



## Manage Stress and Build Resilience

Stress is an unavoidable part of life, and while it's not inherently harmful, how we cope with it is crucial. Chronic stress is linked to serious health problems, including heart disease, anxiety, and depression. However, building resilience—the ability to recover from challenges—can help us manage stress better. By strengthening our resilience, we can protect both our mental and physical health and handle stress more effectively.

### Recognizing Stress and Taking Action

The first step to building resilience is recognizing when stress is starting to take a toll on your body and mind. Early signs, such as irritability, headaches, or trouble concentrating, serve as signals that your stress levels are rising. By being aware of these early symptoms, you can take proactive steps to address them before stress becomes overwhelming. Building resilience starts with self-awareness and taking action to counter the negative effects of stress.

### Stress-Relief Techniques and Self-Care

Resilient individuals rely on stress-relief techniques to manage daily stress and build emotional strength. These techniques can include deep breathing, meditation, or physical activity like walking or yoga. Regular physical exercise is especially important, as it helps reduce stress hormones and boosts your mood. In addition, prioritizing self-care through proper nutrition, sleep, and relaxation is essential for resilience. Taking care of your body strengthens your mind, making it easier to navigate life's inevitable stressors.

### Strengthening Social Connections

A reliable support network of family, friends, or colleagues provides emotional comfort and helps you handle stress more effectively. Whether it's a quick chat or leaning on loved ones for advice, social support reduces isolation and strengthens your ability to cope. In today's digital age, staying connected is easier than ever through phone calls, video chats, or social media.

### Reframing Challenges

Resilience also involves how we perceive stress. Resilient people practice "reframing," which means changing the way we view challenges. For example, being stuck in traffic can become an opportunity to enjoy music or a podcast. This mindset shift helps you feel more in control and less overwhelmed. Over time, reframing can be a powerful tool for managing stress more effectively.

Building resilience is crucial for managing stress. By recognizing stress early, practicing self-care, fostering social connections, and reframing challenges, you can develop the skills to handle stress more easily. With the right strategies, you can navigate stress and maintain a healthier, more balanced life.

**BHS provides referrals to qualified mental health professionals that can help. Call BHS at 800-245-1150 to speak to your designated Care Coordinator about your benefits and options for support.**



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