

TIPS TO MANAGE YOUR STRESS

You can tackle stressful situations in college and beyond. San Jacinto College licensed professional counselor **Gladys Arvizu** shares how. Arvizu, a first-generation college graduate, understands the challenges and obstacles students face to pursue their educational and personal goals.



“I enjoy advocating for others and helping them navigate their college and personal journey.” — Gladys Arvizu, M.Ed., LPC

Q: WHAT’S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GOOD & BAD STRESS?

A: Stress is part of life.

Good stress motivates you or causes excitement. Examples:

- New job
- First date
- Major exam
- Competition or sport
- Roller coaster
- Deadline

Bad stress occurs from something negative. You become anxious, overwhelmed, and so scared you stop living your daily life. Examples:

- Relationship strain
- Loss of job
- Chronic illness/injury
- Increase in financial burdens
- Death of a loved one
- Abuse or neglect

Q: I’M STRESSED RIGHT NOW. WHAT CAN I DO?

A: Try these three things:

1. Deep Breathing: This simple technique is excellent for managing emotions.

- a. Sit comfortably and place one hand on your abdomen.
- b. Breathe in through your nose, deeply enough that the hand on your abdomen rises.

- c. Hold the air in your lungs. Then exhale slowly through your mouth, with your lips puckered as if you are blowing through a straw.
- d. The secret is to go slow: Time the inhalation (4 seconds), pause (4 seconds), and exhale (6 seconds). Practice for 3-5 minutes.

2. Grounding Exercise: Just 5 minutes of mindfulness can lower your heart rate and stop anxious thoughts.

- a. Relax. Sit in a comfortable position, feet planted on the ground. Rest your hands on your thighs or desk.
- b. Breathe. Allow relaxing breaths to enter deeply and exhale fully.
- c. Engage your five senses, one at a time for about 1 minute each. What do you see, hear, taste, feel, smell?

3. Positive Self-talk: Show yourself self-compassion, support, and understanding.

- I am capable and strong.
- I can do this.
- I have control over how I react.
- I'm getting better each day.
- I can learn from this situation and grow as a person.

Q: WHEN SHOULD I GET HELP?

A: At San Jac, you can meet with a mental health counselor anytime you're facing a personal obstacle or challenge and need someone to talk to. If you're feeling overwhelmed, anxious, or fearful and it's impacting your daily life, seek help!

1. General Help: At San Jac, counselors are available virtually and face-to-face. You can schedule an appointment or visit as a walk-in:

- Visit sanjac.edu/mental-health-resources.
- OR visit appointments.sanjac.edu:
 - Click "Student Support Services."
 - Choose your appointment type: "In-Person" or "Virtual via Zoom."
 - Choose "Mental Health Counseling" as the reason.
 - Pick an advisor, date, and time.
 - Fill in your information and click "Schedule Appointment."

2. Emergency Help: If you're experiencing a mental health crisis:

- Call **911** immediately.
- Call **988** (free, confidential National Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Lifeline).