

8 Steps to Overcoming Stress

Did you know 43 percent of adults suffer from adverse health effects caused by stress? WebMD estimates that 75 percent to 95 percent of all doctors' visits are stress related.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has even declared stress a hazard of the workplace, costing American industry more than \$300 billion annually. Stress can play a role in problems such as headaches, high blood pressure, heart problems, diabetes, skin conditions, asthma, arthritis, depression and anxiety.

To be healthy, you need to be happy—not stressed. Here are my tips for preventing and managing stress, as well as the anxiety, depression and disease it causes.

1. Trust. Much of your stress stems from worry and fear. During times of stress, as well as other times, remind yourself that all is well. Jesus had much to say about trusting God to take care of you. Again and again, He tells us not to be afraid. Let go of your need to understand and control everything. Yes, bad things happen, but learn to trust that God is in control and only allows them for ultimate good. Say to yourself several times per day, "All is well, and all will be well." Your body's cells will listen to what your ears hear.

2. Look at the big picture. Ask yourself, "Will I be worrying about this on my deathbed?" In other words, most of the things we worry about today are not important in the big picture. During times of stress, little things seem much bigger than they really are. Mentally walk away from them as you remind yourself of what really matters over the long term—for example, happy moments with friends and family.

3. Practice the 3-3-3 plan. Breathing is perhaps the simplest and most natural thing you can do to relax. During periods of

stress, practice my 3-3-3 plan. Stop what you're doing every 3 hours (9am, 12pm, 3pm, 6pm and 9pm). For 3 minutes close your eyes and take 3 deep, slow breaths. Focus on your breathing and nothing else. Your mind, body and spirit will immediately respond.

4. Get physical. Take a 20-minute walk; finish a project around the house; stretch for 10 minutes—just get physical. Only 20 percent of US adults meet recommended aerobic and muscle strengthening guidelines, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Among numerous other health benefits, physical exercise releases various hormones that lessen stress and create feelings of well-being.

5. Talk to others. More often than not, just talking about something out loud to another person changes the way it feels and gives rise to easy solutions. In one survey, Consumer Reports found that talk therapy was reportedly more effective than drug therapy for depression and anxiety.

6. Talk to God. Jesus said, "Come to me all who are weary and heavy laden." Actually, you don't have to say much at all, just rest in God's presence, listening and waiting, thanking Him for all the good memories and future promises.

7. Laugh. Laughing lowers blood pressure, relaxes muscles, boosts immune function and reduces stress. It raises the levels of disease fighting T-cells, Gamma, Interferon and B-cells. Laughter also triggers the release of endorphins, the body's natural painkillers, producing a general sense of well-being. Numerous hospitals incorporate formal and informal laughter into their therapeutic regimens.

8. Listen to music. Finally, listen to your favorite music, especially songs that tend to slow you down and help you unwind. In a recent study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, ICU patients listening to music required 36 percent less sedation and experienced 36.5 percent

less anxiety than those receiving normal care. Many people prevent stress by keeping music playing softly in the background throughout the day.

Don Colbert, M.D., has been board certified in family practice for over 25 years and practices Anti-aging and Integrative medicine. He is a New York Times best-selling author of books such as The Bible Cure Series, What Would Jesus Eat, Deadly Emotions, What You Don't Know May be Killing You, and many more, with over 10 million copies sold. He is the medical director of the Divine Health Wellness Center in Orlando, Fla., where he has treated over 50,000 patients.

For the original article, visit .