

## Activities That Help Counteract Your Stress

A certain amount of stress is inevitable and a small amount of stress is actually good for you, keeping you alert and motivated. However, sustained stress will elevate stress biochemicals such as cortisol, which can take a toll on your mood as well as your body.

Even if you can't find ways to reduce specific stressors, you can still find activities which can counterbalance the stress in your life. There are many activities you can do which will reduce the cortisol levels in your body and bring you feelings of calm and control.

The worksheet on the next page shows you things you can do every day to fight the negative impact of stress. When you make "stress-busting" activities a daily habit, you will start to see a noticeable difference in your mood and your ability to focus on both the issues that are bothering you and the things you do each day to bring happiness and fulfillment into your life.

Put a check mark by the activities you are most likely to do. See if you can find one activity to do in each category. Then estimate the time you will do the activities each day. Finally, put a check mark when you have accomplished this activity each day in a week. Keep this chart for three weeks.

Week of \_\_\_\_\_ (Date)

Activity	Check If Interested	Estimated Time/Day	Achieved (put a check mark for each day)
<b>Scheduled Relaxation</b>			
Deep breathing			
Meditation			
Visualization			
Relax with quiet music			
Yoga			
Other			
<b>Self-Care</b>			
7-9 hours sleep			
Good nutrition			
Minimum ½ hour exercise			
Massage			
Other			
<b>Social Activities</b>			
Meaningful conversation(s)			
Fun activities with family or friends			
Meals with family or friends			
Spiritual activities with others			
Other			
<b>Time Management</b>			
Set goals and steps to achieve them			
Realistic 'to do' list			
Delegating appropriate responsibilities			
Realistic scheduling and planning			
Other			
<b>Creative and Fun Activities</b>			
Journaling			
Hobbies			
Time with pets			
Play			
Other			