



Are you a planner or do you “just let things happen?” There are benefits for each approach. However, when it comes to stress management, it’s best to be prepared and think ahead.

Be Prepared for **STRESS**



Be Prepared

- **Maintain healthy habits.** Eat nutritious foods in appropriate amounts, be physically active regularly, and get lots of sleep – at least nine hours.
- **Participate regularly in activities that you find relaxing.** Build a collection of activities that you find relaxing. Try practicing relaxation techniques, listening to music, taking a walk, working on a special project, writing in a journal, watching movies that make you laugh, reading, spending time outdoors, getting involved in an art project, helping someone else, playing video games, surfing the Internet.
- **Practice setting boundaries** on what you are able and agree to do.
- **Prioritize your time** so you don’t get behind on obligations, like school work or family responsibilities.
- **Build a support system.** Surround yourself with friends and family you can call on to listen and help when you are stressed out. Build strong relationships and keep commitments to family and friends.
- **Know where to get professional help.**
- **Listen to your thoughts, feelings, and your physical reactions.**
Don’t let stress sneak up on you.
- **Work on thinking positively** about challenges and problems. For example:
 - Change is a normal part of life.
 - Challenges are opportunities.
 - Problems are temporary and solvable if you act.
 - Success is possible.
 - I can manage this.
- **Practice solving problems and making decisions.**
- **Practice asking others for help.**
- **Solve problems as they occur.** Avoiding problems can lead to feeling overwhelmed.

Sources:
American Psychological Association’s “Stress in America” Press Room, www.apa.org
Nemours Foundation, www.teenshealth.org • Mayo Clinic, www.mayoclinic.com