

25 WAYS TO Alleviate Stress

Do you feel like stress is building up inside you? If unchecked, stress can be debilitating. Fortunately, you can successfully manage or even banish your stressful feelings by developing your own repertoire of methods to combat stress.

1. Take some deep breaths.

- ▶ Breathing more deeply can contribute to both physical and mental relaxation.

2. Walk.

- ▶ Going for a walk goes a long way toward helping you release tension.

3. Lie down.

- ▶ Lying down can help you relax your muscles. Eventually, your thoughts will follow.

4. Cry.

- ▶ Having a good cry can be one of the most cleansing activities you can do. After crying, you'll tend to feel relieved and ready to go on with life. If you need to cry to alleviate stress, then go ahead and do it.

5. Take five.

- ▶ Allow yourself time to just *be still*. Sit outside on your porch or under a shade tree. If it's cold outside, sit in front of your fireplace. You don't need an hour; you can take five minutes just for yourself. You'll be amazed at how much better you feel!

6. Enjoy nature to relieve stress.

- ▶ Being in a natural environment is conducive to relaxing.

7. Let it go.

- ▶ Allow yourself to let go of the stressful feelings. With some practice, you can train yourself to emotionally release your tension.

8. Use visual imagery to watch your stress drain from your body.

- ▶ Imagine you're relaxing on your favorite beach and the stress flows out of you and is blown away by the breeze.

9. Give yourself a break.

- ▶ Avoid being too hard on yourself, even if you make a mistake. **Remind yourself that nobody's perfect.**

10. Talk to someone about your stress.

- ▶ If you have a partner or a close friend, verbalize your feelings to them.

11. Journal your feelings.

- ▶ The fascinating thing about journaling is that the act itself usually helps people to vent or get their feelings out. Thus, you're actively releasing your stress when you write about your emotions.

12. Read.

- ▶ Reading can provide great temporary escape from those stressful feelings. Give yourself permission to get comfy on the couch with your favorite author in hand.

13. Call a relative.

- ▶ How long has it been since you had a good old-fashioned phone chat? Ring up your friend from high school or college and inquire about how their life is going.

Nothing will help you let go of stress like hearing about someone else's life.

14. Go to the movies.

- ▶ Another harmless temporary escape is going to the movies and becoming immersed in a great story.

15. Watch your favorite comedy on television or rent a funny movie.

- ▶ Who knew that stress relief is just a remote control button away?

16. Cook something.

- ▶ If you enjoy preparing great recipes, the act of cooking can bring feelings of joy and contentment, followed by more joy when you eat your delicious concoction.

17. Share a meal with those you love.

- ▶ Having a meal with loved ones tends to be relaxing and fun, too. No room for stress there!

18. Exercise with a DVD.

- ▶ Whether you do aerobics, dancing, or Tai-Bo, the act of doing exercise in your own home is a great tension buster.

19. Go to the gym to work out.

- ▶ Even if you don't have a membership, you can usually get a free trial at some gyms. Working out at the gym will help you say goodbye to those stressful feelings.

20. Sing out loud.

- ▶ You know you want to. Nothing helps you let go of uncomfortable feelings the way singing does. Whether you're in your shower or in your car, belt out those tunes!

21. Listen to music.

- ▶ Sometimes, just hearing some of your favorites while you're cleaning or surfing the internet can make you feel better. Music can truly banish those stress blues.

22. Go out for an evening with your partner or friends.

- ▶ Spend a fun and relaxing evening together for dinner, dancing, or chatting. This can be the perfect antidote to stress.

23. Play with your children.

- ▶ Nothing will remind you about what's really important in life like spending time with your kids.

24. Ask your kids about their day and then listen.

- ▶ Nearly all children have a need to tell parents about their daily experiences.

Being there for your kids will help you determine the priorities in your life, often reducing your stress as well.

25. Call a counselor.

- ▶ In the event that you try many of the strategies and still feel stressed, consider calling a professional to help you sort things out.

Reflection

- ▶ If you feel like your tension sometimes gets out of hand, you can successfully diminish uncomfortable feelings by trying some of these suggestions.

Alleviating your stress is within your power!