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## Tip 1: Reduce job stress by taking care of yourself

When stress at work interferes with your ability to perform in your job, manage your personal life, or adversely impacts your health, it's time to take action. Start by paying attention to your physical and emotional health. When your own needs are taken care of, you're stronger and more resilient to stress. The better you feel, the better equipped you'll be to manage work stress without becoming overwhelmed.

## Tip 2: Reduce job stress by prioritizing and organizing

Time and Task Management skills can be learned and will help create balance in your schedule.

## Tip 3: Reduce job stress by breaking bad habits

As you learn to manage your job stress and improve your work relationships, you'll have more control over your ability to think clearly and act appropriately. You will be able to break habits that add to your stress at work – and you'll even be able to change negative ways of thinking about things that only add to your stress.



## Some Practical Ways To Handle Stress

We all feel stressed from time to time, it's inevitable. But if left unchecked, it can make it very difficult to live a happy life. It can lead to a number of major health problems, ranging from anxiety to severe depression and from mild acne to life-threatening heart attacks. Since April is National Stress-Awareness Month, I thought it would be a good time to highlight some positive ways we can respond to stress in our life and keep it in check.

The first thing you want to do is **figure out the cause of your stress**. Many times we feel overwhelmed by all the responsibilities coming at us but instead of feeling like your are dodging balls being thrown at you, identify what it is that you are stressed about. Is it a project at work, a dispute with a co-worker, unpaid bills, a fight with your spouse? If you can pinpoint the root of your anxiety, you are on your way to getting organized and taking back control.

**Make up your mind to get and/or stay healthy.** Taking control of your health can make a huge difference in how you deal and respond to stress. The best way to reclaim control of your life is by taking control of your body through exercise, nutritious food and recommended sleep.

**Do what you love.** It is much easier to handle pockets of stress when the rest of our lives are filled with activities you love. Find one hobby or two that enrich your life. What are you passionate about? If you aren't sure, than try different classes or activities and see what is meaningful and fulfilling.

**Make a change.** Sometimes just de-cluttering your desk or car can help. Plan a vacation. A change of scenery can really lift your spirits. Maybe when you come back, what was bothering you won't seem as big!

**Focus on now!** One of the biggest stressors for many people is *lack of time* or feeling you just can't get it all done! Staying focused on "now" is easier said than done. I know you have all heard the phrase "be mindful and stay in the moment". Stress is often heightened when we think about everything we need to get done, tomorrow, next week, next month...Instead focus on what needs to get done right now and then prioritize for the things to come. Try to focus, even for one minute, on right now. Perhaps close your eyes, and think of one positive phrase to say to yourself. It may just change your outlook. (*advice often given by "the Wingman", Michael Gross*). Don't worry or fear what might be, you are wasting precious time...now!

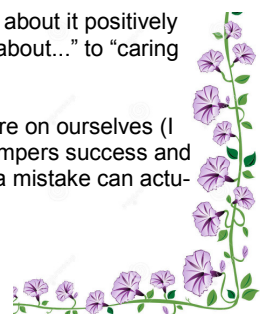
**Set boundaries and keep them.** If you're a people-pleaser like me, saying no feels like you're abandoning someone, have become a terrible person or are throwing all respect out the window. But of course that couldn't be further from the truth. Plus, those few seconds of discomfort are well worth avoiding the stress of taking on an extra activity or doing something that doesn't contribute value to your life. One thing I've noticed about productive, happy people is that they are very protective of their time.

**Laugh!** It's true, laughter really is the best medicine. Watch a funny show or video, tell a funny joke, or go to a card store and read through some funny cards. Whatever it takes, give yourself time for laughter each and every day.

**Keep a happiness or gratitude journal.** Every evening for the next 30 days spend a few minutes reflecting on the day you just experienced and list three to five things that made you smile that day. Research shows that doing so can actually help to increase your immune system.

**Put a positive spin on it.** If you are facing some challenges right now, do your best to think about it positively and then let that new positive mindset become your focal point. Change the word "worrying about..." to "caring about"...

**Embrace mistakes or at least don't drown in perfectionism.** Why do we put such pressure on ourselves (I too am guilty). It's exhausting and anxiety-provoking. Research shows that perfectionism hampers success and often leads to depression, anxiety, addiction and missed opportunities to be happy! Making a mistake can actually lead to growth. So happy with being perfectly imperfect!



## Cheap Sunglasses



Okay, so maybe you won't find the lyrics to a famous ZZ Top song listed here, but it warrants "turning up the volume" and listening. Given the epidemic of skin cancer in this country, sun safety should now be an important part of our lives even in the winter. But it is especially important with the warmer weather approaching and more time expected outside! Some people think about sun protection only when they spend a day at the lake, beach or pool. But sun exposure adds up day after day, and it happens every time you are in the sun. **If you work outside, take note!** Sun safety should include methods of sun protection (which will help prevent skin cancers and premature aging) and methods of skin cancer detection.



There are many easy to use products that will help make your life sun safe. Sun protective clothing, including hats, sunglasses, sunscreens, umbrellas, sun shades, awnings, canopies, window film or UV film, all will help protect you from ultraviolet radiation. It is important, however, that you familiarize yourself with how to best combine sun protection methods, what the standards for sun protection apply to each product and how best to use each product. For example, **sun protective clothing should offer a UPF of 30+ and therefore block 97 percent of UV. Sunscreens are best if they are broad spectrum and have a SPF 30+. You should also know that all sunscreens should be applied 20 minutes before being exposed to the sun and should be reapplied every two hours while exposed.**

### What to look for when you buy sunscreen:

- Pick a broad-spectrum sunscreen that protects against UV-A and UV-B rays and has a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15.
- Read product labels. Look for a waterproof brand if you will be sweating or swimming. Buy a non-stinging product or one specifically formulated for your face.
- Buy a brand that does not contain para-aminobenzoic acid (PABA) if you are sensitive to that ingredient.
- Try a sunscreen with different chemicals if your skin reacts badly to the one that you are using. Not all sunscreens have the same ingredients.
- Use a water-based sunscreen if you have oily skin or are prone to acne.
- Be aware that more expensive does not mean better. Although a costly brand might feel or smell better, it is not necessarily more effective than a cheaper product.
- Be aware of the expiration date because some sunscreen ingredients might degrade over time.



## Superfoods for Stress Relief

When stress feels like it's piling up in your life, that snack from the vending machine may seem like a quick fix. Eating healthy takes preparation and when you are stressed who has time for that? Research has shown that the foods we eat could actually relieve your tension by stabilizing your blood sugar or, better yet, your emotional response.



"Green leafy vegetables like spinach contain folate, which produces dopamine, a pleasure-inducing brain chemical, helping you keep calm," says Heather Mangieri, RDN, a spokesperson for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. A 2012 study in the *Journal of Affective Disorders* of 2,800 middle-aged and elderly people and found those who consumed the most folate had a lower risk of depression symptoms than those who took in the least.



"The omega-3 fatty acids in salmon have anti-inflammatory properties that may help counteract the negative effects of stress hormones (adrenaline and cortisol)," says Lisa Cimperman, RD, of the University Hospitals Case Medical Center and a spokesperson for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

Many of us are familiar with the food coma after Thanksgiving Day meals. Turkey breast contains tryptophan which is known to have a calming effect. Other foods high in tryptophan include nuts, seeds, tofu, fish, lentils, oats, beans and eggs.



According to MIT research, carbohydrates can help the brain make serotonin, the same substance regulated by antidepressants. But instead of reaching for a sugary dessert, go for complex carbs that won't contribute to



## Ways To Get Hooked on Exercise



You know that exercise is good for your health. But there's always an excuse for dodging it – you're too busy, too tired, or just plain bored with exercise. It's time for a fresh approach. With a little extra motivation, you can create an exercise routine that you'll feel good about. Try these tips:

**Set one small goal.** Instead of this: "I'm going to exercise every day for an hour, count calories at every meal and lose 10 pounds in 30 days," start with one goal that's achievable. "I'm going to add 10 more minutes of exercise to my day." If you currently get no exercise, any improvement is a great start. Build on small successes by continuing to add more minutes to your exercise routine.

**Sign up for a race.** You don't have to be a runner to enter a 5K race. These events are a great way to get motivated to exercise and have fun with family and friends. You can get ready for the race at your own pace. You might start by walking for 20 minutes and gradually increase the intensity of your workout to alternate jogging and walking.

**Make an exercise pact.** Put your exercise plans in writing or post it on social media. It makes your commitment real, and people may even offer encouragement. Making a pact with a friend is even more powerful because there's someone to hold you accountable. Sign up for an exercise class together or schedule workouts on your calendar.

**Exercise your own way.** You don't have to go to the gym to exercise. Find an activity you enjoy – such as tennis, golf, kayaking or hiking. Or, add more movement to your day by walking, taking the stairs or playing in the park with your kids.

**Get inspired by others.** Read success stories and remind yourself that anything is possible. Make connections with people who encourage each other to exercise. Work with a personal trainer or join a running club for a boost of encouragement.

### Benefits of walking

Walking, like other exercise, can help you achieve a number of important health benefits. Walking can help you:

- Lower low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol (the "bad" cholesterol)
- Raise high-density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol (the "good" cholesterol)
- Lower your blood pressure
- Reduce your risk of or manage type 2 diabetes
- Manage your weight
- Improve your mood
- Stay strong and fit

All it takes to reap these benefits is a routine of brisk walking. It doesn't get much simpler than that. And you can forget the "no pain, no gain" talk. Research shows that regular, brisk walking can reduce the risk of heart attack by the same amount as more vigorous exercise, such as jogging.



Focus on the benefits of Exercise... better health!

Give yourself a pep talk. "I can do this". Think positive!

**April 5th, 2017 may be the "official" walking day but why not encourage your employees to walk more often throughout the month. Here are a few ideas:**

Have a Walking Wednesday and ask your employees to bring their sneakers to work that day to encourage a lunchtime walk.

Start a Walking Challenge. Have your employees track either steps, distance or time walked and offer a chance for participants to win a small prize.

Map out the distance around your municipal grounds so folks know how far they can go in even 10 minutes.

**Good health is the ultimate reward but it's up to you to take that first step!**



Core exercises go way beyond doing countless ab crunches. "Your **core** is the central link in a chain connecting your upper and lower body" as stated in Harvard Health Publications. It is essential for 1) everyday activities, 2) on-the-job tasks, and 3) a healthy back. A strong core enhances balance and stability. It can help prevent falls and injuries during sports or daily activities. It also helps with posture relieving pressure off your spine and allowing you to breathe deeply.

Check out the Exercise of the Month for a core Pilates movement that's easy but so effective!

Source: [www.health.harvard.edu](http://www.health.harvard.edu)



## How To Ease Allergy Symptoms without Medication

Spring is a beautiful time of year with longer days, trees starting to bud, flowers popping through the earth, and birds singing. But for some, this is a time of sneezing, itchy eyes and scratchy throats. Allergies can really put a damper on this time of year! You can't control pollen, but you can control your diet. Simple changes in the foods you eat can help combat these allergy symptoms.

**Use food to stay in balance:** Allergies are immune system reactions run amok. Think about balancing your immune system rather than boosting it, as stimulation may inadvertently create a stronger allergic reaction. A helpful way to balance your immune system is to eliminate the dietary factors that may be compromising your immunity. Avoid foods that you may have sensitivities to, such as citrus, eggs, wheat and dairy, for a month before allergy season starts.

**Avoid inflammatory foods** It's also important to eat a clean diet: Limit inflammation-causing processed foods, avoid white flours and sugars, and opt for lean protein, leafy greens and colorful vegetables. Skip fried foods and focus on healthy fats, such as nuts and avocado, as well as flax and fish oils. Five portions of vegetables and fruits a day also help your body better handle allergies by supplying it with nutrients such as quercetin—which prevents the release of histamines, the chemicals in the cells that trigger allergies—and resveratrol, which fights inflammation.



**Cure like with like** Eating local bee pollen, available from health food stores and local beekeepers, is another way to improve your pollen tolerance. Start slowly (ideally during winter) with a few granules of pollen a day to make sure you have no strong allergic response, and then increase the amount to one or two teaspoons. Choose bee pollen with variable color strands—a range of color indicates a variety of plants—thus increasing the exposure your body can handle. (Local honeycomb works along the same lines; make sure you are not allergic to the comb itself by eating just a little bit in the beginning.)



### Recipe Corner



#### Grilled Chicken and Strawberry Cobb Salad

Doesn't get much easier than this! Healthy, fresh and looks beautiful!

#### Directions:

Whisk together olive oil, lime zest, lime juice, and honey. Season with salt and pepper and set aside.

Place romaine in a large bowl and top with chicken, strawberries, feta, peas, avocado, and red onion. Season with salt and pepper to taste and drizzle with dressing. Toss and serve immediately.

*Recipe from Country Living.*

#### Ingredients:

- 1/4 c. extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tsp. lime zest
- 3 tbsp. lime juice
- 1 1/2 tsp honey
- Kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1 head Romaine lettuce, torn
- 2 chicken breasts, grilled and sliced
- 2 c. sliced strawberries
- 4 oz. crumbled feta cheese
- 1 c. cooked peas
- 1 avocado sliced
- 1/2 c. sliced red onion

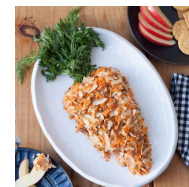
#### Carrot Cake Cheese Ball to bring for Easter Dinner

1. Whisk cream cheese, honey, vanilla, cinnamon and salt in a medium bowl until combined. Stir in 1 cup carrot, pineapple and raisins.
2. Coat a large piece of plastic wrap with cooking spray. Scoop the cheese mixture onto it. Using the plastic wrap to help you, form the cheese mixture into a ball, then completely wrap in plastic. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour and up to 2 days.
3. Just before serving, combine pecans, coconut and the remaining 1/4 cup carrot in a small bowl. Turn the cheese ball out onto a serving plate and form into a carrot shape. Coat with the pecan mixture. Garnish with carrot greens, if desired.

Make Ahead Tip: Refrigerate for up to 2 days.

#### Ingredients:

- 8 ounces reduced-fat cream cheese (Neufchâtel), softened
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup shredded carrot plus 1/4 cup, divided
- 1/2 cup diced pineapple
- 1/4 cup golden raisins
- 1/4 cup chopped toasted pecans
- 1/4 cup toasted unsweetened coconut flakes



Serving size: 2  
Tbsp.  
Per serving: 101  
calories; 7 g fat(3 g  
sat); 1 g fiber; 9 g  
carb.

*Recipe from EatingWell.com*

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*Happiness is like a butterfly: the more you chase it, the more it will elude you, but if you turn your attention to other things, it will come and sit softly on your shoulder.*

