

Stress Reduction Checklist



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It seems in this day and age everyone is affected by some form of stress. Once you learn what causes your stress, you can learn the best ways for you to reduce it and deal with it. Use this handy checklist to identify your stressors and ways to reduce their effects on you.

Identifying Stressors

- Journaling how I feel and what is causing my stress helps me identify what my stressors are and how I react to them.
- Physical symptoms: Do I have headaches, upset stomach, grind my teeth, tense muscles? Am I sleepy all the time or do I have trouble sleeping? I keep a journal of when these symptoms are worse.
- Is my stress work related? Am I overworked, working long hours with little reward? Do I have too much responsibility or am I afraid of losing my job?
- Is my stress coming from a dysfunctional relationship at home? Am I dealing with teenagers or others who don't respect me? Am I a caregiver for a special needs child or elderly parent?

Ways to Reduce Stress

- I accept that the worst could happen. Once it's accepted, the mind becomes calm and clear and ready to find a constructive solution.
- My attitude affects how I deal with stress. Negative thoughts make a situation more stressful.
- Deep breathing techniques can be done almost anywhere. Adding guided imagery or soothing music helps me do my breathing techniques.
- Yoga allows me to release stress hormones and relax my body.
- Meditation allows my mind to relax and find solutions to my problems.
- I practice aromatherapy, a process that uses essential oils to promote relaxation. I have a variety of oils including lavender to help me relax.
- I have a variety of herbal teas to help me relax. When I feel stressed, I take a few minutes to relax with a cup of herbal tea.
- I use the emotional freedom technique. With this form of therapy you locate and tap pressure points located on your body.
- I keep track of what and when I am eating. I no longer eat when I feel stressed. I find other ways to deal with it instead.

- I eat a healthy, balanced diet to help build up my immune system and lower my blood pressure.
- I eliminate processed foods (especially fast food) to help my body feel better. When I feel better I can cope with stressful situations better.
- I choose foods that give me energy, like raw foods such as oranges, nuts, or spinach. I eat Omega 3 Fatty acid foods such as fish as well.
- I don't skip meals. I get three healthy meals each day.
- I eliminate mindless eating. I no longer snack on bags of crisps or biscuits.
- I steer clear of simple carbs like chocolate and sweets. I no longer drink fizzy drinks.
- I get out of the house when I am stressed. I attend comedy shows or watch funny movies. Laughter is a tremendous stress reliever.
- I listen to my favourite music. Classical music has been shown to soothe emotions. I dance, sing and have fun.
- I volunteer and give my time to helping others. I also remember to keep time on my calendar for me.
- When my muscles are tense, I spend a day at the spa. I give myself permission to get a spa treatment to help relax my muscles.
- I enjoy relaxing with a good book. Not a book I need to read but one that is purely for enjoyment.
- I am exploring new hobbies like painting, ceramics or crafts. I find hobbies I enjoy and that keep my hands and mind busy.
- Gardening has become a passion. Planting flowers or vegetables relaxes me.
- I take a soothing bath when I am stressed. I light candles. Add calming bath products with lavender or chamomile. Put on an eye mask and just relax.
- I am learning to say "no". I realise my family can take care of themselves occasionally.
- I play like a child or play with my children. I let go. Run. Giggle. Just being silly.
- I call or spend time with positive friends when I feel stress overwhelming me.
- I get out of the house if the stress is there. Go to see a film or a new restaurant.
- I spend time doing things I enjoy like taking a walk in nature or visiting a museum.

- I have spoken with my doctor about my stress. I have researched the side effects of any pharmaceuticals recommended.
- When my stress becomes too much for me to handle I contact a professional to help me through it.

Avoiding Stress

- I have begun keeping a time management log to prioritise my tasks into what is important and what can wait. I manage my time by doing things in short blocks of time or asking others to help with projects.
- I am changing the part of my lifestyle that seems to be the most stressful. I no longer juggle everything. Now I say “no” to obligations that aren’t a priority.
- I am getting enough sleep. Sleep helps my body recover. I keep a notepad by my bed to record what I’m worrying about when my problems keep me awake.
- I have changed my lifestyle to one that is healthier. I eat healthy foods, limit my alcohol consumption and don’t smoke. I exercise, including walking, daily.

Embracing Peacefulness

- Whenever a stressful situation arises, I do not give it my immediate reaction. I always take little time to think about it before I respond.
- The past is in the past. I will concentrate on the here and now and what things I can control.
- I am learning to think positively. I try to find the good in every situation.
- Giving thanks for the blessings in my life right now is a priority I do every day.
- I spend time listening to my inner self. I take breaks when my body tells me things are getting too stressful.
- I genuinely care about others and how they feel. I smile and hug more often.
- I am learning to fully embrace myself in my beliefs and my faith.
- Forgiveness helps lift a weight off me. It gets rid of the bitterness and negativity surrounding blame.