

99 Ways to Deal With Stress

**Please note: The relaxation techniques on this list will help lower your stress hormones, therefore helping you cope more effectively with your stressor.*

1. Talk to a friend or loved one.
2. Take a hot bath or shower to relax.
3. Create an art journal & express your fears, joys, frustrations, etc.
4. Write about your experiences in an online journal or paper journal.
5. Look for books, websites, and blog posts related to your stressor and research ways to alleviate the stress or find a solution to your problem.
6. Punch a pillow.
7. Scream into a pillow.
8. Brainstorm solutions with a friend or loved one.
9. Use scents, such as aromatherapy oils or scented candles to destress.
10. If you are a person of faith, pray.
11. Read devotions or other inspirational materials.
12. Focus on ways to serve others instead of focusing on your stress.
13. Listen to calm music.
14. Practice meditation.
15. Try mindfulness by concentrating on living in the present moment.
16. Read a good book, especially fiction, to help you escape for a short time.
17. Take a walk out in nature. Observe and appreciate your surroundings.
18. Eat a healthy meal.
19. Exercise. The endorphin release will help you feel better.
20. Find a story about someone who is worse off than you and offer them help, pray for them, or send positive thoughts to them.
21. Make a list of all the things in your life you are grateful for.
22. Make a list of all the people in your life you are grateful for.
23. Make a list of all the adversities you have overcome in your lifetime.
24. Make a list of all your accomplishments. Celebrate the gifts and talents you have which enabled you to achieve those things. Give thanks for them all!
25. Seek out someone who has been through what you are going through and contact them for support, help, advice, or to just hear their story.
26. Give up. Give up the need for control over the situation.
27. Get at least 8 hours of sleep a night for a minimum of one week.

28. Do something that makes you happy!
29. Color in a coloring book or print out a coloring page online. Grab a nice beverage, put on some fun or relaxing music, and enjoy!
30. Listen to upbeat music that will pump you up!
31. Have your doctor do a blood test to see if you have any vitamin or mineral deficiencies. If so, take supplements.
32. If you have unresolved trauma, see a therapist so you can heal.
33. Decide to go to bed 30 minutes early. Put fresh sheets on your bed or use a linen spray with a soothing scent, such as lavender, chamomile, or vanilla. Read something calming or meditate in bed.
34. Write a letter with your non-dominant hand. Address the letter to your stress or stressor. Tell it how it makes you feel.
35. Express your fear through art. Splatter paint, scribble with dark marker, do whatever feels good. The point is to get the frustration about your fear out of your body and onto whatever medium you're using.
36. Take 3 deep breaths in and blow 3 powerful breaths out. While breathing in, focus on what you want to draw more of into your life (positive energy, happiness, money, love, etc.). While breathing out, blow out all of the negative things you want to get rid of (negative energy, stress, fear, feelings of lack, doubt). Repeat often.
37. Make a list of all the negative aspects of whatever is causing you stress. Find ways to reframe as many of those negatives as possible. What can you learn from each of the negatives?
38. Make a list of all the positive outcomes you can imagine from this stressor. Focus on ways to make as many of those outcomes as possible become a reality.
39. Find ways to pamper yourself to help you relax. Put on lotion, paint your nails, wear a nice scent, shave your legs, put on pajamas, comfortable clothing, or get dressed up. Whatever makes you feel good... try it!
40. Sit outside in silence. Observe as many sights, sounds, smells, and physical sensations as you can.
41. Find something other than your stress to focus on.
42. Try a new hobby. Learning something new will help your brain have a positive focus.

43. Question your self-talk. Is what you're stressed about really a threat? Is it possible that the thing you're stressing about isn't even going to come true?
44. Be completely still in a quiet, safe place in your home. Sometimes sitting in silence allows new observations and insights about your fear to come through.
45. Practice yoga or t'ai chi.
46. Read a book, article, website, or blog post about spirituality to gain a new perspective on your stress.
47. Find a binaural beats app to download. Put on a pair of headphones and listen to one of the tracks on the app.
48. Do an activity you know brings you joy. If you know you like to make pottery, or bake goodies for others, or play basketball with others at the local community center, go do that.
49. Volunteer. Find a place where your talents and skills are needed and offer to help. Focusing on others can take away some of your own stress.
50. Ask trusted friends or family members how they would handle your particular stressor if they were in your shoes.
51. Use visualization to start your day. How would you like your day to go? What do you want to accomplish? Focus on those things and do your best to make them happen.
52. Read blogs for new perspective. The blogs don't have to be about your particular stressor. Reading a new blog may expose you to a different way of thinking which can help you view your stressor in a new light.
53. Find ways to reduce costs. Even if money isn't tight, taking control of a specific area of your life can help you feel better equipped to handle stress.
54. Organize any cluttered or messy areas of your home or office. The idea is the same as #53. Taking control of a specific area of your life can help you feel better equipped to handle stress.
55. Use a stress ball or hand gripper to help alleviate stress.
56. Don't isolate yourself from others. It's okay to take time to be still or quiet, as previously suggested, but isolation is different. It's unhealthy and can exacerbate your stress.

57. Concentrate on developing deeper breathing. Shallow breathing does not allow your brain to receive as much oxygen, so even taking in 10 deep breaths can help you feel better due to increased oxygen levels.
58. If a specific person is causing your stress, make every effort to minimize the amount of time you spend around that person.
59. Spend time with a pet. Whether the pet is yours or someone else's, dogs, cats, rabbits, guinea pigs, birds, fish...they can all reduce your stress level by petting or watching them.
60. If you cannot reduce the time spent with the person who causes you stress or being in the stressful situation (such as dealing with an ugly commute or a toxic work environment), map out a plan for how you're going to deal with the person or situation AHEAD OF TIME. Waiting until you're stressed isn't going to help you cope!
61. Find other people who have dealt with the same stressor and find out how they dealt with the stress.
62. Stop and rate the stressor on the 5-Scale. Ask how much the stressor will matter in 5 weeks, 5 months, and 5 years from now. This can help you gain a better perspective on the situation. It may not be as bad as you think!
63. Turn OFF your digital devices for a minimum of 2 hours. You may think you need the distraction; however, digital devices are not conducive to relaxation and calm.
64. Avoid social media and any source of news for a whole day. Both of these can induce stress, so taking a day off from them should help you feel somewhat better when dealing with a stressor.
65. Read something in the self-help or personal growth realm, such as the Your Gentle Nudge blog!
66. Consider using a life coach. A life coach is uniquely qualified to help you set goals and problem solve smaller or larger situations in your life. You can effectively use a life coach for as little as 6 weeks to make positive changes. Many life coaches can help you make a plan to deal with or even change your interaction with the stressor.
67. Get away from your current environment for the day, overnight, for a weekend, or for a full-blown vacation. Often times getting away from our usual routine can help us gain a new perspective on the stressor and feel refreshed so we can face it head on.

68. If money is your stressor, doing the work to create a positive relationship with money will help immensely. This goes beyond creating a budget and sticking to it. Find a financial planner or financial planning resources and follow the steps laid out by the person or the resource. Do the work!
69. As with #68, if you have stress related to your love relationship or with your children, seeking out the appropriate professional, such as a therapist, or resources related to the subject, such as books, articles, websites, and blogs, can help you find new strategies to deal with your stress and change the situation.
70. Ask yourself, "How am I contributing to the situation?" Are you worrying too much? Are you antagonizing another person or not handling very well the person who is antagonizing you? Have you blown the situation completely out of proportion? Is your view of the situation accurate? Having a trusted friend or loved one to explore these questions with you can sometimes be helpful.
71. Do not, do not, DO NOT fall prey to victim mentality! Don't allow the thought that things are being done to you and you have no control. At the very least, you get to choose how you feel about the situation and how you deal with the situation. DON'T GIVE YOUR POWER AWAY!
72. If feeling overwhelmed by all you have to do is your stressor, decide what absolutely has to be done by you and see what you can delegate to others. Find things you can say "no" to...don't volunteer for every single task you are asked to do. And be realistic about what you can get done in one day. There is no shame in leaving something for tomorrow's TO DO list.
73. If you have the financial resources, pay to have professionals do some of the things you are doing. Can you get someone to maintain your lawn? Walk your dogs? Do your grocery shopping? If these things are causing a time crunch and you are able, farm them out to the pros.
74. If you DON'T have the financial resources to pay professionals to take a few items off your "To Do" list, maybe you can swap chores with a neighbor or a friend. See if you can agree to have your kids stay at their house for the evening for free so you can have a date night or free time or kid-free grocery shopping time and you'll do the same for her the next week. Or maybe your friend loves to do a household chore you hate and vice versa. Trade chores for what you're good at or at least for what you like to do!

75. If lack of time and overwhelm are stressors for you, finding an organizational system to help you manage your time, plan meals, or get your physical or mental house in order would be well worth the time and money spent. There are numerous free and inexpensive resources on the internet through blogs, courses, and ebooks which may be of help.
76. Micromovements are small, bite-sized actionable steps you can take to make progress when you have what feels like a large or overwhelming task at hand. If something feels daunting, figure out what the first small step is, then do that. Then figure out what the next step is, and do that, and so on. You'll be making progress in no time!
77. Be productive. If you're making progress in at least one area of your life, you can celebrate that area and focus on how to make progress in other areas of your life.
78. Find the humor in the situation. If you can laugh at the stressor or at least one thing about the situation, it can help you keep the stressor in proper perspective.
79. Drink at least 64 ounces of water a day. Believe it or not, dehydration can cause stress, headaches, and general crankiness, not to mention it can cause you to eat more and crave carbs.
80. Stretch your body. Once again, stretching helps get more oxygen into your muscles, and oxygen helps you feel refreshed, relaxed, and rejuvenated.
81. Say daily affirmations. Did you know that saying affirmations out loud daily helps retrain your subconscious? Your subconscious doesn't have critical thinking skills, so repeating positive affirmations out loud helps rewire your neural pathways and reduce negative and limiting beliefs.
82. Remind yourself to not take your stressor with you. If work causes you stress, do your best to leave work at work. If an aggressive driver upsets you, tell ONE person about it to help vent your stress and frustration, but then don't allow that experience to hold any more power over you. Every time you tell someone about your stressor and get aggravated by it, you're stimulating your stress hormones again and giving away your power. You have the CHOICE to decide if you're going to keep giving your stressor your physical and mental energy. Make the choice not to let it drain you!
83. Create and uphold boundaries. Many stressors are caused by allowing others to treat us in ways we don't want to be treated. Decide how you

want to be treated and don't allow anyone to walk all over you, bully you, tell you what to do or how you should feel, and if they treat you in a way you don't like, say something. You can do this in a kind way, but you need to do it. If you allow a person to treat you poorly once, they will likely do it again. Then you will have a much bigger problem and stressor on your hands.

84. Examine your own expectations of both yourself and others. Are your expectations realistic? Are they necessary? Are you creating additional stress for yourself with the expectations you've set? Are you creating stress between you and someone else due to your expectations of that person? If any of this is true, adjust your expectations. Decide what is truly important in the situation.
85. Ask yourself if your stress is being caused by the need to be right. Would you rather be right than compassionate? Would you rather win the argument at the expense of hurting the other person? Sometimes letting go of your need to be right and opting to hear the other person out and choosing to be kind instead of right will alleviate a LOT of stress for both you and the person with whom you're dealing.
86. If you're dealing with a difficult person, deciding to take the high road can alleviate some stressful situations. A person cannot argue with you if you do not participate. Instead, if that person decides to engage with you in a negative way, he or she will be arguing at you, and may feel foolish when you don't respond. Don't participate in someone's negative treatment of you. Modeling the behavior you would like the other person to treat you with can sometimes be much more effective than arguing back.
87. Prioritize what's important in your life and let the other things fall under the category of "Don't Sweat the Small Stuff." If there is a stressor in an area of your life that's important, do your best to either correct the situation or effectively cope with it. Otherwise, don't let it cause an unnecessary spike in your stress hormones.
88. Find something or someone who makes you laugh and get to laughing! Laughing has many beneficial effects, including releasing endorphins which can help you feel better. If you're lucky, you'll be able to laugh at your stressor!

89. Instead of mindlessly turning on the TV, news, or music when you first wake up, try being quiet or playing soft or uplifting music. This can set the tone of your day to a more positive one where you will (hopefully) incur less stress.
90. Examine the times when you turn on the TV, news, or music and don't think about it. What would be a better use of your mental energy? If you do tend to turn on the news just to keep you company, you can absorb the negative energy of what's being reported. Protect your mental energy at all costs! Examine what you let into your mind and spirit.
91. If you spend time in your car commuting to work, doing errands, or going other places which take more than a couple of minutes to drive to, what positive music, stories, ebooks, podcasts, affirmations, or other uplifting things could you listen to which? The goal is to infuse your life with positivity in as many places as possible to help you feel good so you can more effectively combat stress.
92. Perform Random Acts of Kindness. This is an old movement, but an effective one. If you take the time to do something kind for another person, it really does help you feel good both physically and mentally. Anything you can do to feel good will help you ward off stress.
93. Limit your consumption of information. Sometimes we create more stress for ourselves by worrying that we don't have all the information we need to make a choice. This is called FOMO, or Fear of Missing Out. Get the pertinent information, make a choice, and be confident in your choice! Having too many choices can be a major source of stress.
94. Take time to truly enjoy what you're doing. How do you spend your free time? Are you having fun and enjoying life or are you merely existing, going through the motions each day? Being intentional about doing things that bring you joy will lower your stress levels.
95. If you suffer from depression or you suspect you do, please take good care of yourself and see your doctor. Depression is a major cause of stress and can distort your thinking, causing you to view stressors as larger than they truly are. You do not need to suffer alone.
96. Procrastination causes many stressful situations. If you are a procrastinator, find strategies that will work to reduce or eliminate your

tendency to procrastinate. If you procrastinate, you are essentially creating more problems for yourself and are being your own worst stressor.

97. Take time to do a personal inventory. What areas of your life are satisfying? Not satisfying? What is good about the satisfying areas? What can you do to change the not satisfying areas? Find resources to help you make a plan and decide to make the changes needed to improve your life.
98. Do a guided meditation. There are a number of free apps you can download which will lead you on a guided meditation. Some will instruct you on breathing techniques in addition to telling you what to visualize. Taking your mind to a calmer place will definitely help relieve stress.
99. Set up your bedroom to be a sanctuary. Fill it with things which help you to relax. Be sure to use soft, calming paint and fabric colors. Hang tranquil art. Use gentle lighting. Have pleasant scents on hand. Put spiritual reading materials and a journal and pen within reach. Include a music source for calming tunes or guided meditations.

The most important thing to remember when you're dealing with stress is that we all deal with stress. You are not alone. Reach out to others for help and guidance.

What would you add to this list? Email me at writechristine@YourGentleNudge.com with your suggestions.