

Monthly Newsletter

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Stress Busters: 20 Little Things You Can Do To Lower Stress Immediately!

Stress management does not necessarily require major changes in our lives--only minor adjustments. The psychology team at the University of Washington at Tacoma offers the following suggestions:

1. Go to bed 15 to 30 minutes earlier at night. You will feel amazingly more refreshed in the morning!
2. Reduce or eliminate caffeine from your diet. Caffeine is a major stimulant.
3. Avoid chronic perfectionism! It's OK to be perfectionistic about some things, like taking medications in just the right way. But don't be bothered by fuzz-balls under your bed!
4. Take time to visit your local library. Enjoy browsing through magazines that you would ordinarily not come into contact with.
5. Don't feel that you must find tasks to do at home on your day off. A lazy Sunday afternoon often yields a refreshed and renewed outlook on Monday morning!
6. Build some personal time into your schedule each day during which you choose to do something that is relaxing or refreshing. Taking just 15 minutes to read the newspaper or taking a hot bath are two popular choices.
7. Improve your appearance. Get a haircut, manicure or new outfit. Looking better will help you feel better!
8. Nourish your friendship circle. Call an old friend or send a card to someone who might be going through some bad times.
9. Limit activities with "negative" friends or acquaintances who reinforce bad or stressful feelings.
10. Take a long walk several times a week. The release of endorphins will trigger a great sense of well being.
11. Learn to appreciate those closest to you. All too often, we tend to take their positive traits for granted and focus on traits we wish we could "change."
12. Make time for some volunteer work in your community, thereby "stepping out of yourself" and your problems.
13. Visit a local nursing home on occasion and get to know one or more residents. By brightening their day, you'll brighten your own.
14. Explore your creativity! Take a class in something that you might find challenging but rewarding. Example: One harried accountant discovered joy and serenity in learning calligraphy.
15. Learn to say no! Never give an immediate answer to someone's request for your time or assistance. (Note: This does not make you a selfish person.)
16. Go to a movie...particularly a mystery or thriller in which you can "lose" yourself and become absorbed.
17. Simplify your life. Cut out a few selected activities that are ritualistic but not truly necessary.
18. Spend some quality time with your family pet. Research studies have consistently documented the calming effects that pets can induce.
19. Don't procrastinate! Remember that we tend to postpone those tasks we find burdensome or threatening, but they continue to loom on the horizon thus causing stress. Tackle them and get past them!
20. Schedule "worry time" every few days during which you can focus exclusively on things that might be causing you concern. Attempt to come up with one workable idea which may impact positively on your problems.