

STRESS BUSTERS



Stress We all have it. You can't escape it. Stress isn't good or bad, it just is. If you allow stress to build up, it can become distress which can play havoc with our health and our lives. We can, however, direct that energy on a positive path. These are a few ideas you can use on a daily basis to help you achieve and maintain your optimal state of health and prevent distress.

Diaphragmatic Breathing:

Place one hand on your abdomen and the other on your chest. Emphasize the breathing of the abdomen, feeling the hand rise as you inhale and fall as you exhale. Let the chest relax

Exercise:

Take a walk, a bike ride, play tennis, or jog. Exercise is a natural stress reducer.

Neck Exercises:

1. Drop your head forward (chin to chest), hold for 10 seconds. Slowly rotate to the left with your ear toward your shoulder. Hold for 20 seconds. Drop your head forward and rotate to the right. Hold for 10 seconds
2. Look over your left shoulder, relax. Hold for 20 seconds. Look over your right shoulder. Hold for 20 seconds.

Shoulder Exercises:

1. Place your fingers on your shoulders, rotate your shoulder by imagining that you are drawing a circle with your elbows for 20 seconds. Reverse direction for 20 seconds.
2. Interlace your fingers and stretch your arms above your head, facing and pressing your palms toward the ceiling.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation:

Tense and relax each of the various muscle groups (feet, calves, thighs, buttocks, stomach, chest, shoulders, arms, hands, back, cheeks, jaw, throat, and neck). Inhale just before you tense and exhale completely each time you relax.

Double Breath:

Inhale a vigorous double breath through the nostrils and exhale through the mouth with an ah-ha sound. Repeat three times.

Scream:

Roll up the window in the car or wrap a towel around your head and let out a scream. Screaming is a great way to let go of tension and anger.

Cold Splash

Splash your face with cold water at mid-day. This is invigorating and refreshing. Take a quick shower.

Laugh

Laughter releases endorphins into the system and relaxes the nervous system.

Use Empty Times:

While standing in line at the bank or waiting at a stop light, take a few deep breaths and use this opportunity to practice relaxation.

Express Yourself:

Express your emotions and feelings. Talk out your worries with loved ones.

Music:

Listen to soothing music.

A Hug A Day:

Give and receive at least seven hugs a day. Tell a friend or spouse how much you appreciate them. Do something for others.

Avoid Self-Medication

Avoid cigarettes, alcohol, caffeine, salt, sugar, and processed foods.

Take One Thing at a Time:

It is defeating to tackle all your tasks at once. Prioritize your tasks and work.

Give in Once in a While

If the source of your stress is other people, try giving in instead of fighting.

Reward Yourself:

If you handle a stressful situation effectively – reward yourself.

Be Present:

Learn to appreciate whatever you are currently doing.