

STRESS RELIEVERS

Learn to say "NO" and mean it!

Shut stress off at the "intake" valve, not after you have it.

Set realistic goals — Remember these are your goals.

Cut the deadwood out of your life. Forget the oughts, and shoulds, have-to's and quit. Cut out anything that drains your time and energy or is no longer enjoyable.

Use your leisure time to provide balance.

Exercise. **MAKE** time for it!

Proper nutrition and sufficient sleep help.

Learn breathing and relaxation techniques.

Keep a sense of humor.

Indulge yourself—do special things for yourself.

Change the environment — withdraw from the situation for awhile.

Use break times for fun — do a crossword puzzle or play games.

Find a good listener (a patient person who won't interrupt or give advice)

Stretch. Stand up.

Smile. Read a joke book. Visit with someone who has a good sense of humor. See a funny movie.

Do something that you consider "playing."

Separate work life and home life.

Sing — it requires deep abdominal breathing.

Attention — absorbing hobbies are satisfying.

LAUGH.

Listen to pleasant music, daydream, use visualization techniques.

Don't delay doing distasteful things. Accept short-term stress rather than long-term anxiety and discomfort. Make a constructive worry list. Then ask:

- 1) What is the worst thing that could happen?
- 2) Is there anything I can really do about it and do I want to do something?

Rule #1: Don't sweat the small stuff

Rule #2: It is all small stuff. You can't fight or flee, so flow.

STRESS

15 WAYS TO RELAX

1. Exercise regularly. Aerobic activity is a natural stress reducer.
2. Practice relaxation techniques, such as deep breathing.
3. Know your limitations and set realistic goals.
4. Pamper yourself. Take a hot bath, get a massage or curl up with a good book.
5. Organize your life. Make a list of the things you need or want to do.
6. Delegate tasks and ask for help. Friends, family members and many local organizations can help ease the burden of daily life.
7. Make time for yourself every day to do what feels good to you.
8. Laughter is good medicine. Read a humorous book or see a funny movie.
9. Eliminate or change stressful activities.
10. Enjoy time with your favorite people.
11. Give yourself a pat on the back.
12. Avoid reliving your mistakes. Find out what you can learn from them and move on.
13. Eat a well-balanced diet, low in fat and calories and high in fiber. Avoid foods and beverages with high sugar, caffeine or alcohol. A poor diet can add to your stress level.
14. Talk to someone about your problems. Sometimes, discussing your difficulties, worries and concerns out loud can put them into perspective.
15. Be optimistic. It will help you handle the stress in your life.

21 Ways to Cope with Stress

- 1. Take care of yourself.**
For example, once in the morning and once in the afternoon:
 - Make a telephone call to someone who really cheers you up.
 - Explore a new "fantasy" vacation that you can tag on to your next working trip.
- 2. Take slowpoke training.**
Slow down. Allow more time for tasks, getting to appointments, eating meals, and relaxation.
- 3. Ride a rainbow.**
See something pretty in what's about you. It's really quite a lovely world if you take time to look at it.
- 4. Pin a medal on yourself.**
Reward yourself when you've worked hard. Have some lobster. Go out dancing. See a show.
- 5. Pretend you're on four wheels.**
You'd never abuse your car like you do your body. Exercise. Get sleep. Alcohol, coffee, and cigarettes don't reduce stress—they increase it.
- 6. Retire from the Supreme court.**
Get out of the world-affairs-judgment business. Why add to your stress level by useless worry over problems that may be insolvable?
- 7. Get lost in a dream.**
Always be working on something larger than the weeds by the rose-bush, car payments, or dusty closet shelves. Tomorrow's dream takes the stress out of today's problem.
- 8. Don't buy a cow to get a glass of milk.**
Don't make big deals out of everything. Simplify life. Take on a little bit at a time.
- 9. Avoid leaping contest with kangaroos.**
Don't compete with everybody doing everything. Refuse to compare yourself to others. Set your own standards.
- 10. Go to the North Pole.**
Or a cave or attic or anywhere you can be by yourself. Try to be alone for a few minutes each day just to relax, meditate, or read.
- 11. Don't tie tin cans onto dogs' tails.**
Be kind. Respect the feelings of others. Be nice to everyone. Let relationships run smoothly.
- 12. So, who cares?**
Maybe today, but 500 years from now? Or even five years from now? Put things in their right perspectives. They may not be as important as you think.
- 13. Develop the ability to interpret a stressful event as a new challenge.**
When all else fails, learn to laugh at yourself when the roof falls in.
- 14. Plan your next crisis.**
Some stressors keep coming back repeatedly, so, next time, anticipate it and manage it calmly.
- 15. Work on being open and politely assertive.**
Suppressed feelings, anxieties, self-doubts, and low self-esteem are among major stresses that lead to illness and disease. Expressing your feelings clearly and directly without being defensive or threatening can be a great tension-reliever.
- 16. Determine how real your stresses are.**
Assess the worst possible outcome. Then let worries be forgotten.
- 17. Look at crises differently.**
View them as a positive push toward necessary change.
- 18. Stay calm when crises hit.**
Take long easy breaths from the beltline. Let your jaw and shoulders relax with every breath out.
- 19. Do one task at a time.**
Avoid trying to drive a car, eat your lunch, plan a meeting agenda, and dictate a letter all at the same time.
- 20. Remember you're not alone.**
Allow your family and friends to be there when you need them. Develop and use your support network.
- 21. Follow the Serenity Prayer.**
God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference.