## **25 Proven Ways to De-Stress for Adults**

## **1. Identity your stress triggers.** First things first, what exactly stresses you out? Do you know exactly what triggers this reaction? How do you react to it,? When you have a few answers, look for possible solutions.While you’re not going to be able to eliminate every stress trigger in your life, you can at least remove the ones that you have influence over.For example, if your morning commute is your main cause of stress because of traffic, then ask for a flexible schedule where you only have to commute three days a week and work two days from home. Another option for a flex schedule would be coming in earlier or arriving later so that you can avoid most of the hectic traffic.

## **2. Take a 10 minute walk.** Exercise is one of the best stress relievers out there. But, not everyone will take the time or have the motivation to commit to a strict workout regimen.

## **3. Laugh** Research has found that laughing can decrease stress hormones, reduce artery inflammation and increase HDL, the “good” cholesterol

**4. Breathe.**Slow, deep breathing, even if it’s for only a couple of minutes can dramatically decrease tension. You can try one the following breathing exercises during your lunch:

**Power 10 -** Take 10 breaths. Focus on feelings of anxiety and stress while inhaling and releasing and letting go while exhaling for 6 seconds.

**Heart boost** - Think about two of the best moments of your life and then positive feelings you experienced during these specific moments as you inhale. Release any negative feelings as you exhale. When you pair a positive emotion with an inhalation, your heart will shift rhythms in order to improve your mental state.

**Heart shifting** - Here you’ll take three sets of five breaths with a 4-second inhale and a 6-second exhale. During the first five breaths, focus on negative emotions and then let them go with each exhale. For the second set of breaths, clear your mind of any other thoughts and just focus on the feeling of inhaling and exhaling. Finally, focus on embracing “the love in your heart” during the inhale, whether that be for a family member or friend. Let go of the negative emotion while exhaling.

**5. Get up earlier.**This isn’t for everyone, but if you’re more of a morning person then start waking up even earlier. You’d be surprised at how much more you’ll accomplish before everyone else is awake. You might enjoy reading, getting in a workout, responding to emails or getting right to work.

## **6. Eat well.** Our moods and our foods are closely linked. That’s why when you feel down in the dumps or stressed out you automatically reach for your comfort food. Nonetheless, cookie dough for breakfast is never the best option health wise.You *can* start small. Healthy eating improves your energy, makes you more productive, and improves your physical and mental health. It can also save you money. Avoid junk food and stick with fruits, veggies and foods that are rich in omega 3 fatty acids, such as flaxseed.

## **7. Visualize** A short visualization can be the quickest path to getting centered. Just get comfortable somewhere quiet and imagine the person, place or thing that makes you happy. If accomplishing a goal charges you up, imagine someone thanking you for what you've completed.

## **8. Meditate** Time and time again this practice of inward-focused thought, along with deep breathing, has been proven to reduce heart disease risk factors including high blood pressure.Check out 5 minute meditation. It’s designed to help you reduce stress by meditating for just minutes.

## **9. Dry skin brushing.**According to Dr. Joseph Mercola, [dry skin brushing](http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2014/02/24/dry-skin-brushing.aspx) is often used to brush “off dead skin cells” and also activate “waste removal via your lymph nodes.”

## **10. Chew some gum.**There was a 2008 [study](http://bit.ly/1mQUvPp) from Swinburne University in Melbourne, Australia, that discovered that chewing gum can reduce the stress hormone cortisol in saliva by 16 percent during mild stress and about 12 percent during moderate stress.

## **11. WOOP, there it is!** Psychologist Gabriele Oettingen, author of *Rethinking Positive Thinking: Inside The New Science Of Motivation,* Oettingen suggests that we use a mental contrasting tool she calls [WOOP](http://woopmylife.org/woop-1) (Wish, Outcome, Obstacle, Plan). This involves closing your eyes, imagining your wish coming true for a few minutes, and then thinking about the main obstacle that’s in your way.After that, envision the action that you would take to remove the obstacle.

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## **12. Get enough, quality sleep.**Are you getting enough sleep at night? You should. Sleep is an essential component in staying healthy and strong and it can help you better handle stressful situations.Remember, just cause you’re in bed for eight hours doesn’t mean that you’re getting quality sleep. Make sure that you get restful and restorative sleep each and every night by having a cool, dark, and quiet environment.

**13. Buy a plant.**Plants are more than just beautiful air purifiers. They can also reduce stress and anxiety - [particularly](https://inews.co.uk/essentials/lifestyle/wellbeing/plants-help-relieve-stress-much/) chamomile, jasmine, lavender, marjoram, and skullcap.

## **14. Count.**Since counting numbers gives your mind something neutral to focus on, instead of whatever’s stressing you out, it can divert your thoughts and place you on a more serene track.

## **15. Hug someone.**Led by Sheldon Cohen, researchers at Carnegie Mellon found that hugs can protect people from stress and infection. Cohen [says](http://www.cmu.edu/news/stories/archives/2014/december/december17_hugsprotect.html) that, “being hugged by a trusted person may act as an effective means of conveying support and that increasing the frequency of hugs might be an effective means of reducing the deleterious effects of stress."

**16. Get out of town.**Taking an annual vacation is good for you since it removes you from stressful situations. But, not everyone has the time or money to go overseas or disappear for a month.Even a weekend getaway like camping or visiting a friend or family member and a “staycation” can be effective when you need to unwind.

## **17. Unplug** British [researchers](http://www.everydayhealth.com/emotional-health/0112/your-smartphone-may-be-stressing-you-out.aspx?xid=tw_everydayhealth_20120112_smartphone) connected the dots between rising stress levels and constantly checking a smartphone.Sometimes you need to turn off all of your devices in and even leave them behind. Try it. You’ll be surprised at how peaceful you feel when you’re not checking your phone every five minutes.

## **18. Naam yoga hand trick.**Sharon Melnick, author of Success Under Stress, says that simply applying pressure to the space between your second and third knuckle (the joints at the base of your pointer and middle fingers) can create a sense of instant calm.[According](http://www.businessinsider.com/how-to-relax-instantly-2013-6#ixzz2dNhuCsiS) to Melnick, "it activates a nerve that loosens the area around the heart, so any of that fluttery feeling you feel when you're nervous will end up going away."

## **19. Visit your BFF.**Studies have found that during stressful times visiting your best friend can decrease the levels of the stress hormone cortisol.What if your bestie isn’t around? At least you can hang out with man’s best friend. A study from the Virginia Commonwealth University discovered that employees who brought their dogs to work experienced lower stress levels throughout the work day.

## **20. Practice gratitude.**When it comes to increasing your happiness, improving your health and coping with stress there isn’t as powerful as gratitude.There have been numerous scientific studies, including research conducted by renowned psychologists [Robert Emmons and Michael McCullough](http://psychology.ucdavis.edu/Labs/emmons/PWT/index.cfm?Section=4). They found that those who consciously focus on gratitude experience both a greater emotional well being and physical health than those who don’t.

**21. Discard and organize.**Clutter and disorganization cause chaos and stress. Don’t believe me? How stressed out were you the last time you couldn’t find your car keys or an important document?Get rid of the junk you no longer need and start organizing the stuff you have so that you know exactly where everything is when you need it.

## **22. Get crafty.**Avid knitter and pediatrician, Perri Klass, M.D. found that repetitive motions from crafts like [knitting](http://journals.lww.com/academicmedicine/fulltext/2001/07000/knitting.4.aspx) can soothe anxiety. If knitting isn’t your cup of tea, pick-up hobbies like cross-stitching or making jewelry.

## **23. Scream, sigh or sing.**Stress is a result of us not letting it out. One of the easiest ways to release this stress is just by letting out a good old-fashioned primal scream or sing your favorite song since that releases endorphins and oxytocin.

## **24. Sit in a rocking chair.**Research from the [University of Rochester](http://www.rochester.edu/pr/releases/med/watson.htm) found that the mild exercise of rocking in a rocking chair can release endorphins, improve mood, and even reduce pain.

## **25. Create calendar cushions.**One of the biggest stress factors is having an overbooked calendar. In the future, start creating cushions in your schedule so that you aren’t rapidly bouncing from Point A to Point B.