

Using Writing to Manage Stress

APSU Writing Center Handout

Do you have assignments or deadlines piling up? It's easy to feel overwhelmed or anxious with a long to-do list. Writing can be a powerful way to manage stress. When you write, be patient with yourself and use writing as a space to process how you feel. This handout includes several writing strategies to help you reduce stress and get back on track.

Set a Timer to Write

- Set a timer for 5–10 minutes.
- Open a Word document or grab a notebook.
- Start writing whatever comes to mind.

Evaluate Your Emotions

- Consider writing about your current emotions:
 - Why do I feel stressed?
 - Is the assignment deadline too soon?
 - Am I confused about the instructions?
- Once your feelings are on paper, it's easier to understand what's causing stress and how to manage it.

Write in a Journal

- Spend a few minutes in the morning, afternoon, or evening reflecting on your day. Write about what makes you happy, frustrated, or uncertain.

- Consider using these prompts:
 - Do I feel confident about my assignments?
 - Do I need to brainstorm ideas with a tutor?
 - Do I need to find more research using APSU Library databases?
 - What topics were confusing in class? What came easily?

Create a Gratitude List

- Writing about what you're grateful for shifts your focus from stress to positivity.
- At the end of each day or week, list three to five academic things you're thankful for:
 - Did I pass a quiz or turn in an assignment?
 - Did I attend all my classes on time?
 - Did I have a productive tutoring session?
- Then, add three to five everyday things:
 - Did I drink enough water today?
 - Did I meet up with a friend?
 - Did I get enough sleep this week?
- Focusing on small wins can help you feel balanced even on tough days.

Write Future Goals

- Write down what you want to achieve this semester or year.
- Consider using these prompts:
 - Why is it important to finish my assignments?
 - How will this course benefit me in the long run?

- This type of writing helps you stay grounded and see the bigger picture when life feels overwhelming.

Inspirational Quote

“It is not what you write or what you produce as you write that is important. It is what happens to you while you are writing that is important. It is who you become while you are writing that is important.” - Louise DeSalvo in *Writing as a Way of Healing*

References

Kennesaw State University Writing Center. (2009). Using Writing to Manage Stress. Kennesaw State University Writing Center.

<https://writingcenter.kennesaw.edu/resources/Using%20Writing%20to%20Manage%20Stress.pdf>

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