

101 Ways to Reduce Stress

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Did you know that chronic stress levels cause systemic inflammation, chronic hunger, blood sugar issues, insomnia, illness, fatigue, depression and so much more? And let's face it, stress kinda sucks. It's great for when we're in a difficult situation, like speaking in public or running from a bear, but for general every day life, it really doesn't serve any purpose and when you have that kind of stress day after day, it causes some pretty significant damage.

Here are 101 different ways for you to begin to focus on reducing stress. Put a star next to, or highlight, the ones that you currently do, the ones that you'd like to do more of, or the ones that look like something you could realistically add to your lifestyle.

1. Sleep in (once in a while).
2. Nap occasionally.
3. Take a long shower.
4. Enjoy a relaxing bath
5. Listen to classical music
6. Walking meditation
7. Guided relaxation meditation
8. Deep breathing
9. Mindful meditation
10. Restorative yoga
11. Child's pose
12. Pet a dog or cat
13. Light a candle and watch the flame flicker
14. Go for a walk
15. Hike in nature
16. Deep breath at stoplights during heavy traffic
17. Count to ten before responding to anything that's upsetting you
18. Take a break from social media
19. Scream – if you must scream in a pillow, then do so. Release stress vocally
20. Sing – in the shower, in your car, in your kitchen, at your desk...wherever
21. Go see a funny movie
22. Spend 5-10 minutes watching something that makes you laugh like a YouTube video or a favorite comedian.

23. Do a household chore. Folding laundry or doing dishes can be very relaxing and meditative.
24. Read a book
25. Try progressive relaxation.
26. Embrace aromatherapy. Lavender is said to reduce cortisol levels and there are other scents that can have a similar impact
27. Chew gum
28. Get a massage
29. Get acupuncture (unless you're stressed out by needles)
30. Get a manicure or pedicure
31. Get a facial
32. Have sex
33. Try self-hypnosis
34. Hug someone
35. Journal
36. Gratitude practice
37. Paint, draw, or express yourself creatively through art
38. Join a choir, if you enjoy singing
39. Exercise
40. Take fish oil (omega 3 fatty acids)
41. Get some sunshine
42. Drink tea (green tea and black tea both have antioxidants, plus the ritual of making and drinking tea can be relaxing)
43. Reduce your caffeine intake
44. Spend time with friends
45. Join a club – make friends
46. Spend time with family that you like
47. Learn to say “no”
48. Do something for yourself every day.
49. Create systems that support you to feel productive
50. Get organized (or hire someone to help you get organized)
51. Clear clutter out of your home and life.

52. Listen to the sounds of nature. If you enjoy the ocean, then listen to ambient ocean sounds.
53. Volunteer for a cause that's important to you.
54. Eat less sugar
55. Prepare for tomorrow. Get a planner or organizer and make sure you go to bed with tomorrow scheduled and planned. You will be less likely to spend hours in bed thinking about what you have to do tomorrow.
56. Arm yourself with healthy snacks.
57. Create a budget
58. Save more money
59. Hit the pool and float
60. Find a hot tub or hot springs and soak.
61. Spend time in a sauna
62. Leave your cell phone behind
63. Take a day off, really take a day off, and do things that you love to do.
64. Learn, and practice, tai chi
65. Do sunrise asanas
66. Perform sunset asanas before bedtime
67. Try corpse pose
68. Improve your diet, eat whole foods
69. Cut back on alcohol
70. Forget about multitasking
71. Be in the moment when performing a task
72. Practice listening during conversations.
73. Stop and smell, look, and listen. Pay attention to your senses
74. Wear clothing with textures that make you feel embraced and comfy.
75. Pay attention to your self-talk. Simple things like shifting your language from statements like "I really blew that" to "I did the best I could, and I learned some things to apply next time" can make a huge difference in your stress level.
76. Wash your hands. Don't make your body have to fight extra germs to keep you healthy.
77. Prep meals at the beginning of the week.

78. Get healthy take out dinner when you're feeling overwhelmed and don't have time to cook. A trip to your supermarket for a rotisserie chicken and a bag salad is an easy out.
79. Call a friend
80. Play. Find active games that you enjoy and go play with friends. This might be anything from joining your local softball league to learning to surf.
81. Learn something new.
82. Do word games.
83. Read entertaining books. I'm all for reading a solid award winning literary fiction book or for reading non-fiction, but it's also okay to read commercial fiction. Pick up a James Patterson or a Nora Roberts and kick back once in a while.
84. Get more houseplants
85. Garden
86. Do yard work. It's repetitive and can be relaxing.
87. Eat a little dark chocolate. Really dark, like 70% or higher
88. Make lists to feel more in control over your projects and your day
89. Prioritize. Focus each day on the most important tasks to accomplish and focus on them first.
90. Get away from people who stress you out.
91. Turn off the news.
92. Don't talk about things that stress you out, politics, religion, and so on.
93. Pare down your task list. Delegate and eliminate the things YOU don't have to do.
94. Start expressing your feelings. (However, it's a good idea to think things through beforehand. You don't want to feel like you're complaining all the time and you want to have a positive response to your communication.)
95. Learn to forgive
96. Join a church or religious affiliation. Go to meetings
97. Break large projects into small, manageable, steps.
98. Make your bed a happy and luxurious place to be.
99. Limit screen time. Watch less television and spend more time on activities that engage your body and brain
100. Visualize peace, success, and positivity
101. Set a goal.

Finally, identify your stress response patterns. When do you get most stressed? Who stresses you out? What stresses you out? Write down these situations. Then start brainstorming how you can change these patterns.

If you need help, let me know. We can work through some of your most predominant stress patterns together. Stress hurts your health and while we can't completely avoid it, there's a lot we can do to reduce it and reduce its impact on your life.