

STRESS MANAGEMENT



STRESSORS

Below, list the first five things that come to your mind that cause you stress.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____



THE 20 POINT STRESS TEST

Check those descriptions that apply to you

- 1. Your stomach tightens into a knot when you think about your job and all that you have to do.
- 2. You have trouble sleeping at night.
- 3. You frantically race from place to place trying to get everything done that is required of you.
- 4. You seem “on edge” or angry with people for no apparent reason.
- 5. You feel depressed at the end of the day for not accomplishing all that you had planned to do.
- 6. You experience frequent mood changes including overreacting to minor problems.
- 7. You need some type of drug, alcohol or tobacco to get through the day.
- 8. You have difficulty maintaining intimate relationships.
- 9. You neglect your diet or exercise routine making excuses that you don't have time.

THE 20 POINT STRESS TEST

- ___ 10. You tend to keep everything bottled up inside.
- ___ 11. You think there is only one right way to do everything.
- ___ 12. You fail to find humor in many situations others see as funny.
- ___ 13. You do not leave the office for lunch or short breaks.
- ___ 14. You make a “big deal” out of everything.
- ___ 15. You get angry when you have to wait on anything.
- ___ 16. You try to do everything yourself.
- ___ 17. You feel that most people move too slowly for you.

THE 20 POINT STRESS TEST

- ___ 18. You feel guilty when you take time for yourself.
- ___ 19. You cut people off mid-sentence so that you can tell your point of view or opinion.
- ___ 20. You experience memory loss.
- ___ Total number of check marks

SCORES

- 0-5 too little stress, you need more activities
- 5-10 moderate stress, manage it wisely
- 10+ high stress, consider health issues

Good stress
vs
Bad stress

STRATEGIES FOR COPING WITH STRESS

Negative Coping

Alcohol/Drugs
Denial of problems
Eating/Not Eating
Fault-finding
Illnesses
Impatience
Being self-destructive
Zoning out (TV, Computer)
Obsessive thinking
Stubbornness
Tantrums
Overdo Tobacco/Caffeine
Anger/Violence
Withdrawing from friends
Sleeping too much
Staying too busy
Avoidance

Positive Coping

Play
Work
Faith
Limits
Exercise
Laughter
Flexibility
Surrender
Counseling
Relaxation
Meditation
Alone Time
Affirmations
Commitment
Togetherness
Conflict Resolution
Ask for help

Common Mechanisms for Coping with Stress

You are responsible for finding solutions to the problems causing your stress

Admit what your stressors are and how they are affecting your life.

Seek out trustworthy sources of support. Talk to people who want to help you.

Use relaxation or meditation exercises

Research methods of relaxation and meditation to relieve stress and increase self control.

Get physical exercise

Studies show that a brisk fifteen-minute walk can be more calming than a tranquilizer.

A regular program of aerobic exercise 3 times a week can keep tension from building up.

Drink a glass of water

Many people don't drink enough water and our bodies need constant hydration.

A glass of water can change your attitude in 15 minutes.

Common Mechanisms for Coping with Stress

Find emotional support from friends or relatives Talk to others; share your anxiety.

Write your feelings down Writing can help you let go of your fears or clarify things.

Breathe slowly and deeply Forgot to breathe? Practice taking slow, deep breaths periodically during the day. It's a quick attitude changer.

Take a warm bath or shower or swim Water is a great stress reducer. Use progressive muscle relaxation while you are soaking.

Practice better time management Review your time management skills and practice with a daily planner. Remember to look at your planner DAILY!

Prioritize tasks Take care of the most important tasks first and let the others wait.

Common Mechanisms for Coping with Stress

Seek professional help. Talking to a supportive counselor can help you get a better perspective on your situation and give you ideas for change.

Redefine your goals or set more sensible standards. Be realistic! Do not try to achieve the impossible.

Take control of your life. Systematically reduce some of the sources of stress. Learn to say “No” to unreasonable demands. Find a way out of a dead-end job or relationship.

Distract yourself. Some problems cannot be resolved now, so don’t think about the situation. Go out with a friend, see a movie, or immerse yourself in a book. Let go of the situation and busy yourself with something else...

Plan your life so that you find satisfaction in more than one place.

You are more likely to find support and appreciation if you engage in a variety of activities.

Do you follow the 12 steps to a positive attitude?

1. **Are you willing to learn**, no matter how difficult it is?
2. **Do you do your best when studying**, and try to improve how you do your work?
3. **Do you demonstrate enthusiasm** in whatever you say and do?
4. **Do you welcome challenges**, experiment and try new things?
5. **Do you have a sense of humor** by not taking yourself too seriously?
6. **Are you confident**, believing that you can achieve your dreams?
7. **Are you a positive person**, being grateful for the things you have in life?
8. **Do you do your best to be punctual**, taking into consideration other people's time?
9. **Can you be patient**, allowing time to let life take care of resolving some issues?
10. **Do you believe in yourself**, you are unique in this world, and so are your talents.
11. **Have you set goals for yourself**, working towards them each day?
12. **How do you have fun in life**, can you play and not take yourself too seriously?

Stress and SELF-TALK

Twelve Quick Tips to Reduce Stress

1. Replace the phrase “I have to” with “I get to” to give a positive feeling to your daily tasks .
2. Cut out coffee, chocolate and soft drinks. Caffeine elevates your anxiety and stress levels.
3. Keep toys on your desk to play with during stressful moments. A stress ball is ideal!
4. Write down your stressful situation, include all the details. Often clarify follows.
5. Tackle the most stressful tasks first while your mind and body are most alert.
6. Exercise at your desk or during breaks. This can take you mind off stressful thoughts.
7. Get some oxygen into your body by practicing deep breathing techniques.
8. Drink orange juice or eat foods rich in vitamin C to reduce the making of stress hormones.
9. Sing a song to relax the body and assist in deep breathing.
10. Watch a funny video or call a fun friend. Laughter really is the best medicine.

Have some fun...



Adapted from "Twelve Tips to Reduce Stress" by Justin Tyme <http://www.ideasandtraining.com/>



Good Health

Key Point: You are what you eat, you feel what you think, and you do what you choose.

The basic ingredients

Food

Eat to live don't live to eat.

Eat several small meals, rather than two or three large meals a day.

Emphasize fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds and grains.

High protein meals give high energy and are best eaten in the morning.

High carbohydrate meals produce sleepiness and are best in the

evening.

Drink lots of water. Our bodies love water.

Exercise

Exercise can release tension, boost energy, build self-esteem and create a all-around good feeling. Try to exercise daily by jogging, swimming, dancing, walking, bicycling, or whatever gets the heart and lungs working.

Sleep

Most people have a natural 24-hour rhythm of sleep and wakefulness. The best sleep occurs when the body and mind expect it. Set a bedtime/wake-up routine and stick to it. Good sleep makes for good days.



Good Health

Problem areas

Sugar Blues

Too much sugar can create an emotional roller coaster, sending blood sugar and energy levels sky high, and then sinking both to depressing or irritating lows. If this happens to you, try snacks of fruits, veggies and nuts.

Colds and flu

Keep from catching colds and the flu by washing your hands often. Practice good hygiene and healthy living habits to maintain a healthy body.

Stress

The major causes of stress are fear and uncertainty. Talking to someone might help relieve stress. So does exercising, relaxing and cultivating a positive attitude.

Alcohol and drugs

Both destroy brain cells which then diminishes mental ability. Avoid or restrict them. If you think you have a problem, ask for help.



Good Health

Let your emotions help

Emotions

Good health begins and ends with emotions.

Smile easily, laugh often, be positive, friendly, kind and helpful.

Enjoy who you are! Change what needs changing, you have time. Express yourself and then, let it go! Holding on to resentments, anger and grudges don't allow you to live in the present.

Relaxation

The simplest, cheapest and most underrated ingredient to relieve stress is relaxation, especially deep relaxation. Meditation can be a life long practice that improves your attitude, self esteem, emotions, health and self expression.

RELAXATION

[Meditation Is an Incompatible Response to Anxiety and Tension](#)

The Relaxation Process Includes Four Stages:

- Deep breathing
- Cognitive muscle relaxation
- Visualization or imagery
- An awakened state



A simple relaxation exercise at your desk

1. Sit straight up in your chair, feet flat on the floor, hands resting in your lap face up and with your eyes closed. Let the noise in the room pass through your mind but don't focus on it. Let it go. Take slow deep breathes, in through the nose out through your mouth, feel the air enter and exit slowly. Do this 6 times. Fill your lungs slowly and slowly let the air out. You are slowing down.
2. Starting with your feet, tighten both of your feet, as tight as you can, count to 6 and let go. Breathe in and breathe out. Move to your calves, then your thighs, your bottom, your stomach, your chest, then your arms and hands. Hold each area tight for 6 counts, then let go. Feel the tingling and relax into it. Pull your shoulders up to your ears and hold for 6 counts and then let go. Scrunch your face up and tighten the top of your head, count to 6, then let go. Feel the tension leave your body. Relax. Breathe easy.
3. After you have tightened each of your muscles, continue to sit for 3 minutes more breathing gently, letting thoughts pass through and out of your head. Eventually try not to think about anything at all, try to clear your mind of thoughts and just breathe.
4. After 3 minutes slowly bring yourself back into the room and feel the quiet calm throughout your body.

Be gentle with yourself, be own your best friend.

