



Managing the Emotional Toll Through a Healthy Self-Identity

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Introduction

A stack of three books is positioned on the right side of the frame, resting on a light-colored wooden surface. The books are slightly out of focus, with the top book having a dark cover and the bottom one a lighter cover. A bright, warm light flare is visible in the upper left quadrant, creating a soft, glowing atmosphere. The overall composition is clean and minimalist.

Outline

- Work relates stress statistics
- Impact of stress on health
- Defining stress in the body
- Identify your stress triggers
- Coping tools
- Self-identity and self-esteem
- Mindset work
- Boundaries

Work-related mental health statistics

- 77% of workers reported described **work-related stress** in 2023
- 35% of people in leadership roles reported work related stress, and 42% felt that **stress was self imposed**
- Entrepreneurs reported 2x the rate of **clinical depression** as compared to the general population
- People who self-report work stress are **3x** as likely to experience addiction issues

Why are support staff so stressed out?

- High levels of pressure and expectation
- Navigating complex situations
- Work related crisis management
- Limited time for self-care
- Interacting with different personalities
- Feeling isolated
- Difficulty asking for help
- Busy schedules

Stress has an impact on health.

Chronic stress can have a profound and lasting impact on physical and mental health.

Untreated stress impacts the immune, digestive, cardiovascular, endocrine systems (+ more).

There is a direct link between stress and chronic pain/medical problems.

Prolonged stress increases likelihood of depression, anxiety, and burnout.

What's the good news?!

- Mental health conditions are treatable
- You can learn to manage your work related & personal stress and show up differently
- Coping tools can and will help
- **Stress is a temporary state.**

Improve your mental health and emotional wellness.

- Understand stress in the body
- Identify your stress triggers
- Coping tools
- Develop a healthy self identity
- Self acceptance
- Soften self-talk
- Create and maintain boundaries
- Challenge self-limiting beliefs
- Get professional help when needed

What is stress?

- **Stress is a body-based alarm system**
- Fight, flight, or freeze
- Our bodies cannot tell the difference between real and perceived threats
- Our state determines our story
- To cope with stress, we need to start by regulating our nervous system

What are your unique stress triggers?

We can identify our stress triggers by thinking about situations that make us feel upset or resentful, paying attention to the physical signs of stress in our bodies, and identifying key emotions when stressed.

How to identify your triggers

- Pay attention
- Body scan
- Keep a stress log
- Check in with yourself

Take a moment:

How do you know when you're stressed?

Coping tools

- Proactive versus reactive coping
- Coping skills layering
 - Using emergency tools when in crisis, followed by additional tools to regulate even further
- **Do differently, not more.**
 - Where are moments in your day where you can cope differently?

Proactive coping tools

- Mindfulness/meditation
- Movement
- Social connection/community
- Deep breathing
- Nourishment/hydration
- Small moments of joy
- Prioritizing sleep and rest
- Morning sunlight
- Therapy or coaching

Reactive coping tools

- Distraction
- Deep breathing with loud sigh
- Somatic shaking
- Heel drops
- Legs up the wall
- Quick movement
- Visual grounding
- Sensory grounding
- Intentional pausing
- A good cry (if possible)

Stress mapping & personal stress plan

Take a moment.

- Jot down 2-3 personal stress triggers
- Identify 1-2 proactive coping tools you're willing to try
- Identify 1-2 reactive coping skills you're willing to try
- Grow your coping toolbox over time

Developing a healthy self-identity

- Self-concept is an ongoing and personal journey. It can change through experiences, thoughts, emotions, & **beliefs about yourself and the world.**
- You can work on your self-identity by:
 - Setting realistic goals
 - Positive (or neutral) affirmations
 - Nurturing healthy relationships
 - Showing up authentically
 - Celebrating your achievements
 - Clarifying your values

Self- acceptance

Accepting ourselves can feel like an ongoing struggle. Often we wonder: **are we doing enough?** Are we worthy of love, belonging, and success? Do we like who we are?

A great way to begin to cultivate self-acceptance is through loving kindness meditation.

Take a moment: Loving kindness meditation.

Quieting your inner critic.

Self-talk shapes how we think, feel, and behave. Typically, harsh and cruel self-talk leads to poor overall health.

Steps to combat your inner critic:

1. Notice it
2. Name it
3. Thank it
4. Challenge it
5. Practice compassion

Take a moment: How would you talk to a friend?

Create and maintain boundaries.

- Setting and maintaining boundaries is **essential** for keeping healthy relationships, managing your time and energy, and promoting health and well-being.
 - Identify your boundaries
 - Communicate to others using “I” statements
 - Be consistent & repetitive
 - Manage guilt & distress

Think of a situation in your life where you'd like to set a boundary

Use the "I" statement script

"I feel _____ when _____ because _____."

"I need _____."

Activity: Boundary Setting

Challenge self-limiting beliefs.

- Bring attention to your daily thoughts
- Identify thoughts/beliefs that are negative, defeating, unhelpful, and limiting
- Reality test your thoughts: **what is the evidence that these thoughts are true, or more likely false?**
- Begin to replace limiting beliefs with more balanced and helpful thoughts

How to ask for help.

You don't have to do this alone. There are professionals who can help you manage stress, create a more balanced self concept, and live a happier, fuller life.

Get connected to assistance:

- Talk to a trusted friend or colleague
- Family support
- Therapy
- Coaching
- Support groups

Additional resources

[Psychology Today](#)

[Headspace](#)

[Calm](#)

[Regulate & Rewire Podcast](#)

[10% Happier Podcast with Dan Harris](#)

[Bloom: Self Help App](#)

The Happiness Trap by Russ Harris

Q & A

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