

Egor Kuzmin  
*Stress Relief*

How to Manage Stress in Everyday Life, Prevent Depression  
and Improve Mental Health



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**Stress Relief. How to Manage Stress  
in Everyday Life, Prevent Depression  
and Improve Mental Health**

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Almost daily we hear people use the word stress, so it seems that almost everyone knows what this phenomenon represents and how to recognize it, not not how to prevent or mitigate its harmful consequences. Stress is a set of emotional, physical, physiological and behavioral responses that occur when an event is thought to be hazardous or disturbing, and beyond our capacity to cope with. Of course, we should not forget that stress is essentially a very positive part of human nature.

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# **Stress Relief**

## **How to Manage Stress in Everyday Life, Prevent Depression and Improve Mental Health**

### **Egor Kuzmin**

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## Introduction

Almost daily we hear people use the word *stress*, so it seems that almost everyone knows what this phenomenon represents and how to recognize it, not not how to prevent or mitigate its harmful consequences.

People often say that they are under stress, where the term *stress* includes some external factors that they cannot possibly influence. They complain of stress at work, at school, at home, at the store, in traffic jams, but at the same time feel powerless to do anything about it.

However, it is important to know that stress is something that comes from within us. It is a subjective response to a person's experiences according to her experience and her own assessment of the situation.

Stress is a set of emotional, physical, physiological and behavioral responses that occur when an event is thought to be hazardous or disturbing, and beyond our capacity to cope with. Of course, we should not forget that stress is essentially a very positive part of human nature.

This reaction has primarily a protective role in dangerous situations, when the body needs to be ready save itself. We also know the saying, "What doesn't kill us, gives us strength." When we deal with difficulties successfully, it is highly likely we will emerge from the struggle stronger, more experienced and wiser. Therefore, we can talk about stress as a challenge, something that motivates and encourages our personal growth.

However, when the level of stress remains elevated for a long time; when the load is large and our strategy for fighting the problems is not effective, it has a negative impact both on psychological and physical health, capacity, productivity and quality of life in general. It is therefore important to understand the essence of stress, be aware of its sources, assess our own strength, willingness and ability to take action in terms of facing and overcoming its unhealthy consequences, as well as to learn new or improve existing strategies in this fight.

## Chapter 1: Sources of stress

Looking around, most would agree that there are many sources of stress. People daily experience stress in all areas of life, in their family, in communication with friends, acquaintances, in public places, school, college, the workplace... the list goes on and on.

Sources of stress can be found internally or in our environment. Therefore, we will split them into two groups.

The internal sources are those that depend on a single person.

Ambitious people and those who set very high goals and have unrealistic expectations are at greater risk. They fail to adapt to circumstances, i.e. reality. The risk is greatest in those who are prone to perfectionism, but also those who are prone to the compliments of authority, so they cannot set their own limits.

If a person's role, in any area of life, is not entirely clear, and it is not clear what others expect from him, he may have the impression that more needs to be done to resolve the situation. Then the problem of dissatisfaction becomes bigger and bigger.

The problem is deepened if a person does not know how to set priorities, which could lead to too much time spent on unimportant things. The pressure increases if someone does not know how to balance between the different areas of life. For example, if a person's job becomes their main focus, she will become increasingly frustrated, tired, and ineffective.

This problem becomes even more significant if the person is prone to doing everything alone, i.e. does not share her workload with her colleagues, family members, or friends. If there she has no confidence in them, the belief that everything must be done by herself grows. Then she has the impression that the entire responsibility is on her.

Sources of stress, which belong to the group of external (i.e. environmental) may include unfavorable social, financial and work situations.

These sources are closely related to the lack of adequate conditions for life and work. In any case, the probability that a person experiences stress is higher if she is living or working somewhere inadequate; insufficiently heated or too hot, too cramped, or noisy with no chance of relief.

It is also important that the person clearly knows what is her role, her tasks in the organization, what is expected from her, what is her responsibility. If the priority is profit, efficiency, blind loyalty to the company, the organization often forgets about a worker's needs. Natural human needs are difficult to reconcile with sudden changes in the work place, the urgency of intervention, inadequate time for rest, the lack of financial and job guarantees.

Of course, it is necessary to emphasize the importance of interpersonal relationships. It is not healthy if a person is having constant conflicts, suspicion, underestimation and rivalry. It is vital to ensure the person has steady support, trust and a sense of belonging and mutual assistance.

## Chapter 2: Symptoms of stress

None of the aforementioned factors necessarily cause stress. When we are exposed to numerous risk factors, the longer the exposure to these factors, the greater the probability of experiencing stress. The consequences will depend on the damage that stressors may cause and assess whether one can do something about it. This is, furthermore, in line with how people normally react in similar situations, the characteristics of their personality, and what is happening in their environment (the existence of social support, duration of the stressful situation, etc).

We often do not recognize when we are under stress how to prevent the negative effects of stress. Therefore, it is important to know that this is a process that takes place in several stages. It is good to know how to recognize the signs that characterize stress, to be able to react as soon as possible. As we said earlier, the consequences, especially in the later stages, reflect negatively on human functioning in all areas of life. If we ignore these early signs, we will reach the final and most serious stages of stress: burnout.

### **The first indication**

That common ways to cope with stress are not producing the desired effect is the phenomenon of excessive enthusiasm. The person feels full of energy, has the impression that everything can be done, idealizes himself and his environment. This person wants to unrealistically solve all existing problems. A person's environment generally not only does not react in a concerned manner, but actively supports this behavior. This is a worker, spouse, child or neighbor ... "just the kind you wish to have." At the same time, this person ignores his own needs, works very hard, skips periods of rest and activities of joy. The logical question is: how long can this last?



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