

10 WAYS TO *Relax* AND REDUCE STRESS

POWERED BY SYSTEMS 24-7

1. Meditate - Sit up straight with both feet on the floor. Close your eyes. Focus your attention on reciting - out loud or silently - a positive mantra such as "I feel at peace" or "I love myself." Let any distracting thoughts float by like clouds.

2. Breath Deeply - Take a 5-minute break and focus on your breathing. Sit up straight, eyes closed, with a hand on your belly. Slowly inhale through your nose, feeling the breath start in your abdomen and work its way to the top of your head. Reverse the process as you exhale through your mouth.

3. Be Present - When you spend time in the moment and focus on your senses, you should feel less tense.

4. Reach out - Your social network is one of your best tools for handling stress. Talk to others -- preferably face to face, or at least on the phone. Share what's going on. You can get a fresh perspective while keeping your connection strong.

5. Tune into your Body - Mentally scan your body to get a sense of how stress affects it each day. Lie on your back, or sit with your feet on the floor. Start at your toes and work your way up to your scalp, noticing how your body feels.

6. Decompress - Place a warm heat wrap around your neck and shoulders for 10 minutes. Close your eyes and relax your face, neck, upper chest, and back muscles.



7. Laugh out Loud - A good belly laugh doesn't just lighten the load mentally. It lowers cortisol, your body's stress hormone, and boosts brain chemicals called endorphins, which help your mood.

8. Crank up the Tunes - Research shows that listening to soothing music can lower blood pressure, heart rate, and anxiety. You also can blow off steam by rocking out to more upbeat tunes.

9. Get Moving - You don't have to run in order to get a runner's high. All forms of exercise, including yoga and walking, can ease depression and anxiety by helping the brain.

10. Be Grateful - Make note of the things you are grateful for in your life.