MIND - U

Our Mind - Our Right

FINDING CALM: THE ART OF STRESS MANAGEMENT

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Nila School of Happiness

The **Nila School of Happiness** aims to nurture emotional well-being and resilience among Society.

We focus on creating an environment that promotes not just academic success but also personal growth and mental health awareness.

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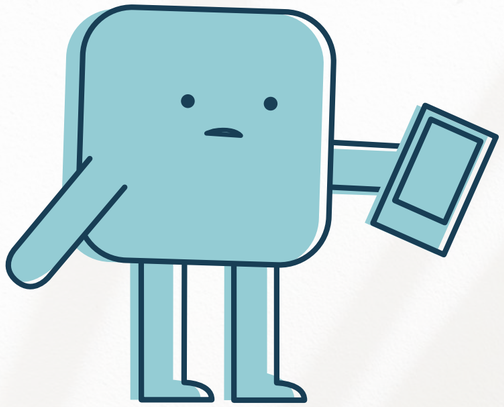
What is Stress Really?

- **Is stress always bad, or can it be a catalyst for growth?**
- **When have you experienced stress that led to a breakthrough?**



Present stress as a signal from the body, not an enemy, but an invitation to respond differently.

What is Stress?

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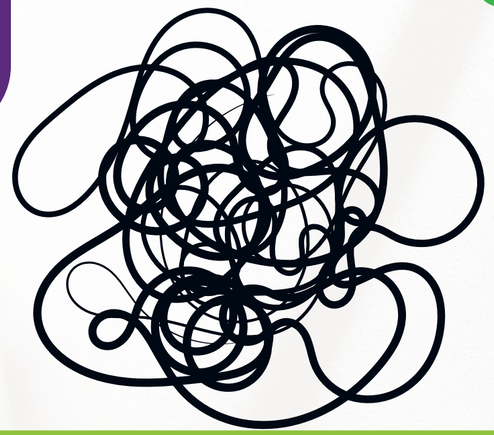
- Stress is a physiological and emotional response to external pressures or demands, triggering the body’s "fight-or-flight" reaction.
- Stress is a universal issue but varies based on many factors including gender, culture, economic conditions, and healthcare access.
- Prolonged stress leads to many psychological issues like anxiety, depression, and burnout, significantly affecting overall well-being and functioning.



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CAUSES OF STRESS

- Long working hours, tight deadlines, and performance expectations are major sources of stress in corporate sectors.
- Students face immense pressure to perform well, leading to burnout and mental health.
- In both rural and urban settings, financial instability and debt create persistent stress, particularly in economically vulnerable populations.
- Prolonged exposure to stress can impair cognitive functions like concentration and decision-making, reducing overall quality of life.

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN STRESS

- Men often experience significant stress due to demanding jobs, tight deadlines, and performance expectations.
- Societal pressure to be competitive can lead to chronic stress in areas like career advancement and physical prowess.
- Financial obligations, such as providing for a family or managing debts, can also cause anxiety about job stability and income.
- Men often exhibit a physiological "fight or flight" response, leading to impulsive actions.
- Substance use can also occur as a maladaptive coping mechanism, leading to further health issues and increased stress.

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN STRESS

- Women Often influenced by balancing multiple roles (e.g., work, family, caregiving) and social relationships.
- They Commonly adopt a "tend and befriend" approach, seeking social connections and support.
- women often utilize emotion-focused coping strategies, such as talking about feelings and seeking help from social networks.
- Higher stress levels in women can lead to increased anxiety, depression, and burnout.
- Emphasizing self-care and mental health awareness can improve their resilience and coping abilities.

The Power of Micro-Moments

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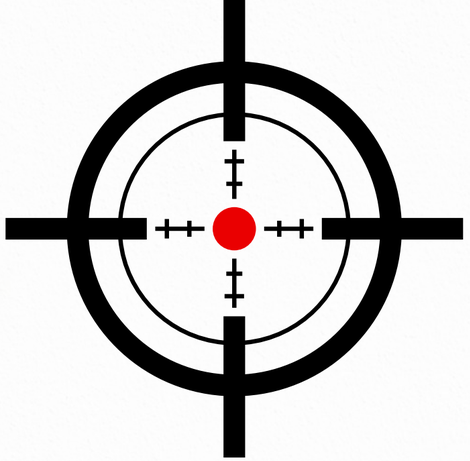
Take a deep breath and focus on the present moment by using your senses to ground yourself. This 1-minute mindfulness exercise will help you calm your mind and reduce stress.



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1. Sight

Look around and notice 3 things you haven’t paid attention to before. Focus on colors, shapes, or objects.

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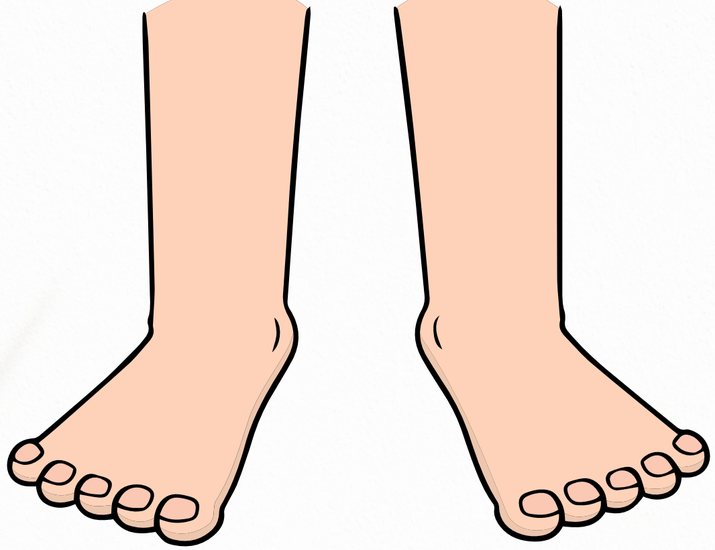
2. Hearing

Look around and notice 3 things you haven’t paid attention to before. Focus on colors, shapes, or objects.

3. Touch



What do you feel? Pay attention to how your feet press into the ground, how your clothes touch your skin, or run your hand across a nearby surface.

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4. Taste

Even without eating, focus on any residual taste in your mouth. Is it dry, fresh, or neutral? If you're eating or drinking, savor the flavor.

5. Smell

Notice any scent around you, whether it's strong or subtle—like the air, coffee, or your environment.

Stress Management Strategies

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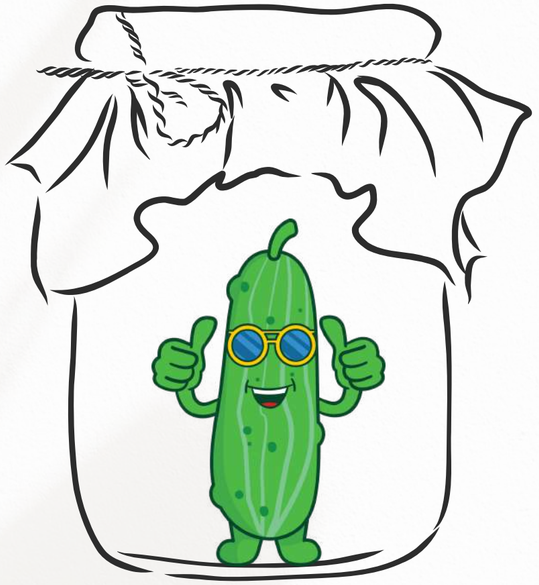
- Engaging in regular physical activity is one of the most effective ways to reduce stress. Exercise releases endorphins, the body's natural mood lifters, which can lead to improved feelings of well-being and decreased anxiety.

- Activities such as walking, jogging, yoga, and dancing promote physical health and provide a mental escape, allowing individuals to disconnect from stressors.

- Quality sleep is vital for stress management establishing a regular sleep routine and creating a calming bedtime environment can improve sleep quality and help manage stress levels.

- To manage stress, individuals can use techniques like to-do lists, breaking tasks into smaller steps, and using digital tools.
- Learning to say no and delegating tasks can also help reduce stress
- Relaxation techniques like deep breathing exercises and hobbies can help calm the mind and body.
- Regular pauses, social support, and open discussions about stressors can also help.
- Lifestyle changes like a balanced diet, sleep, and reduced stimulants can also contribute to stress management.

The Pickle Jar Theory



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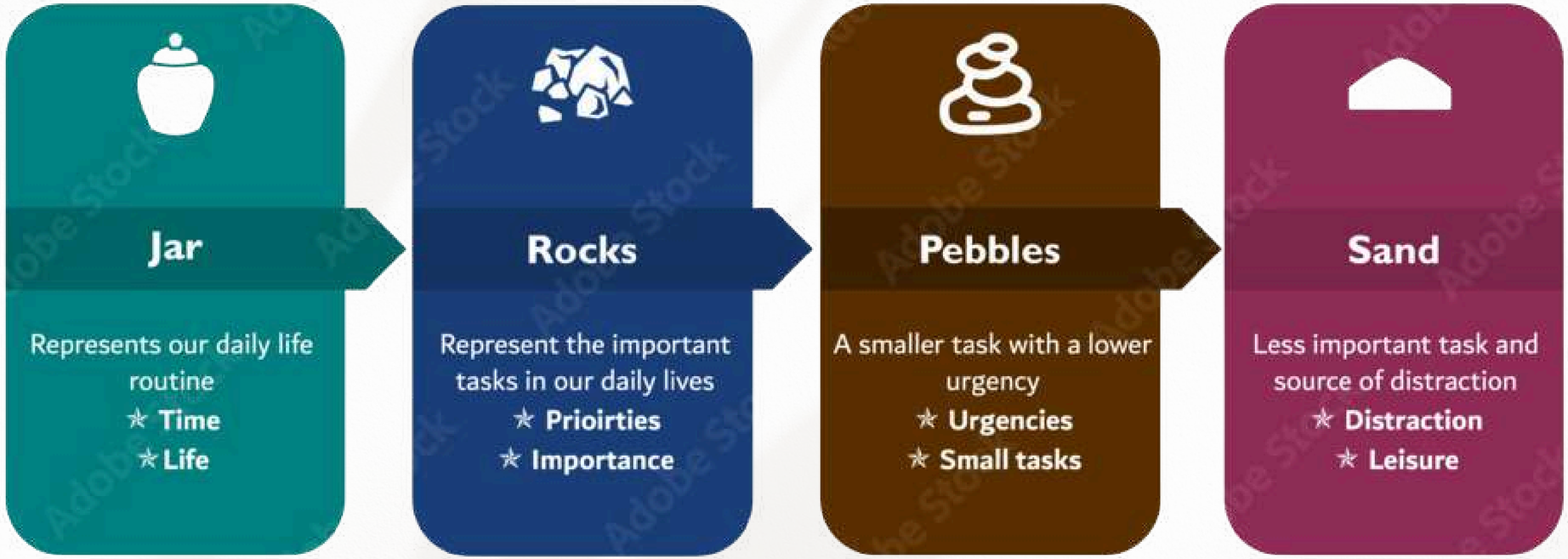
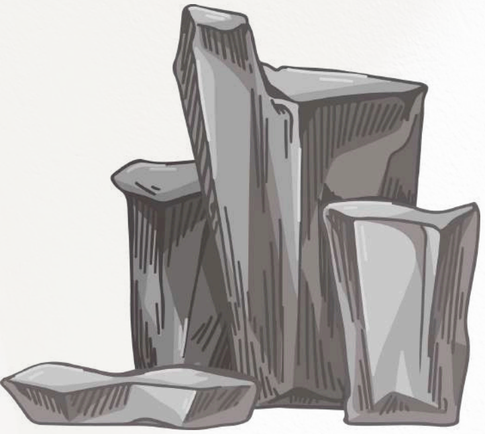
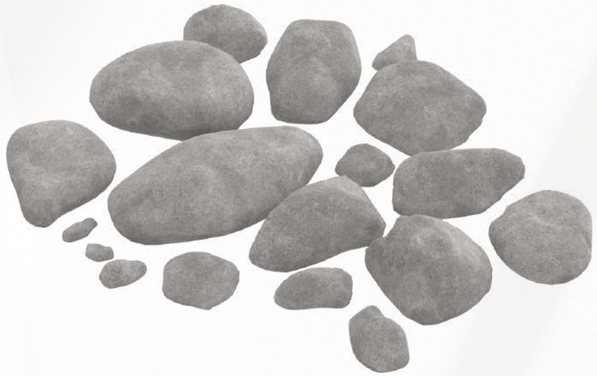
Imagine your day or your capacity for handling stress is a jar. You have different types of items to put into this jar:







- Big **Rocks** represent your **most important and meaningful tasks, goals, and relationships.**
- **Pebbles** symbolize **less critical tasks that are still necessary but don’t bring as much long-term value.**
- **Sand** stands for small, often **unimportant tasks or distractions that can easily fill up your day but contribute little to your overall well-being or success.**

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Applying the Theory to Stress Management:

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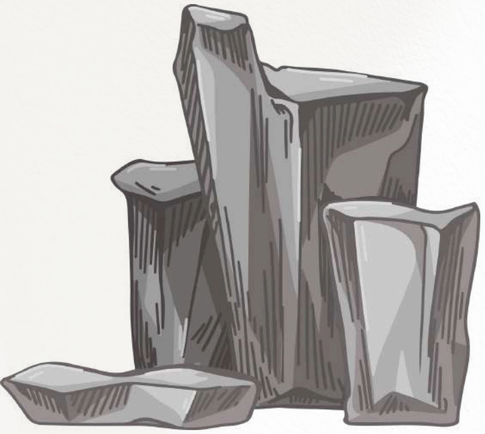

- **Big Rocks: Prioritize Important Things First**

Identify your “big rocks” for the day or week. These could be exercise, quality time with loved ones, or completing a key project. Prioritizing them will give you a sense of accomplishment and reduce stress.

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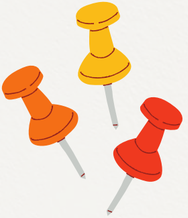
- **Pebbles: Handle Secondary Tasks**

Don’t spend too much time on pebbles. Address them after you’ve handled your big rocks, but don’t let them dominate your time or energy.

- **Sand: Eliminate or Limit Distractions**

  If you fill your jar with sand first, there’s no space for the big rocks. Limit your distractions and avoid letting small, unimportant tasks take up too much of your time.



Key Lessons from the Pickle Jar Theory for Stress Management:

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- **Set Priorities:** Know what your "big rocks" are in terms of stress relief and well-being, and address them first. This might mean focusing on sleep, regular exercise, or time with loved ones before diving into work.
- **Manage Your Time Wisely:** Don’t let minor tasks (pebbles and sand) take over your day. Schedule time for relaxation, self-reflection, or mindfulness practices first.
- **Balance:** By understanding the importance of what you put into your jar, you learn to balance life’s demands, reducing overwhelm and stress in the process.

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EXAMPLES:

The student starts the day by watching YouTube (sand) and scrolling Instagram. Suddenly, time flies, and they panic because there's less time to study (big rocks). Stress builds up, and they feel unprepared for the exam.

The parent spends the evening scrolling through social media (sand). Later, they rush through dinner and barely have time to play with the kids (big rocks). By the end of the evening, they feel stressed and regret not spending enough time with family.

Quick Recap: Managing Stress Effectively

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What is Stress?
Body's response to demands impacting well-being.

Causes of Stress
Work, family, finances, health.

Mindfulness Technique 1: 5 Senses Check-In
Ground yourself by focusing on what you see, hear, touch, taste, and smell.

Stress Management Theories

Pickle Jar Theory
Prioritize "big rocks" (important tasks), then "pebbles" (smaller tasks), and save "sand" (distractions) for last.

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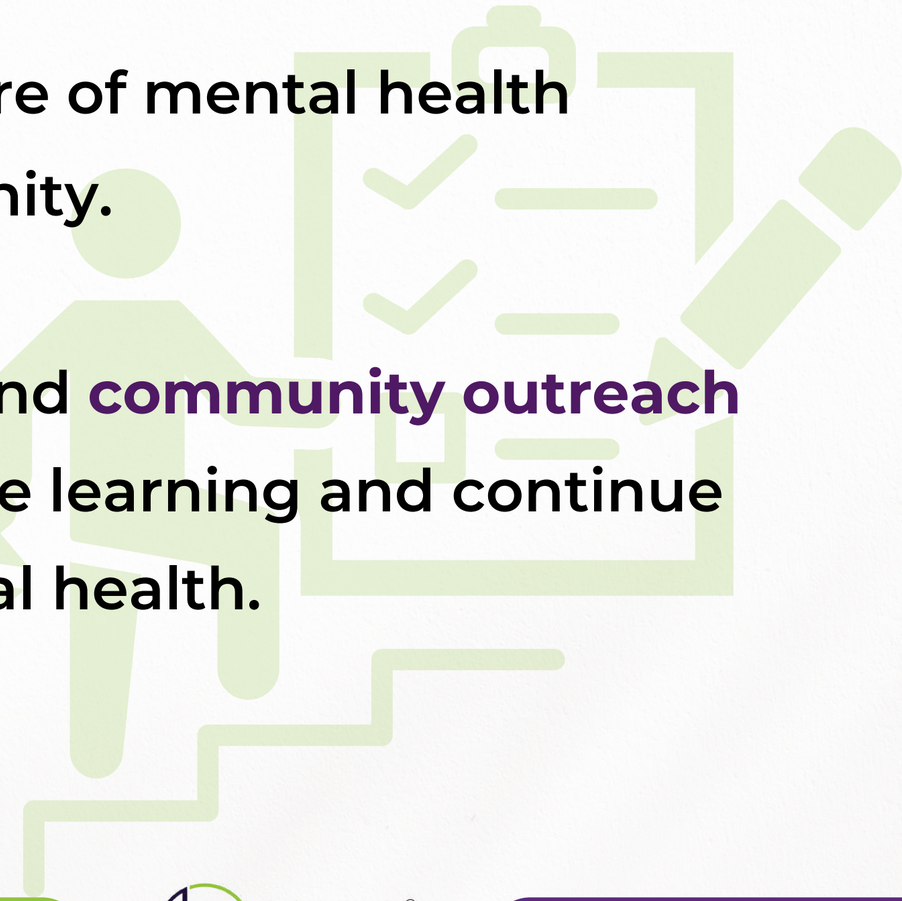
VISION AHEAD:
Continuing the Journey

The Mind U initiative aims to create a culture of mental health awareness and support within our community.

Follow-up workshops, training sessions, and **community outreach** programs will be implemented to reinforce learning and continue the dialogue around mental health.



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The Mind U project is a commitment to building a resilient community.
By working together, we can ensure that every individual feels valued and supported.

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“Let’s embark on this journey of understanding, compassion, and proactive engagement.”

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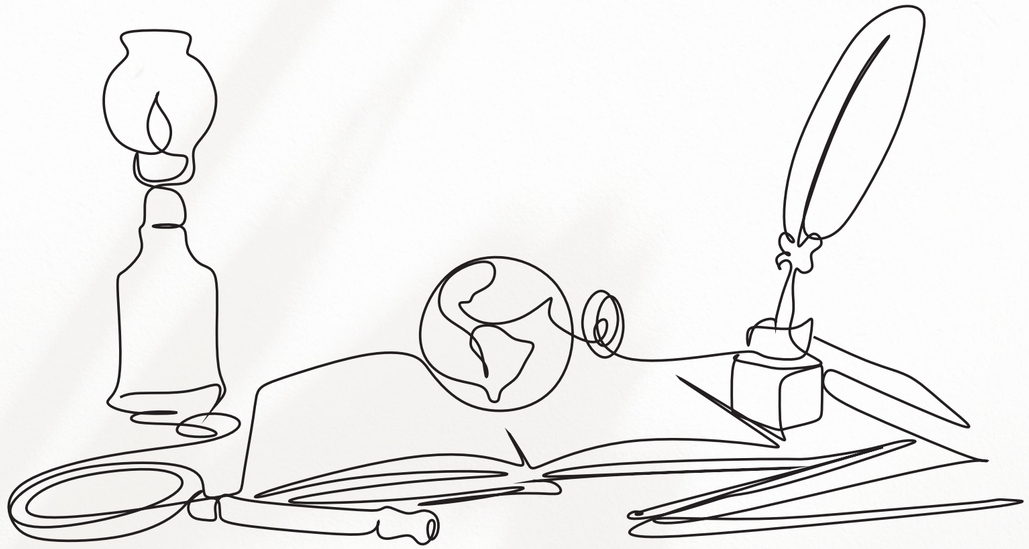

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THANK YOU

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