



Episode 185: How to Know the Difference Between Stress and Overwhelm (and Why It Matters)

with Dr Rachel Morris

In a high-stress job, we professionals have to be able to deal with stress and overwhelm. But it's important to note that these two are not the same thing. One key factor to being able to overcome these struggles is knowing the difference between feeling stressed and feeling overwhelmed. It's only once you know what you're dealing are you able to take the right steps to feeling better.

Do you know what to do when you're feeling overwhelmed? Here's a hint, it's not the same as managing your stress.

In this You are Not a Frog Quick Tip, we give you a few reminders of what to do when you're overwhelmed versus when you're stressed. Know when you need to stop or when you need to start finding solutions. Whether you're feeling overwhelmed now or want to avoid feeling that way in the future, it may be time to stop, take a break and give your brain much-needed time to rest.

Podcast links

[Atlas of the Heart](#) by Brené Brown

YNF Episodes:

- 186: [How to Cope with Anxiety in Yourself, Your Kids and Your Colleagues with Nicky Odgers](#)
- 132: [What to Do When You are Overwhelmed with Gerrie Hawes](#)

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Quote to remember:

“Here is permission to stop. Here is permission to admit it to yourself. Take some time out because you need to be in for the long haul, you need to bid it for the long run.”

What You Will Learn

Are you overwhelmed or stressed? There is a difference between these two things that can help you figure out what to do. You’ll learn that dealing with overwhelm can be different from dealing with stress. If you get it wrong, you might end up exacerbating the negative feeling and falling deeper into your hole. If you’re right, you can take the right steps to feel better and deal with your problem when you can.

This quick tip activity looks into what you can do when you think you might be feeling too overwhelmed. The first step is always to recognize what you’re truly going through right now and identify your emotions. Once you’re able to do that, you can move on to step two for curing overwhelm.

The second part of the activity is all about the importance of taking a break especially when you feel like there’s way too much on your to-do list. It emphasizes the need to prioritize yourself and your mental health first to be able to be back to your best. Learn to take a rest and ruthlessly make time for a break for yourself, even if you have to cancel meetings and more. Remind yourself what truly matters.

You’ll find that once you’re able to take a break and rest your brain, you’re more equipped to manage your stress. It’s time to make use of the stress management techniques you’ve learned and plan out your solution. This is the best time to take action as you’re coming from a place of non-doing and feeling refreshed and better than before!

Lastly, avoid feeling overwhelmed again in the future. Remember that overwhelm can lead to burnout and it’s much better to take good care of yourself before you start feeling overwhelmed. This is your permission to take some time for yourself in the future.



Activity: Taking the Cure to Overwhelm

Step 1: Recognizing when you feel overwhelmed.

Stress is not the same thing as feeling overwhelmed. Identify the difference between these two in your own words.

Stress is...

Overwhelm is...

Think back to past experiences and see if you can determine if you were feeling stressed or overwhelmed.

Stressful Experiences	Overwhelming Experiences

Are you feeling stressed or overwhelmed right now?

Step 2: Ruthlessly take the time you need.

Check your calendar. What can you cancel today or this week to give you some time to stop and give your brain a chance to rest? Plot out your week's schedule in the space below and cross out what you can cancel.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat	Sun



Get into your effort all mindset! As you look at your calendar and hesitate to cancel anything, ask yourself these questions:

What do these things truly matter? Are they really important and critical right now?

Will the world end if you don't make this happen?

With this new perspective, go back to your schedule and see if you can cancel any more things.

Step 3: Deal with the leftover stress.

Once you've been able to have a break, it's time to deal with the stress. Which stress management techniques work best for you to manage stress?

Plan out how you can carry out your solution to deal with stress in the area below.





Step 4: Avoid overwhelm in the future

Eliminate hurry in your future. Look at your schedule for the next month and make sure to put in buffers for your brain to be able to take a rest. Mark the dates and times you can dedicate to your non-doing.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat	Sun

CPD time claimed:

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