

Topic: **Friend or foe – what is stress and how to deal with it?**

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## TASK 1

Read the following text and decide if the statements are **true** or **false**.

What I get most stressed about is giving presentations. A few days before the presentation I find it hard to concentrate, I forget things, I can't sleep and I get nervous really easily. On the day of the presentation my stomach aches, my heart beats faster and I am short of breath. I know, it sounds strange, but that's how I feel and it's all because of stress. To be honest, I wish I could stress less and be able to control this emotion. I know I'm not alone and I know that nowadays people stress a lot, much more than in the past. It's mainly because we live faster and in a more complicated world. Nevertheless, I decided to do something about it. I searched the internet to learn more about stress. I believe that when you know what makes you nervous and you know how your body reacts to stress, you will learn how to manage it better. I found many interesting articles and interviews with experts explaining how to deal with stress. Some tips I liked more, while others didn't appeal to me at all. After all, we are all different and we get stressed for different reasons. Anyway, here are my top five tips for stress-management:

- No. 1 **Practice long, slow and deep breathing.** That's my favorite solution, it's simple and helps me to calm down immediately.
- No. 2 **Get a good night's sleep.** Turn off your mobile devices and TV at least two hours before you fall asleep. Let your mind rest.
- No. 3 **Don't stress alone.** Talk about your problems with your family and friends.
- No. 4 **Make an action plan.** Scope out a situation and plan how you are going to deal with it.
- No. 5 **Harmonize with nature.** Go out, take a walk. Fresh air and [physical activity will help you relax.

Decide if the following statements are **true** or **false**.

- 1. When you understand stress you will be able to deal with it better.
- 2. Slow breathing helps you to calm down.
- 3. We stress much more nowadays than in the past.
- 4. Stress helps us think clearly, focus and remember things better.
- 5. There are many ways to control stress.

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## TASK 2

Read the text again and tick ✓ the stress relief tips the speaker talks about.



## TASK 3

Stress-management plan. A stress-management plan is a plan that will help you to organize your thoughts and understand better what makes you stressed, how it makes you feel and what you could do to deal with it.

**STEP 1** Write down the things or situations that stress you and think of how they make you feel.

What makes me stressed

- speaking in public
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**STEP 2** Make a list of things that you like doing, things that are good for you and help you to relax.

What helps me to relax?

- listening to music
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**STEP 3** Do you remember the speakers' top tips on how to deal with stress? Below you will find some extra ideas on how you can manage your stress.

1. Identify the problem divide it into smaller tasks. Work on each task one by one.
2. Let things go if you cannot change them.
3. Get some exercise. Exercising is the best thing we can do to deal with stress. It improves our mood, and increase our sense of well-being.
4. Breath in and out deeply to relax.
5. Eat and sleep well. Healthy food, and good sleeping habits help us stay focused for a longer time, alert, happy and calm.
6. Release your worries by talking to someone, writing a journal, singing, dancing, using art or music, for example.
7. Help build a better world. Think of ways in which you could help other people.

Now, use the ideas from STEP 2 and think of ways in which you can help yourself in different stressful situations. Take a look at the example below.

**Example:**

<p><b>What makes me stressed?</b></p> <p>I get stressed when I speak in public or give a presentation.</p>	<p><b>What can I do to deal with it?</b></p> <p><b>Get ready and practice before the presentation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- practice the presentation at home</li><li>- ask my parents or friends to listen to my presentation and tell me what they think</li><li>- record the presentation at home</li></ul> <p><b>Breathe deep.</b></p> <p><b>Have a good night sleep</b> the day before the presentation.</p>
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## MY STRESS-MANAGEMENT PLAN

<p><b>What makes me stressed?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p><b>What can I do to deal with it?</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>
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