

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

THE PERSPECTIVE PROCESS

1. How can I use my strengths to offset some of my challenges?

Strengths are a tremendous resource when faced with stress. By understanding your strengths, you can leverage them with any challenges you may have.

For example:

- If relationships are a strength of yours and habits are a challenge, you can use your relationships to help you with your habits through accountability and support.
- If safety is a challenge, you can use your relationship strengths to provide support and ideas for feeling safe in ways you may not have thought.

2. What effect does my temperament have on how I view stress?

There is no doubt that temperament, genetics, and upbringing all play a part in how we view stress.

- If you manage stress well and see it as an opportunity for growth, then you most likely have greater resilience with stress.
- More relaxed temperaments typically are not as alarmed by stress and may even under-respond to stress.
- Analytical temperaments will choose to view stress depending on their understanding of stress.
- If you have a more anxious temperament and struggle with seeing stress as positive, you may also have a sensitive neurological system that is easily aroused and more sensitive to stress. While this sensitivity can be helpful because you are more aware of the stress, it can also be more debilitating if you allow stress to overwhelm you. That's why it's important to change the way you view stress. Stress is not debilitating or something to avoid, but rather a normal part of life.
- More relaxed temperaments typically are not as alarmed by stress and may even under-respond to stress.

Regardless of your temperament, the Perspective process helps you to rethink and change your view and response to stress.

3. What should I do when stressful situations overtake my ability to think clearly?

Whenever you are not thinking clearly you are most likely overwhelmed emotionally. Whenever this happens, you want to try to remove yourself from the situation if possible and calm yourself down with deep breathing and calming thoughts. Keep practicing this until you know you are back in control.

4. Some of my stress is constant and I can't seem to shake it. What should I do with the process?

Some stressors are constant in life. The question is how do you view the constant stress? Living on a noisy street is a constant stressor to some but not to others. What is the difference?

- For people that accept being on a noisy street, the brain begins to habituate the noise. Meaning their brains get used to it, so they do not hear it as much anymore. They accept it and remain calmer.
- If you are not accepting the noise and getting frustrated or angry, you will become tense. If you cannot change a stressor, then learning to accept it is the best thing to do.

People learn to live with cancer, pain, a mother-in-law, a bad job, etc. They either learn to accept the reality of certain stressors and relax or they do not accept them and become tense. It is your choice.

5. What is the difference between stress and anxiety?

Stress and anxiety are a natural part of the body's reaction to danger. The purpose of this response is to ensure a person is alert, focused, and ready to deal with a threat. Since stress and anxiety have similar reactions and symptoms, it is hard to tell them apart.

- In general, stress tends to be short-term and the threat is typically recognizable.
- Anxiety can be more prolonged and there may not be an awareness of what is triggering the anxiety. Anxiety is associated more with dread and apprehension. Even when things are going well, you cannot shake the persistent anxiety. In more severe cases, anxiety can escalate into an anxiety disorder such as panic attacks, generalized anxiety, phobias, and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

If you are uncertain about whether you have stress or anxiety, please talk with your doctor.

6. How can the Perspective process help me with deeply troubling past issues that seem to cloud my entire daily thinking?

First, it is good that you are aware of these past issues and how they affect you. While they may not be pleasant and the timing may not be good, you must be aware of them.

First and foremost, make sure you are currently safe. It is hard to process bad memories if you do not feel safe. Perspective helps you rethink your stress. Remember, how you view past events decides how you respond to them in the present. If this doesn't seem enough, your action step may be to get professional help.

7. What about stresses that didn't surface in your CSA Report?

Many different types of stressors occur daily with varying degrees of severity. The CSA is a snapshot at a given point in time. Remember that the Perspective process is a general, universally applied process to change your attitude and response to stressful situations.

You can't control most circumstances, but you can control your response to them. If you believe the CSA report did not capture your stress, then put together an action plan that includes your most important stress. The main thing is to do something about your stress.

8. **Being an intuitive thinker, I don't do well with structured programs. Can the Perspective process be useful to me?**
Certainly! Whether analytical or intuitive, we all use our brains to sort through responses to almost every kind of stimulation. Some may seem more impulsive than others, but each of us uniquely applies our natural decision-making tendencies. Perspective provides a framework or method to ensure that stress does not override good judgment and more positive outcomes.

9. **I struggle with treating most situations as urgent or critical, so I often feel tension over minor stressful circumstances. How can Perspective help me to overcome a preoccupation with stress?**

You may lack perspective, the ability to put the significance of situations in context. You may also traditionally assume more responsibility than necessary, perhaps as a learned response at an early age.

Perspective trains you to identify what causes your stress and then helps you recognize the skills that change unnecessary or unwanted behaviors (responses). In several Skills videos, we explore the values of Relaxation, Adaptation, and Self-Control, giving guidance on how to live with uncertainties that are beyond our control.

USING THE WEBSITE

10. **Can I change the password to my account?**
No, passwords are assigned by the website and can't be changed.
11. **How do I resume my CSA?**
Log into your account, select "DOING", select "Retake CSA", and select "Resume CSA"
12. **How do I take another CSA?**
Go to DOING and select "Retake CSA" or go to ONGOING and select "CSA" under "Take another CSA."