

## **STRESS BUSTERS! 24 STRATEGIES TO LIMIT THE IMPACT STRESS HAS ON YOUR LIFE**

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**STRESS** – it’s a natural and necessary part of life. If it wasn’t for the stress that the first humans felt when they were hungry, hunters and gatherers never would have eaten enough to sustain life. If the stress of fleeing from predators wasn’t on their minds, humans never would have built the first shelters or fashioned the first tools.

Today, feelings of hunger have evolved into the need to succeed at work (to have enough money to buy food and shelter), and the predators are replaced by everything from disease to identity theft. But stress remains ever-present in our days. Here are some *simple and positive* strategies to limit how much YOU LET stress impact your daily life.

### **Physical and lifestyle strategies**

1. abdominal breathing, relaxation techniques
2. low-stress diet
3. exercising regularly
4. taking respite time, days off (mental health days)
5. taking mini-breaks in your day (5-10 minute periods to relax)
6. time management (pacing yourself and prioritizing your activities)
7. practice sleep hygiene
8. choose a non-toxic environment
9. material security (managing bills, household management)

### **Emotional strategies**

10. social support and relatedness (talking with friends, support groups)
11. self-nurturing (positive rewards)
12. good communication (a habit to develop)
13. assertiveness
14. playtime activities (build time into every day for this)
15. emotional release
16. sense of humor (ensure people around you have one too)

### **Cognitive strategies**

17. constructive thinking (counter negative thinking)
18. distraction
19. task oriented approach to problems (vs. reaction response)
20. acceptance (anticipate coping with setbacks)
21. tolerance for “shades of gray” (ambiguity)

### **Philosophical/Spiritual strategies**

22. work toward a consistent goal or purpose
23. develop a positive philosophy of life
24. get active in a religious or spiritual life (commit and practice)