



Challenge Response

In a nutshell: *There are two key types of challenge responses. Destructive and constructive challenge responses. Constructive challenge responses include strategies such as focusing on solutions rather than the problems and taking rational and actionable steps to resolve issues. A destructive challenge response would be to self-medicate your problems. Many people take solace in substances to anesthetize the stress just for a temporary escape.*

Challenge response doesn't remove stress but helps you experience it differently. Understanding that you may not have the choice to have stress in your life, but you do have a choice in how to respond to it. Being aware of the stress and naming it is a good step in addressing it.

You should be very aware of self-medicating your challenges – many people will use substances to anesthetize the stress or experience a temporary escape. No matter the reason, this is a destructive way to deal with challenges.

Once you have accepted the stress there are several ways to regulate your emotions – deep breathing, mindfulness, meditation, going out in nature, recognizing the resources you have and putting them into practice. This will give you confidence in knowing there are paths out of the stress you are experiencing towards relief.

Another facet to bringing awareness to your challenges is mind management. Be aware of how you speak to yourself when stressed. Instead of spiraling in negativity remind yourself that you have been through this rodeo before and that you can handle it and persevere. Try to look at the big picture and see what you are learning and how you are growing from this experience. In such situations, it is easy to take the good in our life for granted. Be mindful of the simple things – not everyone has a roof over their head, or hot water for a shower.

Put into practice: *Write or speak out what you are grateful for. For example, in the morning with your cup of tea/coffee or before having dinner with your friends, family or just yourself. This will eventually improve your mood and attitude towards adversities.*

AXA is committed to help people to become 'fit to flourish'. To learn more, click [here](#).

- By Allison Heiliczer, *Rethink The Couch*.