

10 Tips to Help Keep Stress at Bay Every Day

By Jenna E. Caputo

Stress is a huge factor in our everyday lives – it doesn't matter if you're naturally a chronic worrier or if you are a yoga meditation master – stress is still there. So what do we do? How do we avoid unavoidable stress from taking over our lives?

1. **ACCEPT THAT THERE ARE MANY THINGS IN OUR LIVES THAT WE CAN'T CONTROL.** Sometimes you have to just make yourself let go and let it be.
2. **MAKE TIME TO EXERCISE.** The more fit and strong your body is, the better it can fight stress.
3. **ADD IN EXTRA TIME WHENEVER POSSIBLE.** When you are able to give yourself a few extra minutes, it takes away the stress of the impending deadline, or that unexpected traffic jam.
4. **AVOID THE "QUICK FIXES."** Things like alcohol, caffeine, smoking and recreational drugs may seem like they help, but the effect is just a short-term mirage.
5. **TAKE A BREAK.** Hitting a freak out level? Stop yourself and walk away. Even just a 5-10 minute break will help.
6. **WATCH YOUR BREATH.** Many times our inhalation is longer than the exhalation. However, long exhalations give our heart time to relax, since the heart only rests in

between beats.


7. **EAT HEALTHY.** Regular wholesome foods allow your body to work smoothly, without the added stress of trying to process junk.

8. **USE IMAGERY.** There are many forms of imagery, but if you use even a basic method, imagery can help calm and focus the system and make your stressors more manageable.

9. **SLEEP.** Our bodies heal themselves when we sleep, as do our minds. Go to bed at a decent hour every night to allow the body to recharge so you can approach the day from a calm, "clean" slate and be stronger and ready to fight off the rest of the stressors of the day as they come.

10. **ATTITUDE ADJUSTMENT.** "Fake it till you make it." That phrase can be so annoying sometimes, but is so true. Try to keep a positive attitude. Instead of saying things like, "Nothing ever works right for me," say, "I'm doing my best." "This will work right." Instead of, "I feel so tired and crappy all the time," tell yourself, "I feel great. I am strong. I am capable. I can do this." ■

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