

10 EASY TO FOLLOW STRESS BUSTERS

1. Smile

Smiling is the first line of defence against stress. It's quick, easy, and free! When you smile your body releases feel-good hormones and the stress hormone (cortisol) is reduced. Smiling helps you feel calm and in control too. It lowers your blood pressure and makes you feel good about yourself.



2. Exercise



As well as its undoubted benefits for your general health, exercise is highly effective in reducing stress. It improves blood-flow to the brain and helps you to think more clearly. Exercise is also another great way to release endorphins, the body's natural painkillers and feel-good hormones. There is also evidence that fit people are better able to handle the long-term effects of stress.

3. Get enough sleep and rest

Taking a rest isn't only about "not doing anything". A rest from work can mean putting the emphasis on what you do in your leisure time – hobbies, holidays, sport – this will counterbalance work and everyday stressors. And we all need sleep for energy, good concentration and general health. Chronic sleep-deprivation can affect your performance at work, which can be a key factor in raising stress levels.



4. Positive thinking

Changing your thoughts is not as difficult as you think. Try to adopt an outlook on life that stops you seeing external events or fate or luck as determining your happiness. Instead, develop an internal locus of control. This means knowing that your thoughts and your actions will determine your happiness – and you are in control of these. It takes practice but if you can do this you'll really reduce the negative tension that can lead to some stress.



5. Reach out to others

When you need to reduce the pressure in your life, you can't always do it on your own. Everyone should have a social support network of friends, family, colleagues and other people they can call on to help take the strain - whether it's practical help or a sympathetic ear when you feel down.



6. Achieve a good work-life balance



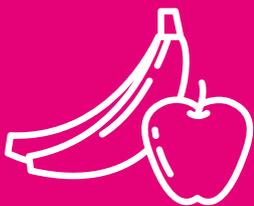
Don't let work dominate your life. No matter how ambitious you are, it's important to make time for relaxation and fun; things you enjoy. That might mean reducing the number of hours you work, or more radically changing to a job that's closer to home so your commuting time is reduced. Use techniques to ensure you're more productive during your day, rather than continually staying late and letting things get you down.

7. Relaxation

A good relaxation technique is an invaluable anti-stress weapon, one that you always carry with you to help you deal with any stressful situation as it arises. Find one that works for you and make relaxation a regular part of your daily routine. There are many relaxation techniques to try from abdominal breathing & visualisation to aromatherapy & spa treatments - find what works for YOU!



8. Eat a healthy diet



A balanced diet that delivers all the nutrients your body needs to function at its optimum level is essential for dealing with stressful situations. Cutting back on stimulants like caffeine & sugar and also depressants like alcohol and nicotine will keep your blood sugar levels consistent and help you to avoid mood swings

9. Manage your time well

We waste a lot of time doing unimportant tasks, especially when we are stressed. So managing your time and prioritising your day is key. Do the important jobs first. The unimportant ones can wait and often they will disappear completely leaving you time to do other things. Also, don't put off the unpleasant tasks – avoidance & procrastination can cause a great deal of stress. Give unpleasant tasks a high priority and get them done!



10. Seek professional help if you need it

This is where we have just the Tonic! We are all about prevention not cure! We have a great spectrum of services in the "Tonic Toolbox" from stress management programmes and workshops, group & 1-2-1 coaching and relaxation therapies.