

A man and a woman are performing a yoga pose in a studio. The man is in the foreground, wearing a grey long-sleeved shirt, with his arms raised and head tilted back. The woman is behind him, wearing a blue tank top, also with her arms raised. They are on a green yoga mat on a wooden floor.

Stress | *Tip sheet*

Stress Management: Is It Possible?

Few of us would argue that balancing both personal and working lives is complicated, often hectic, and at times, quite stressful. Change will always be present so it's important that we face the stressors that are presented to us. Everyone responds to stress differently, some don't suffer long-term symptoms—taking on the capacity and willingness to alter habitual ways of responding to stress. Does this mean we will never experience the unpleasant side effects of stress? Certainly not. What it does imply is that we can reduce the intensity and duration of the common symptoms associated with everyday stress.

We believe that there are many things an individual can do to reduce the impact of stress and curtail the negative effects of common symptoms such as anxiety, depression, insomnia, headaches, loss of concentration, back pain, anger outbursts and many others.

One overriding requirement for any effective stress management plan is an individual's willingness to remain uncomfortable as he or she experiments with new responses. If you insist on change but are not willing to tolerate getting out of the "comfort zone" and face some ambiguity, then your efforts may not be successful.

There are many steps we can take to begin managing stress. Some of these may sound simplistic, but it has been our experience that most people do not engage in sudden dramatic change. Small steps, over time, lead to more lasting positive consequences.

Stress will not go away, ever, in your lifetime. The only thing that can change is how you respond to its presence. Below you can find simple recommendations to take as you begin to take control of your stressors. We urge you to begin experimenting, and then observe any changes that occur over time.

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Stress Management

15 Suggested Stress Busters:

Take 10 minutes each morning and afternoon to clear your mind, focus on your breathing and to review the positives that exist in your life right now.

Once each week, do something compassionate for another human being.

Review what you have accomplished in your life that you are proud of.

Avoid spending time with people who constantly complain or are negative.

Listen to music.

Make certain that you increase your hours of sleep. Sleep deprivation and sleep disorders are epidemic in our culture and are causing a significant increase in depression.

Simplify one area of your life. (e.g. throw something out!!)

Exercise 3 times per week for at least 30 minutes.

Practice some deep, slow breathing a few times per day. Close your eyes for a minute, take time out, and breathe.

Be silly with someone whom you trust or love. Play more. Be a kid for a minute and let some positive endorphins flow through your brain's chemistry.

Forgive someone in your life.

Try to listen more, talk less.

Stop making huge "to-do lists." Make a short list and take some satisfaction in completing the tasks.

Search out optimistic people; eat lunch with an upbeat, non-stressed person.

Stop believing that "life is a rehearsal" and that you have unlimited time. Begin now, knowing that you have no guarantees about tomorrow. Do something different today!

◆ Your well-being is our priority.

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