

American University of Beirut  
Office of Student Affairs  
**Counseling Center**  
**Strategies for Stress Management**

1. **Deep muscle relaxation** – visualize: recall a scene from your past when you were very relaxed
2. **Watch your diet** – especially caffeine and alcohol intake
3. **Fitness level** – exercise can help tolerate anxiety, release tension, and refocus your attention
4. **Maintain proper sleep**
5. **Track your body cycles**
6. **Focus attention** – pay attention to what is relaxing you and ignore what is disturbing
7. **Use diverse tactics** – these could be things like TV. programs, hobbies, sports...
8. **Try hard not to be perfect**
9. **Analyze your "shoulds"** – discover what your "shoulds" are and determine if they are realistic or necessary e.g. "I should always be nice
10. **Illogical thinking** – pay attention to the statements you make to yourself, some could be the result of collecting poor data or imposing too much on yourself.
11. **Increase your self-rewards** e.g. study breaks, special outings ...
12. **Rehearsal** – rehearse yourself being competent and possible outcomes to a situation
13. **Cognitive appraisal** – try to think differently about things, be more positive
14. **Remember that it used to be possible to enjoy things**
15. **Try not to take yourself too seriously**
16. **Release emotions** e.g. cry, laugh... Don't bottle-up negative emotions
17. **Arrange consequences**
18. **Environmental support** – request extra support and assistance from your family and/or friends
19. **Time Out** – take time out or private time from a difficult situation
20. **Avoidance** – don't impose upon yourself situations or tasks that are unnecessary and stressful
21. **Time Management Skills** – learn how to manage your time and priorities
22. **Strengthen interpersonal bonds** – develop caring supportive relationships

## Elements of Time Management

The purpose of Time Management is to allow you to have **control** over your life.

- ***Time management has to be realistic to be effective***
- ***It also has to be flexible***
- ***The most effective TM is the one based on how well you know yourself***

### 1. **Prioritize**

Use an A B C rating, A items being the highest priority – C items can wait

### 2. **Assess the time required** for the completion of your tasks, time and energy required.

Determine how long the task will take

Try to determine if the task can be broken down into smaller tasks

### 3. **Be organized**

Have an organized workplace

Use time saving tools e.g. files, folders, calendars

Avoid overload

### 4. **Be flexible**

Allow extra time for unforeseen obstacles

Allow for the unexpected

Allow yourself to rearrange your schedule

Allow yourself to ask for help

### 5. **Relax**

Include relaxation in your Time Management plan, make it a regular activity

### 6. **Fitness**

Fitness is important. It allows for a much better intellectual and academic performance

Sleep, proper diet and regular exercise are very important

### 7. **Compromise** if you need to. Time Management is only a tool, it is not a master

### 8. **Give up**

Accept your limitations. Don't trap yourself in unrealistic goals

### 9. **Reprioritize**

## Scheduling

**Term schedule** 4 month term schedule, covering all the term dates (assignments, exams) For assignments record the:

a. due date

b. completion date (a week before)

c. start date Same applies to exams and other important events

1. **Master schedule** Template for a typical week List all weekly fixed activities (classes, shopping, sleeping, TV., sports...)

## **2. Weekly schedule**

## **3. Daily schedule**

### **Tips**

- 1 hour in class requires 2 hours of study outside class
- Optimum efficiency is 1 hour block: 50 minutes + 10 minutes break
- Identify your rest time of the day
- Tackle the least interesting tasks during your high energy and peak concentration time
- Use the same place to study