

---

As the carefree days of summer give way to cooler mornings and busier schedules, many people feel an emotional shift known as the “September Scaries.” This term describes the emotional and psychological stress that often comes with the transition from summer to fall. It can arise when school starts, workloads increase, daylight hours shrink and the holiday season begins to peek over the horizon.

---

**According to the [National Library of Medicine](#), research has found that perceived stress levels often rise in late fall, even before the holidays begin.**

---

The September Scaries are common, but they’re also manageable. This article explains how to transform autumn from a period of stress into one of grounded renewal and purpose.

## Why the September Scaries Happen

Transitions can be stressful, even when they’re expected. Summer’s flexibility often allows for more spontaneous activities, extra time outdoors and a slower pace. When autumn arrives, that freedom is often replaced by structure: school drop-offs, stricter work deadlines and a calendar filled with obligations.

This shift can cause a sense of loss. The days are shorter, so natural light exposure decreases, which can affect mood and energy levels. The increased demands of work or family life can leave little room for rest or personal time. For parents, students and professionals alike, the return to a more rigid schedule can magnify feelings of anxiety, fatigue and irritability.

Recognizing these changes as part of a seasonal rhythm can help normalize your experience and open the door to strategies that can help make the transition smoother.

## How to Ease the Transition

Here are a few practical ways to make the shift from summer to fall feel smoother and more manageable:

- **Write down your worries.** Naming your concerns helps make them more manageable. Identify what’s causing your stress and determine if it’s based on facts or assumptions. Once you have a clearer picture, you can address the issues that truly need attention and let go of those that are exaggerated or unlikely.
- **Establish routines that work for you.** A consistent schedule provides stability, especially during times of change. Try to maintain consistent wake-up and sleep times, eat balanced meals regularly, and dedicate specific periods to work or study. Scheduling enjoyable activities, such as weekend outings with friends or time for hobbies, can help offset the monotony and give you something positive to anticipate.
- **Prioritize self-care.** This is an ideal time to reinforce healthy habits. Good sleep hygiene, nutrient-rich meals and regular movement can improve both mood and resilience. Even small actions, such as a short daily walk or a few minutes of stretching, can help you feel more grounded and energized.
- **Embrace the season’s unique offerings.** Instead of focusing on what summer took with it, shift your attention to what fall brings. Explore local trails surrounded by autumn leaves, bake with seasonal produce, visit a pumpkin patch or take up a cozy indoor hobby. Leaning into seasonal traditions can help you create new sources of joy.

## Summary

The September Scaries don’t have to define your fall. By understanding why these feelings surface and taking proactive steps to manage them, you can turn the seasonal transition into a time of growth, reflection and even excitement. With the right mindset and habits, fall can become not just a season of busyness but also one of balance and renewal.

If you have any concerns about your well-being, reach out to a mental health professional.

---

