



Serenity Holistic Touch's 5 Stress Buster Tips

1) Sleep: According to National Sleep Foundation, most Americans do not get a good night of sleep. Sleep plays an important role in maintaining your body's immune system, emotional state and hormonal levels. When you do not get enough sleep, you feel tired, grumpy, and off-balanced. Adults need at least 7 hours of sleep a night, while teenagers need 9 hours and children 11 hours. It is important if you get or have insomnia to break the cycle before it effects your well-being.

2) Meditate: You heard it before from several sources that the best way to reduce stress is to meditate. Medical research shows meditating for 20 minutes lowers your heart rate, blood pressure and breathing. If you meditate regularly, it will improve your physical, mental and emotional health. The biggest question I answer regarding meditating is how to do it. The answer is easy; do something you enjoy which causes you to relax and not focus on anything. Meditating for some people can be listening to Zen music or singing a favorite song, walking or hiking in nature; whereas for other people it might be yoga, creating art or pumping weights. The point of meditating is to still the mind or 'be present.' Silence is not a requirement for meditating, sometimes is involves making a lot of noise (such as singing or chopping wood).

3) Bath: One of my favorite activities for relieving stress is taking a bath. Adding bath salts to the water is very beneficial in exfoliating the skin and easing sore muscles. Many types of bath salts also include essential oils such as lavender, eucalyptus, peppermint and orange, which further help the body to relax. Make it a routine to take a bath once a week for 20 minutes to de-stress. Make it a special event by adding soft music, candles, bath oils and/or bath pillow. It is a great way to unwind at the end of the day.

4) Exercise: Exercise is vital for maintaining our well-being. Medical research shows exercise is more important than diet in supporting a healthy body. Exercise releases endorphins to improve our mental and emotional states. It is important to select an exercise activity or routine that you like or love doing. Why? You will start and continue to engage in it. Probably the easiest exercise activity is walking; to add steps, you can take stairs at work or park at the back of parking lot. Moving the body can be fun and relaxing.

5) Music: A famous unknown quote says music smooths the soul; it is true. Scientific research demonstrates the quickest way to relax is through music/sound. The vibration of music affects the body's rhythm or flow of energy and releasing endorphins to cause the body to relax. Music can affect mental and emotional states also. For example, when you sing along with your favorite song, you become happy and will smile. I encourage you to turn on the radio or your digital music, close your eyes, and take some deep breaths while 1 or 2 songs play and you will feel more relax.