

Manage **stress** together

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Got stress?

Under normal circumstances, we all experience stress. In 2020. . .

We've never seen a year like this one. The pandemic. A divided country. An election.

Will the pandemic ever end? If there's a vaccine, will people take it? Will our division ever heal?

Questions. Questions. Questions.

When we don't have ready answers, we experience s-t-r-e-s-s.

There's hope

Resilience is the ability to "bounce back". We can build resilience as individuals and in our relationships.

Now is the time to develop lifestyle practices that will ensure that we come out on the other side of these uncertain times stronger, happier, and closer to our partner.

How we manage our stress is up to us. . . and we have choices.

We can choose to go it alone. Or we can increase our consumption of alcohol. Or we can reach out to our partner for encouragement and support.

Our partner is our greatest resource in managing our stress.



Tips for managing stress

Tip 1: Cultivate a positive outlook on life. Self-fulfilling prophesy is a real thing.

Tip 2: Accept that there are things you cannot control. Choose to control the things you can.

Tip 3: Share with your partner what you need and want, what's helpful and not helpful. Strengthen your teamwork to conquer your stress.

Tip 4: Get enough sleep, exercise, and "me" time. Eat healthy. Drink lots of water.

Tip 5: Learn and practice relaxation techniques like deep breathing, yoga, or tai-chi.

Tip 6: Even while socially distancing, find ways to reach out and spend time with people you enjoy. Try FaceTime, Zoom or Google Hangouts.



Our partner's stress

- The goal is not to take our partner's stress away or go into codependent caretaking mode. That's not our job.
- Neither is it to make our partner's stress worse by injecting more stress – our stress – into their system.
- Our goal is to provide a safe place where our partner can put down burdens, care for wounds, get fresh bearings, and refuel for the next leg of the journey.
- Our goal is to communicate, with and without words, "You are not alone. I love you. I care. I believe in you. I'm with you all the way."

Couple conversation

Reflect on the following questions, then share your self-awareness with your partner.

1. What are our sources of stress?
2. How are we dealing with this stress?
3. What do I want for you, for me, and for us in how we manage our relational stress?
4. How do we each react/respond to our partner's stress? What's helpful/not helpfu?
5. What am I willing to do to better manage my own stress?

What now?

If you follow the tips in this e-book, you'll not only have a better handle on what's causing your personal and relational stress and how it's affecting you; you'll also have a plan of action to get it under control.

You'll have put yourselves in the driver's seat to steer your life and relationship where you want them to go. In the days, weeks, and months ahead, you'll be following through on your intentions.

Hopefully, you'll begin seeing the benefits of the changes you make. You'll have opportunities to update your commitments. After all, life is a moving target; so make sure you treat your stress management game plan as a living document.

And remember to celebrate! We encourage you to mark your growth in this area by doing something special to savor your progress and affirm your relationship. Whether this means breaking out a bottle of bubbly or a bag of Oreos, take time to delight in the fact that you've gotten a handle on stress!



Want more?

Check out the [Close Companions Online Relationship Academy](#) for a self-paced online course on [Managing Stress Together](#). Your time. Your place. 24/7.



We'd love to hear from you. . .

Reach out and we'll reach back - promise.

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