

14 Stress Reducers

Stress is an inevitable part of life. While it may not be possible to eliminate, it is possible to manage. It's important to experiment and find out what works best for you. Try exploring these tips to get started on de-stressing your life and improving your health.

- 1.** Get up 15 minutes earlier in the morning. The inevitable morning mishaps will be less stressful.
- 2.** Prepare for the morning the evening before. Set the breakfast table, make lunches, put out the clothes you plan to wear, etc.
- 3.** Don't rely on your memory, write it down! The act of writing things down helps save thoughts, ideas and to-do lists into your long-term memory.
- 4.** Plan ahead. Don't let the gas tank get below one-quarter full, don't wait until you're down to your last postage stamp to buy more, etc.
- 5.** Allow 15 minutes of extra time to get to appointments. You will feel in control.
- 6.** Use people's names! This amazingly simple technique can improve all communication and personalize interactions.
- 7.** Ask questions. Taking time to learn what is expected of you can save hours.
- 8.** Use an alarm clock to remind you to go to bed so that you get at least 7 hours of sleep.
- 9.** Writing your thoughts and feelings down (in a journal or on paper to be thrown away) can help you clarify things and can give you a renewed perspective.
- 10.** Inhale deeply through your nose, to the count of eight. Then, with lips puckered, exhale very slowly through your mouth to the count of 16, or for as long as you can. Concentrate on the long sighing sound and feel the tension dissolve. Repeat 10 times.
- 11.** Get up and stretch periodically if your job requires that you sit for an extended period.
- 12.** Talk it out. Discussing your problems with a trusted friend can help clear your mind of confusion so you can concentrate on problem solving.
- 13.** Schedule a realistic day. Avoid the tendency to schedule back-to-back appointments; allow time between appointments for a breathing spell.
- 14.** Allow yourself time — everyday — for privacy, quiet time, and introspection.