

BANISH STRESS FROM YOUR LIFE

*Your Guide to
Living More
Peacefully*



Banish Stress from Your Life: Your Guide to Living More Peacefully

Are you living with too much stress? Do you have days that you feel so overwhelmed you don't know what to do or are so out of control you just want to hide?

Are you spending more time screaming... crying.... pacing the floor... pulling your hair out... or lying awake at night worrying than actually enjoying life?

We all have some sort of stress in our life. In fact, according to the American Psychological Association, American Institute of Stress, NY, 77% of people regularly experience physical symptoms caused by stress. (source: <http://www.statisticbrain.com/stress-statistics/>)



One person might deal with the same type of stress more effectively than another. Knowing your stress limits and how you cope is important so you can avoid the serious health effects.

The percentages below show that people feel stress in a wide variety of ways:

Fatigue	51 %	Change in sex drive	15 %
Headache	44 %	Feeling dizzy	13 %
Upset stomach	34 %	Irritability or anger	50 %
Muscle tension	30 %	Feeling nervous	45 %
Change in appetite	23 %	Lack of energy	45 %
Teeth grinding	17 %	Feeling as though you could cry	35 %

It seems in this day and age everyone is affected by some form of stress. Once you learn what causes your stress and learn ways to reduce it and deal with it, you can begin to embrace living a more peaceful life. In this report we'll delve deeper into stress causes and ways to reduce it.

The Causes of Stress

Stress is a normal part of life. And it does serve a purpose in the right form. It can motivate you to go for that promotion or complete a marathon run. On the other hand, if you don't take care of your stress and it lingers on long term, it can interfere with your family life, your health and your job.

More than half of Americans say stress is the reason they fight with loved ones and friends.

What causes stress? Is it the same for everyone?

The answer is no. Everyone has different stress triggers. Work stress is one of the top stressors for many.

Stressor is the name for a situation that causes stress. It can come from a rocky relationship, an exhausting work schedule or anything that puts big demand on you. This might be something as wonderful as getting married, buying a new home or going off to college. It could be changes in a family situation or the loss of a loved one.

Stress can come from internal factors such as worrying excessively about something or having a negative outlook on life.

The causes of stress depend on how you perceive it. Some things may stress you but never faze someone else. One example could be that your morning commute makes you tense because you are afraid you might be late, while someone else may enjoy the commute, viewing it as time to enjoy music.

Causes of work stress include:

- Not being happy in your job
- Having too much responsibility
- Working long hours
- Dealing with poor management, with unclear expectations of your work
- Working under dangerous conditions
- Being insecure about your job
- Having the responsibility of having to give speeches in front of others
- Facing harassment at work



Life stressors include:

- The death of a loved one
- Getting married
- Moving into or buying new home
- Dealing with a dysfunctional relationship with a spouse or child
- Chronic illness or injury
- Being the caretaker of an elderly or sick family member
- Traumatic events, such as a natural disaster, theft, rape, or violence against you
- Divorce or separation
- Increase in your financial obligations

Internal factors that can lead to stress:

- Emotional problems such as depression, anxiety, anger, grief, guilt or low self-esteem
- Uncertainty
- Unrealistic expectations of yourself
- Fear of changes
- Constantly worrying about something that may or may not happen

The causes of stress will be different for each person based on your personality and how you respond and deal with situations. Some people are able to let everything just slide off their back while others have to work at keeping stress away so they don't worry themselves sick.

The Harmful Effects of Stress

Stress doesn't just affect your daily thoughts. It can cause harmful physical and emotional problems as well.

Our bodies cannot distinguish between a physical threat and a psychological one. If you're stressed over problems at work, an argument with a friend or a ton of bills, your body reacts in the same way as it does when facing a life-or-death situation. Having a lot of responsibilities or problems you worry about all the time may mean your body's stress response is always on, making it harder to deal with.

When you are in a stressful situation, your body will have some type of physical response. Your nervous system releases hormones to prepare you for the "fight or flight" response. You'll notice your heart rate increase; your breathing speeds up, you begin to sweat and your muscles tense. This is just the immediate short-term reaction to the situation. This is known as acute stress.

If you are exposed to stress over a long period of time, it's known as chronic stress. This can lead to very serious health problems. This type of stress can put a lot of wear and tear on the body, causing it to age prematurely and be more prone to illnesses.

Short-term stress signs include:

- Headaches
- Neck pain and other body aches
- Fatigue
- Difficulty sleeping
- Difficulty concentrating
- Upset stomach
- Irritability

Long-term stress, when not addressed, can lead to serious health conditions like:

- Depression
- High blood pressure
- Autoimmune diseases
- Abnormal heartbeat (arrhythmia)
- Hardening of the arteries (atherosclerosis)
- Heart disease or heart attack
- Heartburn, ulcers, irritable bowel syndrome
- Upset stomach - cramps, constipation, and diarrhea
- Weight gain or loss
- Changes in sex drive
- Fertility problems
- Asthma or arthritis flare-ups
- Skin problems such as acne, eczema, and psoriasis

Taking care of yourself and managing your stress can make a huge difference in how stress affects your health. Find ways to reduce stress, including by natural means. Talk to your doctor about ways you can manage your stress and what your options are.

Natural Ways to Reduce Stress

Often people suffering from anxiety want a natural way to reduce stress. They don't want to use pharmaceutical drugs for treatment due to their considerable side effects.

Here are five natural ways to reduce stress.

1. Relaxation techniques

- Deep breathing or breathing exercises. With this method you consciously pay attention to your breathing. Begin by slowing your breathing and focusing on taking regular, deep breaths.
- Guided imagery method. With this method, you focus on pleasant images in place of the stressful or negative feelings.
- Progressive relaxation or Jacobson's progressive relaxation method. Here you focus on tightening and relaxing each muscle group.
- Aromatherapy, which is a process where you use essential oils to promote relaxation.
- Meditation, which is a technique where the mind stops the focusing on stress and instead focuses inward towards calmness.
- Emotional freedom technique. With this form of therapy you locate and tap pressure points located on your body.

2. Stretching and exercising

- Cardio exercises, helping you release good endorphins to relieve stress.
- Strength training with weights or body weight.
- Walking. A 20- or 30-minute walk around the block can help you get your emotions in control.
- Yoga, an exercise that is also a relaxation technique. It gives you the coping skills you need to combat stress.
- Tai chi, which is a form of low-impact, weight-bearing, and aerobic exercise that began as a martial art.

3. Nutrition changes

- Eat a healthy, balanced diet to help build up the immune system and lowering blood pressure.
- Eliminate processed foods, especially fast food.



- Choose foods that give you energy like raw foods such as oranges or spinach.
- Eat Omega 3 fatty acid foods such as fish.
- Drink soothing herbal teas.
- Use natural herbs.
- Don't skip meals.
- Eliminate mindless eating.
- Steer clear of simple carbs like candy and sweets.

4. Activities that enrich your daily life

- Attend comedy shows or watching comic movies. Laughter is a tremendous stress reliever.
- Listen to your favorite music. Classical music has been shown to soothe emotions. Dance, sing and have fun.

- Volunteer. Give your time helping others. Just don't fill your calendar to overflowing.

- Take a day at the spa. Give yourself permission to get a spa treatment to help relax your muscles.



- Read a good book. Not a book you need to read but one that is purely for enjoyment.

- Express yourself with art. Take up a new hobby such as painting, ceramics or crafts. Find hobbies you enjoy and that keep your hands and mind busy.



- Take up gardening. Plant flowers or vegetables. Tending plants can be a peaceful way to put your mind at ease.

- Take a soothing bath. Light candles. Add a calming bath beads like lavender or chamomile. Put on an eye mask and just relax.



- Watch the sunset. Or sunrise.

- Play like a kid or play with your kids. Let go. Run. Giggle. Just be silly.

- Say "no". You don't have to do everything for everyone all the time. Your family can take care of themselves occasionally.

5. Socialization to get rid of stress

- Be around friends (the right friends). Call or spend time with them when you feel stress overwhelming you.
- Get out of the house if the stress is there. Go to a movie or a new restaurant.
- Spend time doing things you enjoy like taking a walk in nature or visiting a museum.



Take a break every now and then. Spend time alone when you need to. Find other ways that help you relieve stress. You can fight stress in natural ways without the use of pharmaceutical remedies that may have harmful or unwanted side effects.

Pharmaceutical Remedies and Their Potential Side Effects

Sometimes a natural approach to relieving stress isn't enough. You've tried everything. The next option is to talk to your doctor about the pharmaceutical remedies available to you and their possible side effects.

There are a several different medications available for controlling anxiety and stress. The major forms of medicines available include:

- Xanax, Xanax XR, Niravam
- Blue-green algae (Cyanobacteria Spirulina)
- Fragmin
- Ginseng (eleutherococcus and panax sp.)
- Valium
- Kava
- Ativan
- Paxil
- Schisandra
- Zoloft

These pharmaceutical drugs often come with side effects that can be bothersome. The higher the dosage the more noticeable the side effects become. These side effects can cause problems with work, school or even everyday activities like driving.

Common side effects of anti-anxiety medicines include:

- Drowsiness, lack of energy
- Clumsiness, slow reflexes
- Slurred speech
- Confusion and disorientation
- Depression
- Dizziness, lightheadedness
- Impaired thinking and judgment
- Memory loss, forgetfulness
- Nausea, stomach upset
- Blurred or double vision

Antidepressant side effects can also cause:

- Nausea
- Nervousness
- Headaches
- Sleepiness
- Sexual dysfunction
- Dizziness
- Stomach upset
- Weight gain

Sometimes a natural approach to relieving stress isn't enough. There are several types of pharmaceutical medicines available that can help. Just be aware of the potential side effects each one can have.

How to Avoid Stress

Stress is a part of everyone's life and can't always be avoided. But you can try to avoid at least some of the situations that cause it and you can control how you react and respond to it.

Begin by knowing how you cope and your coping strategies. Keep a journal to record stressful events and how you responded and coped with the stress. Once you know what causes your stress, begin making changes in your life to help you avoid those situations as much as possible.

Try these ideas:

1. Manage your time so you have time for more of the things you want to do as well as the things you need to do. Keep a time management log to help you decide which items are urgent and what can wait.
2. Change a part of your lifestyle. The choices you make about how you live can be contributing to your stress. For example, maybe you spend a big part of your time trying to juggle family, friends and work obligations. Look at how you spend that time. Could you get rid of some of your obligations? Maybe you could get your family to help out more at home? Or just see your friends once a week or so.
3. Live a healthy lifestyle. Eat healthy foods, limit your alcohol consumption and don't smoke. Exercise daily, even moderate exercise.
4. Get enough sleep so your body can recover from the stress of the day. Keep a notepad or your cellphone by your bed to record what you are worrying about if your problems are keeping you awake.
5. Build the support network in your life, including family, friends and people in your community.



Changing your habits to healthier ones, getting enough sleep and emotional support and learning to manage your time efficiently can go a long way in helping you to avoid stress.

How to Embrace Peacefulness in Your Life

Every day we have plenty of opportunities to get angry, stressed or offended. But what you're doing when you indulge these negative emotions is giving something outside yourself power over your happiness. You can choose to not let little things upset you. ~Joel Osteen

How we deal with stress can make a big difference in how peaceful our life is. Everyone has stress. It's a part of life. The trick is to embrace ways of finding peace even when you are under stress. Here are some ways to do that:

- Choose to be happy.
- Learn to do away with the negative thoughts. Optimism is a positive outlook on your future, on how you view yourself and the world around you. Try to find the good in every situation.
- Practice being grateful. Gratitude means saying thanks for everything good in your life. Be thankful for the blessings in your life right now.
- Accept what is. We can't change everything or control everything. Those things shouldn't concern us. Don't worry about the things you can't change.
- Spend time meditating and listening to your inner self. Meditate for 20 minutes every day.
- Learn how much a smile means. Take the time to enjoy the little things. Don't stress over breaking a dish. Instead, laugh it up. After all, it's just a dish.
- Think beyond your life. Read about other countries and cultures. Realize the world doesn't care about your problems. When you begin comparing your problems to bigger problems like tsunamis and earthquakes, you'll begin to understand how small your problems are.
- Care about others instead of being self-consumed. When you genuinely care about others, you will feel at peace. Show acts of kindness and goodwill to family and strangers alike.
- Keep hope that things will turn out for the best for you. Hope gives you a path to peace. Problems and difficulties are only temporary and will in time be just fine.
- Embrace whatever your beliefs are. Follow your faith 100%. Having a solid, healthy faith is essential to finding peace and wisdom. Research has shown that those who are deeply devoted to their faith have a higher life expectancy because they experience a greater amount of inner peace.



- Continue learning. Stress can come from our worries about not having all the answers. Accept you don't know everything but you can always learn what you need or want to know about. Learn from others who have gone through what you facing. Have a mentor who can guide you, even if it's just through their writings.
- Be in the present. Don't continue to worry about something that happened in the past. That's over with. And don't worry about what is going to happen. It hasn't occurred yet. Living in the present moment means there are no problems or concerns. You aren't worrying about what might happen.
- Learn to forgive. Forgiving others can lift a weight off you that you didn't know you were carrying. Not forgiving can lead to bitterness that is like a poison. It accumulates and builds within you. It's impossible to be free and at peace when you are bound to a past mistake. The incident is long gone. Get over it.

How you think has a huge impact on how peaceful your life will be. Follow the previous steps to embrace peacefulness into your life.

What to Do Next

People who are stressed need a wide variety of ways to deal with it and to find ways to avoid being stressed. Stress can cause many emotional and physical problems if not dealt with quickly.

Whatever the cause of your stress is, the key is learning how to cope with it. You need to find out how you handle stressful situations by keeping a journal of how you feel and react.

The next step is to get support from others you trust.

Deal with your stress by using one or more of the natural remedies suggested throughout this report.

Finally if the stress is too much for you to handle, get professional help. Talk to your doctor about what is going on in your life and get suggestions on how to combat it. Consider your pharmaceutical options and the many side effects before you say yes as a way to relieve your stress.



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