

101 Stress Relievers

Need a quick—or not so quick—stress-break? Fresh out of ideas? Try one of these:

ANGRY? TALK TO A FRIEND ABOUT IT.
Apologize for a mistake. **Meditate.**
Stand up and stretch.

Ask for help.
Call up an old friend.

Build a model ship.

TELL someone "I love you." a joke.
STOP AND YAWN.

Stop and look out the window.

Change coffee break to exercise break.

Work a crossword puzzle.

Close your eyes. What do you see?

Count to ten—or 1000—before exploding.
Count your blessings—make a list.

CLIMB A MOUNTAIN.

Cut back on caffeine.

WATCH A REALLY GOOD MOVIE.

Plan ahead.

DAYDREAM spend your coffee break at the beach.

Do one thing at a time.

Eat a good breakfast.

Forgive someone.

Fly a kite.

Get a massage. Get a pet.

Find someone you're grateful to and thank them.

Go fishing.

Get a good night's sleep.

GO

for a brisk walk. swimming. to work a different way.

Get up fifteen minutes early.

Keep a journal of thoughts and feelings.

Hug a tree.

Hug someone you love.

Laugh at something you did.

Leave the car at home and take the bus. **Lie in a hammock.**

Lift weights.

Listen to the birds.

Make love.

LOOK at the big picture. closely at a flower, leaf, blade of grass or tree trunk. off into the distance.

Read a good book.

Play a round of golf.

Make a list. Then follow it.

WASH THE CAR. Plant a flower. Smell a rose.

- ✓ Take a child to the playground.
- ✓ Take a deep breath and let it all out.
- ✓ Take a leisurely stroll.
- ✓ Take a long bath.
- ✓ Take a nap.
- ✓ Take an herb tea break.
- ✓ Take one day at a time.
- ✓ Take the back roads.
- ✓ Take the stairs.
- ✓ Take time for the sunset—or sunrise.
- ✓ Take up knitting.

Massage your temples.

Quit smoking.

Write a poem.

READ SOMETHING FUNNY EVERY DAY.

Ride your bike to work.

PUT ... a cat in your lap. ... on some music. ... plants in your office. ... your feet up.

Write a letter to the editor.

Share feelings with someone. Practice Yoga. **Work out at the gym.**

WEAR EARPLUGS WHEN IT'S NOISY.

TALK TO YOURSELF: "I CAN DO A GREAT JOB." "I CAN STAY CALM UNDER PRESSURE."

Paint a peaceful scene—in your imagination.

Make time for play.

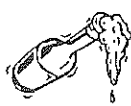
Spend an evening without TV.

Write... down your fears. down your dreams. your congressman.

PRACTICE LAUGHING OUT LOUD.

Watch a cloud for 5 minutes. Watch an ant or other insect for 5 minutes.

Sit by a fire.



Turn cocktail hour into exercise hour.

Walk barefoot in the grass.

Roll your shoulders

CLASP YOUR HANDS BEHIND YOUR HEAD AND STRETCH YOUR SHOULDERS.

Recognizing Signs of Undue Stress in Yourself and Others

Instructions: Go through the following list and note those signs of stress which pertain to you. In doing this, you will be developing your own Personal Stress Profile or (P.S.P.). This list can also help you in becoming aware of signs of distress in other people (e.g., co-workers).

1. Muscle tension - often in the neck, jaw, head or lower back regions.
2. Pounding or fluttering of the heart - a sign of high blood pressure.
3. Dryness of throat and mouth.
4. Increased rate of breathing.
5. Inability to concentrate.
6. Emotional tension or alertness, feeling "keyed up" or "hyper".
7. Fatigue - especially chronic fatigue with little zest for life.
8. Stuttering or other speech difficulties.
9. Hypermotility - the tendency to move about without any reason, eg., pacing the floor.
10. Trembling or nervous tics.
11. Tendency to be easily startled.
12. Blushing.
13. Excessive perspiration.
14. Insomnia or nightmares.
15. Indigestion, diarrhea, queasiness in the stomach.
16. Headaches.
17. Irregular eating or sleeping habits.
18. Lack of appetite or excessive appetite.
19. Abuse of legal or illegal drugs, eg., excessive smoking or drinking.
20. Forgetfulness.
21. Constant rumination or excessive thinking to the point of distraction from the present.
22. Any sudden changes in behavior such as a dramatic change in work habits.
23. No sense of humor.
24. Feeling you cannot control your life.
25. Circular, narrow thought patterns, especially those involving blaming of self or others for problems.
26. Lack of interests or hobbies outside your work.

ARE YOU BURNING OUT?

Look back over the past six months. Have you been noticing changes in yourself or in the world around you? Think of the office...the family...social situations. Allow about 30 seconds for each answer. Then assign it a number from 1 (for no or little change) to 5 (for a great deal of change) to designate the degree of change you perceive.

1. Do you tire more easily? Feel fatigued rather than energetic?
2. Are people annoying you by telling you, "you don't look so good lately?"
3. Are you working harder and harder and accomplishing less and less?
4. Are you increasingly cynical and disenchanted?
5. Are you often invaded by a sadness you can't explain?
6. Are you forgetting? (appointments, deadlines, personal possessions)
7. Are you increasingly irritable? More short-tempered? More disappointed in the people around you?
8. Are you seeing close friends and family members less frequently?
9. Are you too busy to do even routine things like make phone calls or read reports or send out your Christmas cards?
10. Are you suffering from physical complaints? (aches, pains, headaches, a lingering cold)
11. Do you feel disoriented when the activity of the day comes to a halt?
12. Is joy elusive?
13. Are you unable to laugh at a joke about yourself?
14. Does sex seem like more trouble than it's worth?
15. Do you have very little to say to people?

THE BURN-OUT SCALE

- 0-25 You're doing fine.
- 26-35 There are things you should be watching.
- 36-50 You're a candidate.
- 51-65 You are burning out.
- over 65 You're in a dangerous place, threatening to your physical and mental well-being.

Nutrition Tips

1. Stress often influences what we eat, but what we eat can also contribute to mental and physical stress.
2. Essential fats, minerals, protein, and vitamins are available through a balanced diet of lean meat, fish, fowl, eggs, cheese, fruits, vegetables, and milk.
3. Limit or stop using salt, caffeine, sugar, white flour, preservatives, food coloring, artificial flavoring and fats.
4. Vegetables which are most often absent from our diet can be prepared tastily if steamed until crisp but tender.
5. Avoid "fast" foods or processed foods.
6. Drink 6-8 glasses of water daily.
7. Take vitamin supplements to make up for any shortages in food.
8. Snack on nuts, popcorn, raisins, fresh fruit and vegetables.
9. Remember that undereating leaves the body weak and vulnerable to many diseases and overeating which leads to obesity (20% over your ideal weight) can lead to physical problems and strain the heart.

THE SOCIAL READJUSTMENT RATING SCALE

<u>EVENT</u>	<u>SCORE</u>	<u>MY SCORE</u>
Death of Spouse	100	_____
Divorce	73	_____
Marital Separation	65	_____
Jail Term	63	_____
Death of close family member	63	_____
Personal injury/illness	53	_____
Marriage	50	_____
Fired from work	47	_____
Marital reconciliation	45	_____
Retirement	45	_____
Change in family member's health	44	_____
Pregnancy	40	_____
Sex difficulties	39	_____
Addition to family	39	_____
Business readjustment	39	_____
Change in financial status	38	_____
Death of close friend	37	_____
Change in number of marital arguments	35	_____
Mortgage/loan over \$10,000	31	_____
Foreclosure of mortgage/loan	30	_____
Change in work responsibilities	29	_____
Son/daughter leaves home	29	_____
Trouble with in-laws	29	_____
Outstanding achievement	28	_____
Spouse begins work	26	_____
Start or finish school	26	_____
Change in living conditions	25	_____
Revision of personal habits	24	_____
Trouble with boss	23	_____
Change in work hours, conditions	20	_____
Change in residence	20	_____
Change in schools	20	_____
Change in recreational habits	19	_____
Change in church activities	19	_____
Change in social activities	18	_____
Mortgage/loan under \$10,000	18	_____
Change in sleeping habits	16	_____
Change in number of family gatherings	15	_____
Change in eating habits	15	_____
Vacation	13	_____
Christmas season	12	_____
Minor violation of law	11	_____

TOTAL

150 or less - 35% chance of illness in next two years
 150-300 - 51% chance of illness in next two years
 over 300 - 80% chance of illness in next two years

Based on the research of Richard Rahe and Thomas Holmes