

15 Simple Ways to Stress Less

kimcubitt.alphalifestyleacademy.com

When was the last time you felt relaxed? It's easy for stress to build up without you realizing what is happening. After a while, you might think that feeling irritable, sad, or restless is just your natural state.

Meanwhile, chronic tension affects your body too. It can weaken your immune system and increase your risk for many health issues, including heart disease and diabetes.

Stressful events will happen, but you can control how they affect you. Try these ideas for building your resilience and creating a calmer environment.

Increasing Your Resilience:

1. **Slow down.** You'll probably accomplish more if you stop rushing around. Cut your to do list down to a realistic size. **Schedule breaks throughout the day.**
2. **Breathe deeply.** Your feelings are closely tied to your breath. Lie down on your back and place one hand on your abdomen. Your body will naturally start to breathe more fully from your diaphragm rather than taking shallow breaths from your chest.
3. **Laugh it up.** Humor drives away tension. Look for the funny side of difficult situations. Cheer up after a hard day by calling a friend who cracks you up or watching a funny movie.
4. **Eat healthy.** Sticking to a balanced diet will make your body more effective at

tolerating stress. Get most of your calories from natural whole foods. Cut down on added sugar and salt. Lose excess weight gradually and safely.

5. **Sleep well.** Aim for 7 to 8 hours of sleep each night. Move your bedtime back an hour each night until you are able to wake up feeling refreshed. Maintain your new schedule even on holidays and weekends.

6. **Work out.** Exercise is a constructive way to handle disturbing news or conflicts at work. Buy resistance bands so you can do strength training movements at home. Attend a yoga class online or go for a walk.

7. **Create something.** Creativity is another stress buster. **Find a medium that you enjoy.** You may want to paint with watercolors or sculpt metal. You may prefer writing poetry or folk dancing.

8. **Reach out.** Build a network of mutually supportive relationships. Connect with family and friends on a regular basis.

9. **Advocate for yourself.** Let others know how they can help you. **Ask for what you need** tactfully and directly.

Adjusting Your Environment:

1. **Clear away clutter.** A tidy home and workspace will reduce your anxiety levels. Get rid of anything you seldom use. Donate it to charity or sell it online. Throw it away or store it out of sight if you're unable to part with it right now.

2. **Add scent. Fragrance is invisible but powerful.** Wear your favorite perfume. Practice aromatherapy with soothing essential oils like lavender and chamomile.

3. **Play music.** Use sound to create the mood you want. Put together a playlist for different activities. You might relax with soft piano music or show tunes.

4. **Enjoy silence.** On the other hand, the lack of sound can also be soothing. Turn off your devices for a designated period each day, including mealtimes and before bed. Order a pair of noise cancelling headphones if you need to block out noisy neighbors and heavy traffic.

5. **Decorate naturally.** Green spaces are energizing. **Spend more time outdoors and bring nature into your home.** Grow ferns and herbs. Cover your couch with a floral print throw.

6. **Create a refuge.** Design a meditation room or space in your home. If you have trouble meditating, you can use it for reading or relaxation practices.

Dealing with stress is an ongoing process. Take time each day to think about what you can do to make your surroundings more peaceful to protect your health and wellbeing.