

Name, claim and reframe

These notes are private, for your self-reflection and benefit. You can decide if you'll share them with anyone or keep them to yourself.

Complete this in a quiet place where you will not be interrupted or consider using the audio prompts through a headset. You can find the audio by searching Name, claim and reframe at clwsmh.com.

This resource isn't intended as a medical or mental health intervention. If you're currently experiencing challenges, please reach out for support. You could, for example, reach out to your health care professional, or to your workplace wellness or employee assistance program.

Crisis lines in Canada: If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide or is in a mental health crisis, call or text 9-8-8. To find mental health or community services in your area, call or text 2-1-1. If you're in immediate danger or need urgent medical support, call 9-1-1.

Name

- ✓ Identify your thoughts
- ✓ Recognize when you experience a stress response
- ✓ Consider where you are on the continuum

Claim

- ✓ Claim your power over your thoughts and beliefs
- ✓ Challenge the story you're telling yourself
- ✓ Be objective and practice self-compassion

Reframe

- ✓ Ask yourself if your thoughts are helpful or harmful to you
- ✓ Recognize what you are and are not doing related to a healthy routine
- ✓ Consider what coping strategies could help you manage stress
- ✓ Be aware of coping strategies that may be unhelpful or problematic

What thoughts are (or were) going through your mind about your stressors?

Please be as specific as possible. Include any thoughts that evoke blame, anger, shame, self-doubt, fear or guilt.

Identify whether you have experienced or are experiencing a stress response:

- ☐ **Fight or anger** – getting upset, angry, aggressive, critical, blaming, irritable, violent or argumentative
- ☐ **Flight or avoidance** – leaving a threatening or unsafe situation, feeling anxious, staying busy all the time to avoid confronting feelings, being a workaholic or avoiding people or places that feel unsafe
- ☐ **Freeze or shut down** – being temporarily unable to move or react, or just continuing to do the same thing every day on autopilot
- ☐ **Fawn** – focusing on pleasing others to avoid conflict or improve feelings of safety, going along with what others are doing or asking you to do while feeling uncomfortable
- ☐ **None of the above**
- ☐ **Other** – briefly describe in the space provided

Where are you on the stress continuum?

Check the box under the column that most closely describes your current state. Note that it's normal to fluctuate between thriving and surviving but when you're struggling or in crisis, consider reaching out.

☐ Thriving
"I've got this"

- Calm and steady with minor mood fluctuations
- Able to take things in stride
- Consistent performance
- Able to take feedback and to adjust to changes of plans
- Able to focus
- Able to communicate effectively
- Normal sleep patterns and appetite

☐ Surviving
"Something isn't right"

- Nervousness, sadness, increased mood fluctuations
- Inconsistent performance
- More easily overwhelmed or irritated
- Increased need for control and difficulty adjusting to changes
- Trouble sleeping or eating
- Activities and relationships you used to enjoy seem less interesting or even stressful
- Muscle tension, low energy, headaches

☐ Struggling
"I can't keep this up."

- Persistent fear, panic, anxiety, anger, pervasive sadness, hopelessness
- Exhaustion
- Poor performance and difficulty making decisions or concentrating
- Avoiding interaction with coworkers, family, and friends
- Fatigue, aches and pains
- Restless, disturbed sleep
- Self-medicating with substances, food, or other numbing activities

☐ In crisis
"I can't do this."

- Disabling distress and loss of function
- Panic attacks
- Nightmares or flashbacks
- Unable to fall or stay asleep
- Intrusive thoughts
- Thoughts of self-harm or suicide
- Easily enraged or aggression
- Careless mistakes or inability to focus
- Feeling numb, lost, or out of control
- Withdrawal from relationships
- Dependence on substances, food, or other numbing activities to cope

If you were applying the most respectful interpretation, why might you or others respond as you did?

Think about the stress response filling a void, managing a fear, meeting a need or avoiding pain.

What advice would you have for someone you cared about who had a similar experience?

How would you express care and compassion to someone who was struggling?

What is important in a healthy daily routine for you?

What are you currently doing or not doing?

What coping strategies could be helpful right now?

It may help you to:

- ☐ Challenge your thoughts about a situation. Are they true? Does the thought lead to helpful or harmful behaviours?
- ☐ Be aware of and avoid the tendency to use unhealthy coping strategies that negatively impact your health
- ☐ Share your experience with someone you trust – a clinician, peer support or another trusted person
- ☐ Try any relaxation technique that works for you such as deep breathing, mindfulness, meditation, yoga, a massage, a walk, being in nature, enjoying art, gardening, listening to music or writing
- ☐ Protect your physical health through nutrition or movement
- ☐ Use healthy distractions like puzzles, games, crafts, building or creating
- ☐ Focus on healthy sleep habits including intentionally resting when sleep is difficult, turning your phone off, using a weighted blanket, decreasing light and heat in the bedroom or going to bed and waking up at the same time every day
- ☐ Seek help or treatment when needed
- ☐ Other – briefly describe in the space provided

Which unhelpful habits or strategies will you try to avoid or reduce, especially those you may have reverted to in the past when under stress?

This can include those strategies that result in overstimulation like fighting, over-working or over-exercising, or those that result in numbing like substance use, social media scrolling, watching television or isolation.

Come back to these notes if you want to track your progress:

- Are you still thinking the thoughts you had? Are they more, less or the same intensity or frequency?
- Are you experiencing distress or a negative impact on your quality of life or relationships?
- Could you benefit from reaching out to a family member, friend, peer supporter or professional for help in moving forward? If you do, consider taking these notes with you to share as a starting point for dialogue.

When to ask for support

For mental health services, help and support in your community, go to **ementalhealth.ca** where you can search for relevant resources based on what you need and your location.

Stress will happen.

Name it.

Claim it.

Reframe it.

Use this tool to minimize the ongoing negative impact.

If you want to learn more about managing stress, find resources here: **www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com/resources/managing-work-stress**

Workplace Strategies for Mental Health

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