



## 1. Organise your time

**Try to prioritise** - review your to-do list and deadlines each week to help reduce last-minute stress. Don't get overwhelmed by too many tasks. Decide what needs doing now and what can wait. Think about which tasks will make the biggest difference and try to concentrate on one at a time. If you're feeling very stressed now pick one task and focus on that.

**Divide projects up** - break them up into smaller, more manageable chunks. Doing everything at once can increase levels of stress and frustration when things don't get done. Put time in your diary for important tasks and deadlines so they don't get forgotten.

**Keep a structure to your day** - keeping to a routine can really help if you're coping with stress; get up and go to bed at the same times and try to get out and do your usual leisure activities.

Find more ways to organise your time at work on our website: [www.mindwell-leeds.org.uk/work-issues](http://www.mindwell-leeds.org.uk/work-issues)



## 2. Take control

**Keep your desk tidy** - a calm working space where you can find your papers can help reduce unnecessary stress.

**Manage your workload** - start to plan projects early so that you can set deadlines for yourself and flag any problems to your manager.

**Plan for the unexpected** - create some slack in your workload each day so you can react to unexpected demands and tasks that take longer than expected.



## 3. Take proper breaks

**Take a lunch break** - you'll get more done in the afternoon. Go for a walk in the fresh air. Being mindful of what's happening around you, rather than thinking about work, will help you return to your desk feeling refreshed and more relaxed.

**Take your holidays** - working under pressure for months without stopping can allow stress to build up and affect how you're feeling and behaving.

**Pace yourself** - working long hours and taking work home will increase tiredness, reduce your resilience and mean less time for relaxation and exercise. Switch off mobile phone alerts from work emails outside of work hours.



## 4. Reduce the pressure

**Are your managers expecting too much of you?** - if you're struggling, or not clear about your role, try to talk this through with your manager. If you're given unrealistic targets at work - try to address this. Explain what is realistic and why and suggest an alternative solution instead.

**Are you expecting too much of yourself?** - do you put extra pressure on yourself to get everything finished? Does everything you do have to be perfect? Do you do everything at high speed? Do you usually do too many things at once? Learn to be more realistic about what you can achieve. Ask yourself - what can wait, what's important and can anyone else help?

Find more ideas to help with reducing the pressure here: [www.mindwell-leeds.org.uk/stress](http://www.mindwell-leeds.org.uk/stress)



## 5. Get a good night's sleep

Sleep is essential for both our physical and mental health. Most adults need an average of seven to nine hours of sleep. Not getting enough sleep can affect your memory and mental processes like concentration and problem-solving. Getting a good night's sleep recharges you for the day ahead and can help you to feel stronger and better able to cope. **Did you know that checking your laptop or mobile phone before bed-time can disturb your sleep? Try to switch off digital devices at least an hour before bedtime.**

Find more ideas and tips for sleeping better here: [www.mindwell-leeds.org.uk/sleep](http://www.mindwell-leeds.org.uk/sleep)



## 6. Take time to relax

**Practise relaxation and breathing techniques every day** - breathing techniques such as diaphragmatic breathing can help you feel calmer and help combat the physical and emotional effects of stress. Watch a video at [www.mindwell-leeds.org.uk/relaxation-breathing](http://www.mindwell-leeds.org.uk/relaxation-breathing)

**Try different ways to relax** such as yoga, aromatherapy or Mindfulness.

**Slow down** - talk, walk, eat more slowly, relax your shoulders and breath more naturally.

**Try something new** - sometimes life can get dull and be full of routines and jobs that need doing. Doing something different can help you switch off and relax. Give yourself a challenge - try a new activity, learn something new or start a new hobby.

Take a look at the MindWell website for more ideas to help you relax: [www.mindwell-leeds.org.uk/relax](http://www.mindwell-leeds.org.uk/relax)



## 7. Watch what you eat and drink

**Eat well** - eat a well-balanced diet with lots of fresh vegetables. Eat your lunch away from your desk and remember to chew it slowly. Try to plan, if you know you won't be home until late - this will stop you buying a take-away on your way home.

**Avoid unhealthy snacks** - try to avoid crisps and sugary snacks/drinks which cause a high, followed by an energy crash. Eat snacks like fruit, nuts or raw vegetables to keep energy levels steady.

**Cut down on caffeine** - aim to drink no more than two cups of coffee per day. Drinking too much caffeine can produce the same sensations as stress and anxiety. Take some herbal teas to work, instead, and drink lots of water. [www.mindwell-leeds.org.uk/caffeine](http://www.mindwell-leeds.org.uk/caffeine)

**Avoid drinking alcohol** - it's really easy to have a glass or two of wine after a stressful day at work without realising how much you have started to drink each week. Drinking too much alcohol will actually increase your levels of stress, as well as disrupting your sleep and increasing your risks of long-term health problems. [www.mindwell-leeds.org.uk/alcohol](http://www.mindwell-leeds.org.uk/alcohol)

Find more ideas online: [www.mindwell-leeds.org.uk/eat-healthy](http://www.mindwell-leeds.org.uk/eat-healthy)



## 8. Look after your health

**Take regular moderate exercise** - 30 minutes every day can help you feel calmer and boost your wellbeing. Take a stroll at lunchtime or ride your bike to work. Swimming, yoga or dancing are also great ways of exercising. Find something you enjoy.

**Stop smoking** - it's a complete myth that smoking helps you relax. Taking a quick cigarette break when you're feeling stressed will only increase feelings of anxiety and low mood. Quitting smoking can boost your mental health as well as reduce your risks of developing long-term health problems.

On MindWell, you can find more ideas to look after your health here: [www.mindwell-leeds.org.uk/health](http://www.mindwell-leeds.org.uk/health)



## 9. Stay connected

**The support of a good social network is important** - take time to develop your relationships with family, friends and colleagues. Be open with them about how you're feeling.

**Don't keep problems to yourself** - talking things through can relieve some of the pressure and help you feel supported. Whether you're feeling stressed about work, family or money; another person can often see a problem in a different way and suggest things that might help. Try talking to a trusted colleague, your manager, friend, family member or go to [www.mindwell-leeds.org.uk/talk](http://www.mindwell-leeds.org.uk/talk)



## 10. Positive self-talk is important

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**Try to challenge any negative or anxious thoughts** - sometimes having negative thoughts can affect our mood and the way we feel. Talk to yourself kindly and with encouragement. How would a good friend talk to you? Remember positive feedback you've had or ask a friend to share their positive thoughts. Remember using words like 'should', 'must', 'have to' and 'ought to' can put unnecessary pressure on yourself.

**Be positive** - take time to be thankful for the good things.