

STATE TIMES

SUNDAY

Your Companion for a Funday



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How to be happy



role of eating healthy foods for raising spirits. Consuming nutrient-dense foods is said to improve overall brain functions and certain mood disorders too.

Some of the foods you can eat to boost your mood are fatty fish, dark chocolate, green veggies, hydrating fruits, nuts and seeds, whole grain oats and more.

Decluttering can help

Decluttering is the act of removing mess or clutter from a place. It has to do with organizing your space and tidying up a specific area such as a closet or a drawer.

While it may sound very tedious, just investing 20 minutes of your time is all it takes. You can set a timer for however long you're ready to commit and start cleaning your wardrobe, your desk, drawer, your study table. Prioritize your possessions and organize them in a way so that they're easier to find and locate.

Do this atleast once a week and see how good you feel about it.

Expand your social circle (but take pleasure being alone too)

Having friends or being a part of a community is important. It exposes you to different types of people, helps you learn a lot about yourself and also bestows upon you a feeling of belonging.

See your friends regularly, spend time with family and make plans every once in a while. However, if you feel at peace being alone, do that too. Sometimes, you need to give yourself the time to reflect too.

Take some time off of your phone

In a modern world, our phones have become our best friends. It helps us gain knowledge, keeps us posted about news trends and opportunities and also connects us with our loved ones. But taking time off of your screens is something that is necessary for your mental well-being. Social media can be a joyful place, but it is also full of negativity. Learn to unplug, turn off your electronics and sometimes tread into nature. Read, meditate or take a walk.

Reflect and acknowledge the unhappy moments

Happiness does not come the easy way. Only when you learn to overcome challenges, know the taste of failure and learn from your mistakes, is it then that you find true happiness. This is why you must reflect on your journey, acknowledge your unhappy moments and then see how far along you have come.

Have a plan and set your goals

Never move forward without a plan. Know what you want in life. You may find yourself struggling for a while, but with a clear objective in mind, you're bound to achieve greatness.

Keep a journal, stick to your goals and revisit when you feel lost. Having everything in perspective will keep you content in the long run.

Do not dwell on grudges

Being disappointed with someone you love or care for is a part of life. You may feel hurt and betrayed, but you must ask yourself if holding grudges frees you of your woes. Surely not! That said, avoid dwelling on grudges and learn to forgive. It is only through kindness and compassion that you'll find happiness.

Behavioural problems that shouldn't be ignored by parents



The set of duties and responsibilities in a parent-child relationship is most often clear. While parents have to look after their children, take care of their needs and necessities, kids need to follow certain rules to steer clear of danger and focus on their growth. However, sometimes, there is a complete role reversal, where a child is 'parentified' i.e. he or she suddenly finds themselves acting as a parent or a caregiver. It is when children are placed in a position where they feel more like a parent than children. This is called "parentification", in which kids become responsible for themselves and their parents. From looking after the house to being a support system to their parents, children have to take on roles that may leave a lasting impact on their mind and mental state.

Types of parentification

There are two types of parentification: instrumental and emotional parentification.

Instrumental parentification occurs when parents burden their children with roles and responsibilities that aren't appropriate for their age. This involves grocery shopping, cooking, cleaning, paying bills, etc.

On the other hand, emotional parentification refers to situations where parents depend or rely on their kids for emotional support. "Parentified" kids are expected to decipher what their parents are going through and then provide support for the same. Both forms of parentification can be destructive for the child's mental state and may affect them in the long run.

How it affects children

Raising children is often considered challenging. So imagine how kids would feel if they're to manage grown-up responsibilities at a young age.

With no experience, no guidance and hardly any support, taking on the role of a parent can be highly overwhelming and stressful for children. Experts believe the pressure of parentification can often result in anxiety, depression and other mental health problems in children and with no one to talk to about it, it could linger on to their adult life. Furthermore, parentification can also lead to aggressive behaviour in kids, could affect their academic progress and lead to social difficulties, according to The Developmental Implications of Parentification: Effects on Childhood Attachment, a 2012 research study by Jennifer A. Engelhardt, PsyD, from the

Teachers College at Columbia University.

Signs of a parentified child

Some of the possible signs of a parentified kid are as follows:

- Stress and anxiety
- Physical symptoms including stomach problems, unexplained headaches and more.
- Aggressive behaviour and academic problems
- Social anxiety, reluctance to participate in events and engage with other kids.

How to make things right

The first and foremost step to take is to identify whether you're burdening your child with too many responsibilities. The earlier you recognize unhealthy parent-child dynamic, the better it is for you and your child.

Although most children who experienced parentification do not necessarily need therapy or treatment, if they suffer from long lasting negative effects, consult a professional. Since anxiety and depression are possible outcomes of parentification, cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) may help with the healing process.

Most importantly, help parentified kids reconnect with their inner child.

Which zodiac signs get stressed the most?

Whether you are a chill person at heart, or overthink and over plan your future -- you will have to face the music and deal with stress many times in your life. For some people, it may feel like their world is falling apart. Others might not take tricky situations that seriously. How we respond to stress also varies -- some may get serious for a short while, others might go in full panic mode. Here are the top five zodiacs which get stressed the most. Are you one of them? Let's find out!

Gemini

Gemini tops the list of the most stressed sun signs. Your stress can rise so much that even your body often feels the effects of your nervousness. You could find yourself over-communicating or intellectualizing your stressful emotions. You can try journaling to empty your thoughts on a piece of paper. You could also distract by going back to one of your favorite shows or movies or perhaps re-read a book you love.

Aries

Aries can become a complete ball of tension under stress. Your impatience and irritability are signs of great nervousness. You act swiftly when stress strikes and may be prone to reacting rashly in the heat of the moment. Your response to stress is likely to be one of frustration. People should be wary of you when the pressure builds up as you could snap or explode. On the bright side, you tend to shift out of the stressful feeling as quick-

ly as you entered it, forgetting what upset you easily later.

Virgo

Virgo buries their feelings and tries to contain their nervousness. But their stress often eats them from the inside and because of this, they're likely to have minor health issues later on. They tend to think too much, which often leads to stress. They also stress out when someone they love is struggling or is in pain.

Scorpio

Scorpio explodes, as your anxiety increases, so does your level of stress. You need to let off steam physically to release your emotions and move on. Loud yelling and noises can quickly stress you out. You also feel tense when you don't get enough space or privacy. If anyone cheats on you or betrays your confidence, your stress levels will rise.

Leo

Leo is super secretive. Your identity and ego are closely wrapped up with your emotional state, which means any threat to your reputation can be a source of stress. Controlling your emotions is a big ask for you.

Stress might bubble up for you and may generate self-doubts. You might lack the ability to go with the flow and accept the fact that you cannot control everyone. To get relieved from stress, you need to learn to live in the moment instead of trying to control every little aspect of your life.

