

# Managing a Stressful Change

When you're dealing with a change — even a positive one, such as moving to a new home or the addition of a family member — it's not unusual to feel stressed or overloaded. You may also have physical responses, such as sleep disruption, headaches, or gastrointestinal distress. If a change feels overwhelming, try these tips:

- ▶ **Focus on what you can control.** Spending your time worrying about what could happen wastes valuable energy. Keep your attention on actions you can take to improve your situation and let go of anything that is beyond your influence.
- ▶ **Take stock.** Consider how your personal strengths and talents apply to your current situation. Look for opportunities to develop new skills.
- ▶ **Strengthen your support system.** Nurture relationships with friends and family members who are supportive and encouraging. If you are feeling isolated, look for opportunities to meet people who share common interests.
- ▶ **Maintain your health.** Change may make it hard to sustain healthy eating and exercise habits and increase your susceptibility to illness. Make an extra effort to stay on your fitness routine, eat a healthy diet, and get 7-9 hours of sleep a night.



- ▶ **Manage stress.** A leisurely walk through a park or sitting for an hour beside a lake or river will help put your worries in perspective. Set aside time to spend with family, enjoy a favorite hobby, or engage in a relaxing activity.
- ▶ **Look on the bright side.** Sometimes change is scary — that's part of what makes it an adventure! Ask yourself, "How will I grow as a result of this change?" Even negative changes offer opportunities to learn more about yourself and build resilience.

Viewing change as an opportunity will help you recover from setbacks and make the most of the options available to you. For more ideas on how to manage a stressful change, contact LifeMatters.

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