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Help Young Adults Manage Stress

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Help Young Adults Manage Stress



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“I CAN’T SEEM TO CONNECT WITH PEOPLE. I’M AFRAID I’M GOING TO DO SOMETHING TO MAKE ME LOOK BAD.”
 “WHAT IF I’M WASTING MY TIME DOING THIS DEGREE?”
 “I DON’T KNOW IF I’M DOING A GOOD ENOUGH JOB.”
 “I’M NOT GOOD ENOUGH BECAUSE OTHER PEOPLE HAVE MORE LIKES THAN ME ON SOCIAL MEDIA.”

These are some of the distressing thoughts that young adults have about various areas of their life. According to the Pew Research Center, 58% of young adults reported experiencing high levels of distress sometime between March 2020 to September 2022. They are experiencing a lot of doubts about their capabilities to face a more challenging world than many of us from older generations had to face. Like many adults, they worry about the economy and an uncertain future. Some groups have been experiencing more distress than others, particularly women, African American, Latino, Asian, and lower-income families, due to the impact of COVID-19 and inflation.

Stress is nothing new to humanity, we just have different things to stress about. That means we might need to take different approaches to help our young adults learn how to manage their stress better. Here are some tips that will not only help young adults, but anyone who is reading this.

1. **Breathe!** Seems like common sense, but when we are distressed our breathing pattern changes. So, for our bodies to feel less distressed, our breathing needs to slow down. Take long, deep breaths, four seconds in through the nose, then eight seconds out through the mouth, and repeat for at least a few minutes.
2. **Take time to rest.** Sabbath is a wonderful time to do this, but it can be done throughout the week. You are more likely to feel rested if you do something the opposite of what you do throughout the day/week.

3. **Get anchored with our Creator.** In the busyness of life, we forget who created it all. Try to spend at least 20 minutes focusing on the Lord. Notice His power and goodness and bring your attention away from your worries through Bible reading and prayer.

4. **Move!** When we are stressed and anxious, our muscles tighten which can then worsen our mood. Get your blood pumping any way that you enjoy that you can commit to doing daily.

5. **Support.** Our teens and young adults are more isolated so need more support from their families and other caring adults. We can remind them of how much they have accomplished and share what helped us when we faced similar challenges. Parents should avoid high expectations. When a young person is struggling, see how you can help instead of criticizing.

When we look at the Bible, two verses stand out to help us understand God’s approach to stress:

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let our requests be made known to God.” Philippians 4:6 NKJV

“And which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?” Luke 12:25 NKJV

These verses remind us to, “Let go and let God.” ■

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