

QUICK TIPS

Instant Stress Relievers

- 1. Take six deep breaths - inhale, hold for 5 counts and exhale through your mouth.*
- 2. Mentally visit a pleasant scene from your past. Visualize the scene in detail by stimulating all your senses. In just a few minutes you can recapture the pleasure of actually being there.*
- 3. Hug someone - four hugs everyday will do a lot to calm you down. Hug friends. Hug the dog. Hug your significant other.*
- 4. Take an exercise break - take a brisk walk at lunch. Climb the stairs instead of riding the elevator. When your mind is cluttered, move your body.*
- 5. Have a good laugh. Your spirits will rise immediately.*
- 6. Find a friend to listen to your concerns. Choose a patient soul, one who won't butt in or give advice.*
- 7. Change your focus. Put your job concerns away for 5 minutes and concentrate on your life away from work. As your mind gets busy with these kinds of thoughts, you'll find your stress will begin to fade away and you can get back to work with new vitality.*
- 8. Finish something - give yourself a quick sense of accomplishment.*



STRESS MANAGEMENT

**TIGER
BITS** is a publication of the Center for Student Involvement. Copies available in the CSI, lower level rm. 014, FHSU Memorial Union, Fort Hays State University 628-4664.



CSI staff offer programs and consultation in these and other areas of personal and organizational leadership.

Information adapted from the Student Organization and Leadership Development Center at The University of Kansas

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STRESS

Management

*The AAAbc's of Stress Management**

Stress Management is a decision-making process.

Alter it

Avoid it or

Accept it by

Building your resistance or

Changing your perceptions

All three of these techniques can be effective coping strategies.

ALTER implies removing the source of stress by changing something. (e.g., problem solving, direct communication, organizing, planning, and time management.)

AVOID implies removing oneself from the stressful situation or figuring out how not to get there in the first place. (e.g., say "no", delegate, let go, withdraw, and recognize own limitations.)

ACCEPT involves equipping oneself physically and mentally for stress by...

BUILDING resistance, increase your tolerance to stress: physically through proper diet, regular exercise, systematic relaxation; mentally through positive affirmation, taking time for mental health, getting clear about goals/values/priorities; socially through support systems, investing in relationships, clear communication, intimacy; spiritually through meditation, prayer, worship.

CHANGING perceptions. Change unrealistic expectations and irrational beliefs (like "I should succeed at everything I try."). Build self esteem and cultivate a positive attitude.

Some Symptoms of Stress

- difficulty falling asleep, restlessness
- perspiring more than usual
- upset stomach or stomach pain
- feeling confused; unable to concentrate
- muscle tension - stiff neck, clenched jaw, aching back or shoulders
- feeling depressed
- lack of energy; lethargic
- headaches
- relationship problems
- weight gain or loss; change in appetite
- boredom
- feeling frustrated; easily annoyed
- cold hands
- rapid heartbeat
- general anxious feeling
- dilated pupils
- increased susceptibility to colds and other minor infections.

Some Causes of Stress

- lack of stimulation or challenge (underload)
- too much demand or stimulation (overload)
- environmental influences - too much noise, excessive heat or cold, air pollution, crowding, etc.
- death of a family member or friend
- unsatisfactory personal relationship
- loss of a job (fired or laid off)
- unemployment (unable to find job)
- underemployment (not challenged)
- illness or injury
- negative emotions
- change of any kind (positive or negative)
- irrational thinking
- any threatening situation

** Facts About Stress

- Stress is how we respond to events, not the events themselves. Each individual responds differently to the same event.
- Stress is inescapable. Trying to avoid it will create it.
- Not all stress can or needs to be controlled. We need positive high energy stress—it gives us motivation and challenge. We need to control negative, emotional and physical stress.
- False perceptions are often causes of stress. Find out the facts before you get stressed.

Coping with stress

Managing stress is the best way to deal with it. Since stress is a holistic concept, involving the total self, it must be managed by a number of different techniques.

* Source: Richard Holland, University of Delaware

** SOAR series, UNL Student Involvement www/unl.edu/involved