

TAKE CARE

We all feel stressed sometimes. Some stress is normal, but too much isn't good for you, so it's important to know how to take care of yourself and manage the stress you feel. Below is a list of self-care strategies you can try to help yourself feel better — calmer, happier, more in control — if you are feeling stressed or overwhelmed:

- ▶ Talk with a parent or another trusted adult about your feelings.
- ▶ Take deep breaths: inhale for three, hold for three, exhale for three, repeat.
- ▶ Play your favorite music and sing along.
- ▶ Write in a journal or draw/sketch.
- ▶ Close your eyes and imagine visiting your favorite place.
- ▶ Call or text a friend.
- ▶ Make a plan or schedule for completing a school project or studying for a test.
- ▶ Go for a walk, exercise, or dance.
- ▶ Laugh — watch a funny video, tell jokes, look at silly memes or GIFs.
- ▶ Do a "body scan" where you slowly relax from your head to your toes.
- ▶ Get enough sleep and eat healthy foods.

Part 1: Use this chart to list other healthy things you do that help when you are in a stressful situation. Then explain how each self-care strategy helps you feel better.

MY SELF-CARE STRATEGY	HOW IT HELPS ME FEEL BETTER
1.	
2.	

Part 2: Now, practice using self-care strategies with the situations described below. These are all situations that might be stressful or upsetting to you or a friend. For each one, discuss these questions with your group:

- ▶ *What feelings might each person be having, and why?*
 - ▶ *Which trusted adult could the person talk to about the situation?*
 - ▶ *What are some things the person could do to help cope with their feelings?*
1. You are not doing too well in history class and have a big test coming up. You need to get a good grade to pass the class.
 2. You have just gotten into a fight with a friend and they're really mad at you. You want to work it out, but don't know how to talk to them about it.
 3. Your friend's mom lost her job and your friend is worried about her family. Your friend seems much more anxious than usual.
 4. Your friend takes a prescribed medication for depression. He does not like to talk about it. Some classmates found out and have been teasing him.

When you're done, role-play each scenario. Assign the characters in each situation to the people in your group. Then, volunteer to show your class the self-care strategies you came up with.



Remember: If you have a friend who is struggling with feelings, show empathy and let them know you're there if they want to talk. You can also reach out to a trusted adult to talk about how you can help your friend.

