

15 WAYS TO LEAVE YOUR STRESSORS...

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1. Commit, control, challenge

Researchers have found that stress-resistant people share common characteristics. They are deeply involved in their jobs and other life activities (commitment). They believe they can influence important events in their lives as well as the outcomes they experience (control). They perceive change as an opportunity to improve rather than a threat to their security (challenge).

2. Create buffers against stress

Stress is an essential part of life. To be alive is to experience some stress on one level or another. The good news is that we can learn to manage, balance, cope with stress in ways that will lessen its negative impact. We have much more control than we initially believe, mostly because we control the most important element — our Self! To help us along, we can create “stress buffers” by focusing daily on the abundance in our life, living a balanced lifestyle and being always aware of our passions.

3. Encourage informality in the work place

A business is not only about products and processes, it's about people. In times of great stress, value colleagues even more than usual. Put people ahead of rules, politics, charts, etc. An informal work atmosphere does not mean that the work is not getting done! It simply means that the people working there are human beings who sometimes need to function in a less rigid manner. What can be done in your workplace to help people relax a little bit? Fun Fridays? Wacky Wednesdays? Laughter Lunches?

4. Journaling

We are all in dire need of Quiet Time and could benefit from techniques to regularly clear the mind of its `noise`. One efficient way to do it is through journaling because it provides you with

both – time for Self and time to Think. Journaling enhances your intuitive and creative thinking. It connects you to the moment and helps you live your life in true awareness of your feelings, reactions, hopes and dreams. Some of us who can't ever let go of "old stuff" spend too much precious time in the past, while others of us who constantly worry about the future spend too much time away from the present. Journaling is a way to ground us in Real Time, the Here and Now, the Present.

5. Learn to let go of stuff

There is enough going on in our life without dragging every bit and piece from the past everywhere with us. Our minds and our bodies simply can't hold it all in! Update your beliefs, seek counseling, meditate, do what you have to do in order to lessen your "ugly stuff" load. Clean out your "mental closet" once in a while and remember your purpose in life. Why are you on this earth? You are here to create the best possible life and to contribute something significant. You can't do it if you hang on to the past...while your life is happening in the present...

6. Master your mind

Don't try to plan everything all at once. Like any other system, our mind tends to shut down when we overload it. Control your negative thoughts. Don't let them get the best of you. Counteract by thinking happy thoughts as often as you can throughout the day. Yes, there are problems but there are also solutions and successful outcomes. Choose to live your life from a place of abundance and serenity, not a place of loss and scarcity. Use positive self-talk, and keep an open mind to new ways...always...

7. Move your body

As you read through this list, where are your shoulders? Up or down? Relax your neck and shoulders. Take a stretch. Get a weekly massage. Exercise. Take the stairs instead of the elevator EVEN if your office is on the fourth floor! Your brain will be pleased with the mental break and your body will thank you for the opportunity to move. Go out for a walk at lunchtime EVEN if you only have 30 minutes. Why not take 10 of those precious minutes outside?

8. Optimize nutrient intake

Nutrition is the fuel that keeps all your systems going (muscles, organs, bones, brain...). In times of sustained stress, our bodies tend to become depleted of many essential vitamins and minerals. Skipping a meal is equal to skipping nutrients. Would you think of driving your car from A to B without any gas in the tank? It can't be done! Eat your nutrients and know that when you are under stress for a long period time, you need to focus on your adrenal glands. They manage your fight/flight response and have likely been overused if your stress is chronic. When the glands "burn out", you burn out!

9. Relax

Our modern-day society is so rushed, we even have a name to describe the dis-ease – we call it Hurry Sickness. The benefits of relaxation are multiple. It recharges our batteries, helps us focus and keep things in perspective, facilitates emotional and physical healing, enhances our personal sense of control, feeds our creative brain, boosts our resiliency to new stress that is bound to enter our life. When we relax, we give our body a chance to recover from the fight/flight response. Create a sanctuary in your Personal Space. Fill it only with things that you enjoy looking at or being around. Spend time in your sanctuary every day, even if it's only a few minutes.

10. Set smart priorities

Apply Stephen Covey's habits for effectiveness at home and at work. Why? Because his system works!! It is impossible that everything in your personal and professional life is urgent and important all at the same time. Get rid of unnecessary worries. Know where your stress is coming from and take steps toward dealing with it. One priority at a time please.

11. Take responsibility for your well being at work

Your boss, supervisor or colleagues don't live in your mind-body and they can't know how events and situations affect you on a psychological, physical or spiritual level. But you know and you are the only one that can take full responsibility for taking care of yourself. Blaming others won't change a stressful situation. On the other hand, being accountable to self makes everything possible. Choose self-care...

12. Talk it out...slowly

What you are going through is important enough for trusted people to listen to you with interest and intent. The simple fact of slowing down your speech when you share your story, feelings or situation will calm you in the short run. If the listener makes you feel like you are wasting their precious time, they are in fact wasting yours! Treat yourself as the important person that you are and seek support from true friends who care about your state of mind and well-being.

13. Unclutter your environment

I used to own a cup that said "I finally got it all together but now I forgot where I put it". Sound familiar? Clutter soaks up your energy and creativity because of the constant reminders that you have to get to it. Little notes on the brain that say — Clean. Organize. Throw away. Keep. Decide. While you shouldn't become a slave to a Perfect Environment, your stress level can also be increased by the dreaded clutter that won't go away. And that includes your home environment, work space and car! Simplify...

14. Update your fears list

Fears are stress inducers. While it is normal to feel fear in some instances (for example, when our life is in danger), it is not normal to live with fear every day. When we live in fear, we put ourselves in the position of fight or flight on a constant basis. Do you fear the unknown or anything new? Do you have a constant need for approval or fear being rejected? Can you tolerate ambiguity or do you fear conflict? What about taking risks and developing trust? Examine your fears. How are they affecting your daily stress level?

15. Use humor and praise, and CELEBRATE!

The average four-year old child laughs 400 times a day. How many times a day does the average adult laugh? A mere fifteen! Increase your portions of smiles and laughter. Celebrate with your team and don't wait for a special occasion to pat yourselves on the back for a job well done. Tell people how great they are. Celebrate in every area of your life as often as you can. Success comes in many forms and so does celebration. Enjoy a gourmet meal, share a cake with co-workers at work simply because it's Friday, take your partner out for a night on the town because you had a good day! Have fun.

*"When you find yourself at the end of your rope –
tie a knot in it, hang on, and swing!"*

— Leo Buscaglia