

Managing Stress

SLOW DOWN!

SLOW DOWN before you break down!

- ✚ Take a few deep breaths or count to 10.
- ✚ Allow yourself brief breaks.
- ✚ Take off your shoes, put your feet up, close your eyes and relax.
- ✚ Take a one-day vacation.



USE POSITIVE SELF-TALK/COGNITIVE COPING SKILLS

- ✚ I can handle this feeling without smoking.
- ✚ I had to learn how to smoke and now I am learning how NOT to smoke. This is a difficult and will take time.
- ✚ Alcohol does not improve situations; it only provides a brief escape. Only I can change my situation.

BE ASSERTIVE

Many stressful situations can be handled or prevented completely by being more assertive:



- ✚ State your needs and goals clearly and calmly.
- ✚ Learn to say NO -- to responsibilities that are not yours, to emotional demands that leave you feeling drained, and to problems that you can't or shouldn't solve.
- ✚ Work together with others to achieve win-win situations.
- ✚ Ask directly about things when you are not very clear – do not assume that your boss, spouse, or friends “should” know what to tell you.

EXERCISE

- ✚ Regular exercise has a lot of benefits, one of which is reducing your stress.
- ✚ Aim for at least three times a week, for at least 20 minutes.
- ✚ Fitness walking is a good start if you don't already have an exercise or sport you like.



HOBBIES AND FRIENDS

Do things you really enjoy!



Spend time with friends.

AVOID DRUGS AND ALCOHOL



These are poor options for managing stress. They actually generate more stress by impairing your judgment, memory, health, and overall ability to handle stressful situations.

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

A healthy body will decrease the possibility of experiencing stress. Keep a consistent sleep schedule, eat nutritious foods, and maintain a healthy lifestyle.