3. LIVING BY YOUR VALUES

For example, what kind of friend or
family member do you want to be?



- Loving ● Wise
- Patient



- Committed
- Reliable ● Calm
- Responsible
- Caring



- Protective ● Courageous

Values describe the sort of person you want
to be; how you want to treat others and the
world around you.



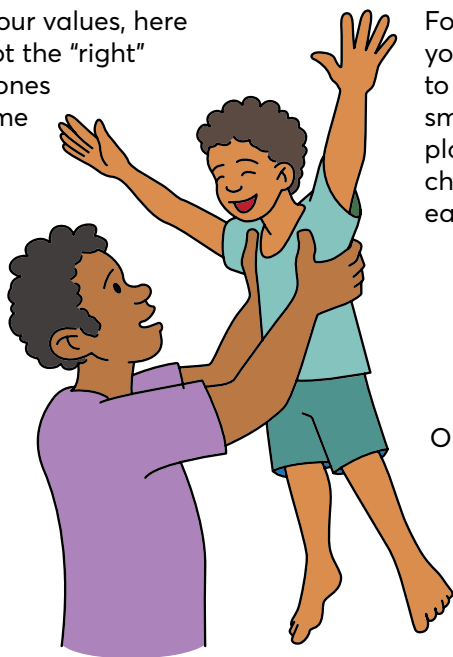
To help you clarify your values, here is a list. These are not the "right" values or the "best" ones - they are simply some common ones.

- To be kind
- To be caring
- To be generous
- To be supportive
- To be helpful
- To be brave
- To be persistent
- To be forgiving
- To be grateful
- To be patient
- To be responsible
- To be protective
- To be disciplined
- To be hardworking
- To be committed
- To be loyal
- To be honourable
- To be respectful
- To be fair & just
- To be ...

Select 3 or 4 of these values that seem more important to you and write them in here:

- To be _____
- To be _____
- To be _____
- To be _____

Choose a value and think of one thing you can do to live towards that value.



For example, suppose you choose to be kind to your child. Then a small step might be to play or read to your child for 10 minutes each day.

Or suppose you choose to be grateful and respectful. Then a small step might be to greet someone you care about warmly and express gratitude.



4. BEING KIND

Being kind to others and yourself can help you feel better.



Everyone needs a friend.
Everyone needs kindness.



We can be kind to ourselves too.

And if you are kind to yourself, you will have more energy and motivation to be kind to others, so everyone benefits.



So think of one thing you can do today to be kind to yourself or others. For example, do something you enjoy, cook a dinner for a friend, or say a kind word to yourself or someone else.

Remember... even the tiniest actions matter.

A giant tree grows from a tiny seed. And even in the hardest or most stressful of times, you can take small ACTIONS to live by your values.



When you act on your values, you will begin to create a more satisfying and fulfilling life.

REMINDERS

This image shows a single page of white paper with horizontal blue lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, providing a guide for writing. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the page.

This guide has been adapted from: Doing what matters in times of stress: an illustrated guide.
Geneva: World Health Organization; 2020. Licence: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO.
<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240003927>



**World Health
Organization**

Representative Office
for the South Pacific