

MANAGING STRESS IN A NEW COUNTRY



Afghan people who are forced to leave their country and start over in a new place have great strength and bravery.

It is also a very difficult thing to do. It is common for people who have experienced difficult things to have feelings like fear, anger, sadness and sorrow at the same time that they feel relieved or glad to be safe.

Stress is the feeling of being overwhelmed with worry because of a difficult situation. Stress can change how people think, feel and act.



Kite flying is a great way to combine many strategies that help us with our health and mood. Use kite flying to spend time with family and friends, and move your body. You can also use kite flying as an opportunity to practice breathing slowly and deeply. Create a routine with kite flying by practicing the activity at the same time every week or month.

People can manage stress with routines.

There are things people can do to improve how they feel physically and emotionally:



A sleep routine makes it easier to manage emotions. Enjoy unsweetened herbal or ginger tea instead of kahwah, black tea or green tea in the evenings to help with sleep.



Drinking tea with just spices and nuts can be a comforting way of staying connected to your heritage while in the U.S.



Drinking eight glasses of water every day helps people's bodies and brain function properly.



Move your body every day for at least 15 minutes. This includes walks with your family, stretching, or Attan dancing.



Breathing slowly and deeply is one of the best ways to lower stress and it doesn't take much time.



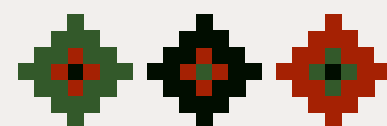
Play games that are popular in Afghanistan, like chess.



Continue the Afghan tradition of eating healthy home-cooked meals at home, together with family.



Connect with other Afghans in your neighborhood or who attend your mosque. Consider hosting gatherings with your new friends.



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Your community can help.

Sometimes managing stress is not enough and people may want or need more support. It can be helpful for people to:

- Talk to a doctor or counselor about what they are feeling
- Join a group with people experiencing the same types of things
- Reach out to a religious leader or community leader
- Contact their caseworkers or resettlement agency



Anyone who feels life is not worth living or if someone is having thoughts about harming themselves, they should call **988** or **+1 (800) 273-8255** right away.

Some people need more support.

People may want to reach out for more support if they notice that for several weeks they are consistently:

- + Having difficulty going to school, work, or taking care of themselves or their family.
- + Noticing that their mood or emotions are getting worse over time.
- + Sleeping very little or sleeping a lot.
- + Crying frequently or feeling sad or worried for most of the day every day.
- + Feeling angry or irritable, or having angry outbursts.
- + Not leaving home or avoiding spending time with loved ones.
- + Having bad memories or nightmares.
- + Feeling that they can't feel emotions or connect with other people.
- + Doing harmful things like drinking too much alcohol, doing street drugs, or getting in fights.
- + Feeling very tired all the time or having headaches or stomach aches that are not due to a physical health issue.

