

Successful Psychology

Simple Tips To Help You Relieve Stress

(NAPSA)—Stress seems to be a fact of life, but it doesn't have to rule your life.

Simple steps such as working out—even taking a walk—can stimulate the feel-good endorphins and serotonin in your brain and help you relax, according to Dr. Michelle Callahan, a developmental psychologist and relationship expert. Besides stress-busting basics such as exercise, drinking plenty of water, eating a healthy diet and getting enough rest, there are other simple steps to help prevent stress.

1. Learn to plan. Being disorganized can result in being late, missing appointments and feeling generally overwhelmed. Use a palm pilot, an agenda or even a lined note pad to prioritize, plan out what you can and can't do and remind yourself of what's coming up.

2. Recognize your limits. No matter how hard you try, you will not be perfect. Consider goals that you can achieve. Also, remember the people around you—friends, family members and coworkers—are not going to be perfect either.

3. Don't forget to play. With increasingly busy lives, many people—particularly women—focus on what needs to be done and forget to schedule enough time for things they enjoy. Go to the movies, visit a museum or have lunch with friends. Doing something you enjoy can restore your energy and actually make you more productive during your work time.

4. Find a relaxation technique that works for you. Whether it's meditation, yoga or even gardening, find an activity that stills the



Staying in touch with those you care about can help reduce stress and make you feel emotionally fit.

mind. Just focusing on your breathing can help you calm down and focus when you are feeling stressed.

5. Stay connected. Studies have found that there are physical and emotional benefits to staying connected with loved ones. It may seem simple, but taking the time to reach out to friends and family with a quick phone call or a greeting card not only makes the recipient feel loved and appreciated, the gesture can also relieve your stress by helping you feel connected to those who are important in your life.

Intimacy and sharing have been shown to improve immune system function. Taking time out to show you care and communicating with loved ones can help your emotional well-being too, says Dr. Callahan. "Greeting cards are a particularly special way to reconnect with people. That extra effort of the hand-written note makes the recipient feel so special." For more tips on staying connected with greeting cards, visit www.greetingcard.org.