

**Tips for managing relationship stress**

As much as we care about someone and enjoy spending time with them, whoever they are and whatever they mean to you, relationships can be stressful. Sometimes it’s as simple as something your pal or colleague did or didn’t say or do. Sometimes it’s external forces or circumstances beyond your control, like work, money, children, news events, etc., making you feel out of sorts.

Here are 8 ways to manage relationship stress:

1. **Start with you.** People who have healthy self-esteem feel good about themselves and navigate tough times more easily. Learn to spot triggers that make you feel down or doubt yourself, and actively foster positivity in your thoughts and self-talk to foster a healthy relationship with yourself.
2. **Consider the source.** Sometimes we lash out at those closest to us when we’re feeling stressed out by things that have nothing to do with them. It could be as simple as feeling hungry, tired or overscheduled – all of which you can take steps to change.
3. **Check your conflict style.** Do you tend to face conflict head-on, or avoid it or something else? By understanding your style, you can be better prepared to adjust based on the situational needs – whether that means actively listening, speaking up or reaching out.
4. **Talk in person.** Stop yourself from firing off an angry or hurt-filled text or email. Arrange a time to talk in person or over video, so you can calm down, gather your thoughts and be respectful.
5. **Give space.** Depending on how strained the relationship is, if you are invested in making a go of it, remind yourself that change takes time. Give yourself and the other person the time it may take to heal and adopt new behaviors.
6. **Focus on each other.** Sometimes we get so wrapped up in the day-to-day of life, we forget to take time to enjoy a loved one’s company. Schedule time to get together to do something you both enjoy so you can re-engage.
7. **Set boundaries.** Some relationship conflicts cannot be solved or resolved. Don’t compromise your own well-being trying to make something work that simply doesn’t. Give yourself permission to leave relationships that do not serve you well.
8. **Get help**. Talk to a friend, family member or professional who can help support you.

**Sources**

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