

# STRESS AND BURNOUT

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Stress and burnout affects all of us to a greater or lesser degree. How we react to these difficult situations in life determines how long they will last and how to avoid (or minimize) them in the future.

## I. Stress vs. Burnout

A. *Stress*: state of mental or emotional strain or tension resulting from adverse or very demanding circumstances

- Possible stressors: exams, juries, relationships, jobs, deadlines, lack of down-time, roommates, etc.

B. *Burnout*: physical or mental collapse caused by overwork or stress

- Burnout Warning Signs

- Lack of care or concern about your responsibilities
- Constant exhaustion
- Lack of motivation to do *anything*
- Low mood swings
- Change in eating and/or sleeping habits
- Feeling of loss of control
- Irritability
- Consistently overwhelmed

II. Remember that life is 10% of what happens to you and 90% of how you react to it. Being proactive in your approach gives you the greatest chance of avoiding/minimizing stress and burnout

A. Stay healthy

1. Get plenty of rest
2. Eat healthy foods (and portions)
3. Develop a manageable exercise plan
4. If you get sick, see a doctor and fully recover before resuming activities

B. Set appropriate boundaries

1. Learn to say “No” to things that overextend you
2. Take a daily break from technology; turn off phone, computer, and TV

C. Make lists, get organized

1. Schedule your day (including fun/social activities) to eliminate wasted time
2. Make an “escape list” of short activities (unrelated to school or work) and interject these periodically into your day
3. Set reasonable, daily goals no matter how small or insignificant. Then acknowledge your accomplishments and reward yourself
4. Make a list of your stressors so you can prepare yourself for them in advance
5. List things that you enjoy about every day/week to look forward to them
6. Making a to-do list is a good way to take things off your mind, prioritize them, and then focus on one task at a time until it is completed

D. Incorporate humor into your day. Laugh and smile more.

E. Stop making excuses

F. Change your morning ritual to wake up earlier and take your time getting ready so that you are not rushed

G. Find a hobby

H. Ask for help (friend, family, mentor, or professional)