

# How to Deal With Stress in Your Life: Embrace It

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My Uncle Sidney, a retired U.S. Navy physician and Vietnam veteran, has a military phrase he uses as advice for what to do when life is lousy: Embrace the Suck.

He's dispensed this colorful guidance to me in several stressful situations—when I've been anxious on deadline, dealing with a difficult family member, and, most recently, struggling through the pandemic.

“The point is, when you're stuck, surrounded or suffering, you need to assess where you are, learn to live with it, and try to advance,” Uncle Sidney says.

Pretty good advice for our times.

We're still dealing with the whiplash of uncertainty and the emotions it provokes: frustration, anxiety, anger and fear. To help us through, psychologists recommend an approach similar to Uncle Sidney's, which they call acceptance.

They define it as the ability to see reality clearly and embrace all our emotions, both pleasant and unpleasant. It's a focus of a widely used and studied therapeutic approach called Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), which a large body of research shows helps people feel [less anxious and depressed](#) and more resilient and hopeful.

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