

STRESS happens to all of us. It sneaks up on us when we least expect it, disguising itself as tense muscles, headaches, agitation, and quick temperedness.

Stress does not need to be an assumed part of your lifestyle. You have the inherent right to be happy, healthy, and thriving. You can choose to ignore stress and live with it, or take action and do something about it. It is up to you. Give yourself the gift of relaxation. You deserve it!

Here are 10 easy ways to relief stress. Make a mental note of these, or list them on post-it notes to hang up in conspicuous places as reminders.

■ **Stop** - Whatever activity you are engaged in, stop, and quiet your mind.

■ **Breathe** - Focus your attention on your breath, slowing it to a regular pattern.

■ **Allow** - Allow your muscles a moment to relax, as you focus on your breath. As you inhale, consciously breathe into the stress in the muscles and relax them as you exhale. Take deep breaths and release.

■ **Listen** - Quiet your mind by listening to your breath as you inhale and exhale. Listen to your body telling you that stress is taking place.

■ **Rest** - Give yourself permission to rest your body and your mind. Many times our stress is from mental fatigue, not just physical tiredness. Take a 10-minute power nap if you have the opportunity, or simply close your eyes and repeat the phrase over and over in your mind, "I am quiet, peaceful, and relaxed. It is safe for me to rest now."

■ **Exercise** - Go for a walk, a jog, or a swim. Exercising releases endorphins in your brain which will pre-occupy your mind. This is a wonderful way to physically release built-up tension that you have held in your physical body.

■ **Be present in the moment** - When you recycle the same thoughts, keep a mental 'to-do' list, or worry about something that is already over, then your mind is elsewhere. You are not fully present at the moment, and neither is your mind. Being focused elsewhere, or living in the past and ruminating, can be extremely tiring and stressful. Consistently recall yourself back to the present moment.

■ **Call a friend** - Talking can be a great stress reliever. The simple action of being heard by someone who cares about you can make everything feel better. You have released the tension, and you have been heard. You will find that your body automatically begins to relax and release the tension. You may yawn often during the conversation. Yawning is a form of releasing physical tension as well as the body's way of taking in more oxygen to nourish the tense muscles.

■ **Have a massage** - Physical touch releases tension and stress from the physical body, as well as relaxing your thoughts and emotions. You may want to schedule ongoing massage therapy sessions as part of your regular routine. People who receive massage on a regular basis experience less stress because they aren't storing the tension for long periods of time.

■ **Seek counseling** - Asking for assistance, either through traditional or intuitive/spiritual counseling is not a sign of weakness. In fact, it is the opposite. It is a show of strength from within to ask for help. It reflects your willingness to deal with your stress and manage your life in a new and healthy way. A counselor can help you maintain a healthy balance during times of stress, extreme tension, difficulty, or transition.

Compiled by 1Klassifieds team



IMMEDIATE STRESS RELIEF

