

# Mental Health – tips to build, strengthen & maintain



**Mental Health = ability to reflect on yourself, willingness to learn new things & keep an overall positive, open mindset**

## Tips & Tricks

1. **Hold each other** accountable & train each other to practice positive thinking (which includes to avoid unrealistic phantasies and turn them into realistic expectations to avoid frustration)
2. **Be aware** of the individual “red buttons”, so stress triggers – and avoid touching them respectively help each other in managing them. Sometimes just acknowledging “I know this is might let you feel stressed, but I am sure you will master this!” – as long as meant honest – is a big positive push to manage personal stress levels down (find out on the different stress-personalities & triggers and general warning signs of stress)
3. **If hit by** the feeling “all too much” and being stressed out – know some SOS-quick-exercises (like the heart exercise) that help you to regulate your physical reaction which supports to also calm your mind down again.

## Quick exercises

### Heart Exercise – SOS-anti-stress exercise



**3 – 5 Minutes** (or as long as you like - 3 minutes already make a difference!)

1. When you notice you are under stress/pressure (and your heart beats quite quick), take 2 - 3 deep, satisfying breaths.
2. Gently place your hand over your heart, feeling the gentle pressure and warmth of your hand. If you wish, place both hands on your chest, noticing the difference between one and two hands.
3. Feel the touch of you hand on your chest. If you wish, you could make small circles with your hand on your chest.
4. Feel the natural rising and falling of your chest as you breathe in and as you breathe out.

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## Breathing Exercise 4-7-8 (“thought-stopper”)



3 – 5 Minutes

This exercise forces the mind and body to focus on regulating the breath, rather than replaying your worries - also when you lie down at night.

1. let your lips part. Make a whooshing sound, exhaling completely through your mouth.
2. close your lips, inhaling silently through your nose as you count to 4 in your head.
3. for 7 seconds, hold your breath.
4. Make another whooshing exhale from your mouth for 8 seconds.

## Warning signs of stress



Observing the below signs in yourself and/or your colleagues over a longer time can be a hint on a raised, non-healthy stress-level

1. Burning Muscles
2. Increased need for meds (e. g. pain relievers)
3. Chronic low-grade inflammation
4. Skin problems
5. Feeling cold
6. Craving for sugar
7. Constant tiredness (despite sufficient sleep and/or even holiday leave)
8. Lack of compassion & kindness
9. Weight fluctuation
10. More fearsome behavior
11. Falling sick on one of the first days of your holiday
12. More than 3 infections per year
13. Learning deficits/forgetfulness