

Mike Moore's

53

NATURAL

STRESS

BUSTERS

(A Student Pocket Guide)

Introduction

This handy pocket guide is based on the fact that unmanaged stress is a destructive reality in your lives and must be controlled.

The good news is... IT CAN BE without taking drugs.

You are in control of your response to what happens to you. All you need are effective coping skills.

That's what this pocket guide provides.

I hope you find it helpful.

Mike Moore, M.ed

**You must STOP
believing all the
NEGATIVE
THOUGHTS
you think.**

~ Mike Moore ~

Why We Must Manage Stress

Stress is the number one health problem facing young people today.

- * The World Health Organization says that by mid-century, stress-related illnesses will be the leading cause of disability.
- * According to a government survey we, as a society, spend billions of dollars a year on stress-related illness.
- * A British study has found that your health is seriously effected by the quality of your relationships. Those who have poor relationships tend to have high blood pressure and high stress levels.
- * New research strongly links stress to disease.
- * Over 85 percent of doctor visits are for stress related concerns.
- * Stress damages the brain and can impair memory function.
- * Stress raises blood pressure and stimulates the production of inflammatory hormones which contribute to the build-up of plaque in the arteries.
- * Stress can trigger pain, gas and other symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome. It also aggravates stomach ulcers.
- * Stress can cause and aggravate pain in the body.

The Health Benefits Of Laughter

Laughter isn't just fun and enjoyable, it's good for our health. Each month modern medicine is discovering more about the therapeutic dimension of humour and laughter and is encouraging us to add them to our wellness program.

When we laugh we...

- * lower our blood pressure.
- * stimulate the immune system.
- * promote relaxation and reduce stress by half.
- * increase the oxygen level in our blood giving us more energy.
- * increase the endorphin activity in our body resulting in a sense of well being.
- * are able to keep things in perspective.
- * banish boredom.
- * are more socially attractive. People enjoy being with those who laugh easily and often.
- * increase our enjoyment of life.

Laughter has been called social glue because it bonds us to the people we laugh with.

It is also social lubricant because, just like oil in a car, it reduces inevitable friction among human beings

If it feels good to laugh then laugh to feel good.

Managing Stress Not Eliminating It

It is important to remember that we are talking about managing stress and not about eliminating it from our lives. If stress were not a part of our lives we would be dead. Living involves stress. It's unmanaged stress that can destroy our health and well being and which must be controlled.

**The mind can make
a heaven out of hell
or a hell out of heaven.**

~ Milton

**There's nothing
more
DANGEROUS
to your health
than the
FEAR
of losing it.**

~ Mike Moore ~

Do You Manage Stress Effectively?

Place a checkmark beside each statement that applies to you.

DO YOU...

- * give yourself time to avoid rushing? _____
- * go through the day at a comfortable pace? _____
- * enjoy taking the scenic route even though it's longer?

- * do things for the sheer joy of doing them? ____
- * avoid getting upset at the shortcomings of others?

- * enjoy relationships for their own sake? _____
- * feel confident standing up for yourself? _____
- * accept people for who and what they are? _____
- * feel reasonably satisfied with yourself? _____
- * accept that which you cannot change? _____

The greater the number of checkmarks the more effectively you manage stress.

**Slow me down. Ease the
pounding of my heart by
the quieting of my mind.**

~ Anon

53 Simple Stress Busting Tips

- 1. Take four deep breaths slowly.** It really works to relax the body and mind.
- 2. Relax the tongue.** Usually the tongue is held tightly against the teeth. Free it up in the mouth so it can just rest there without tension.
- 3. Take one minute vacations.** In your mind visit places where you find peace and stillness. Picture yourself there soaking up the beauty and solitude.
- 4. Relax your facial muscles.** When we are tense we frown and squint which adds to the tension. Tell your facial muscles to relax and they will. Try to maintain this relaxed face throughout the day.
- 5. Move slowly.** When you find yourself rushing for no reason, SLOW DOWN.
- 6. Laugh more.** Laughter cuts stress and promotes relaxation.
- 7. Listen to beautiful music.** Quiet music calms the restless spirit and promotes relaxation.
- 8. Watch and enjoy the sunset.** Great for the spirit in turmoil.
- 9. Visualize yourself as a balloon being inflated.** As you breathe in, the balloon fills with your stress and tension. Then breathe out all the stress and tension leaving yourself limp and relaxed.

**Worry is like a rocking chair;
it will give you something to do
but won't get you anywhere.**

~ Anon

10. Enjoy the rhythm and beauty of nature for its lessons are patience and peace.

11. Search your holy book for relaxing peaceful passages. Copy in a journal or memorize and refer to them often.

12. Make time to watch a sunrise or a sunset or a moonrise. There is something calming and peace inducing about these simple, natural activities.

13. Doodle a figure 8. I read that just doodling the figure eight promotes relaxation and eases stress.

14. Drink chamomile tea with honey. This drink has been shown to calm you down and quiet the mind.

15. Plant and care for a small garden. Gardening gets you in touch with the life force around you and puts things in perspective.

16. Learn to love taking a brief nap. There is nothing like a brief nap to set things right.

17. Learn to love silence. In an age of noise and confusion we find peace and relaxation in just sitting still in the stillness of silence.

18. Visualize yourself as calm, relaxed and peaceful. There is a growing body of evidence that we tend to become what we visualize.

**When you
feel overwhelmed,
YOU ARE!**

~ Mike Moore ~

19. Become a humour hound... a seeker and recorder of the funny and fun things that happen every day.

20. Practise the gentle art of sitting in the sun. It helps us reap the many benefits of sitting still and basking in the beauty of the day.

21. Don't multi task. It is stress inducing and non productive in the long run.

22. Learn to laugh... A LOT! The physical and psycho-social benefits of laughter are clear. Live better, laugh more. Laughter, if not the best medicine, is certainly very good medicine.

23. Everything in moderation. It is excess that can cause distress.

24. Sit quietly and concentrate on what is around you. 4 slow, deep breaths calms the fear centre of the brain called the amygdala.

25. Take photos of peaceful scenes or situations. These will help you when you want to take a one minute vacation during your busy day.

26. Don't try to please everyone. Pleasing people is not why you were created. You are here to become the best person you are capable of becoming. Constantly trying to please people gets in the way of this mission.

27. Learn how to say NO. When we feel forced to do something we don't want to do because we just can't say NO we experience anxiety.

28. Watch and learn from a cat. A cat relaxes completely and moves slowly and is very efficient.

**Think thoughts of peace
and not of affliction.**

~ Bible

29. Take a relaxing bath. Most people take showers today but nothing beats a relaxing bath for promoting relaxation and managing stress.

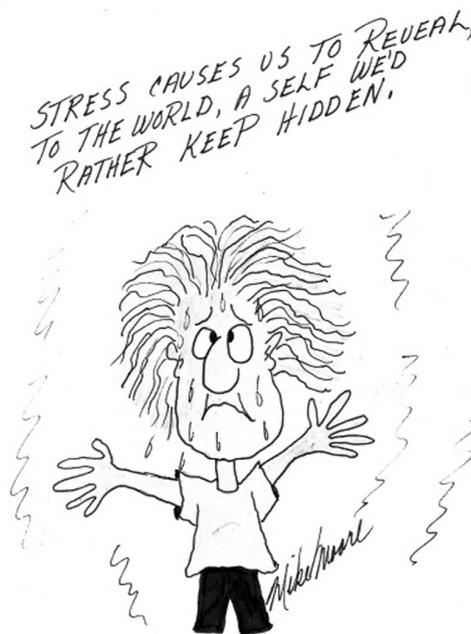
30. Adopt the philosophy of Live and Let live. Don't expect people to live up to your expectations because when they don't it can cause stress levels to soar.

31. Use your imagination to bring about peace of mind. We tend to become what we imagine, so visualizing yourself as calm, relaxed and peaceful helps you become that way.

32. Eat healthy food. Fruit and vegetables should dominate your plate.

33. Try to eliminate negativity from your life. Negativity causes illness by being a destructive emotion. Negative thoughts result in poor health.

34. Stop complaining. People who complain a lot tend to be highly stressed and so do those around them.



35. Try aromatherapy. Use the internet to identify the stress reducing herbs and spices that calm us down. Make them part of your stress management program.

36. Go for a 30 minute massage. There is nothing like a massage to calm and heal our body and our mind.

37. Have a ME Day as often as you can. Never feel guilty taking time to calm your mind and spirit.

38. Identify your listening points on the planet. Listening points are those places of beauty and wonder that we have experienced that have calmed and inspired us and continue to live in our memory.

39. Attitude:
Behaviour is attitude in action. Positive attitudes result in positive behaviour while negative attitudes result in negative behaviour. When you change your attitude, you can change your life and you manage stress in the process.

40. Relaxation:
Learn the restorative art of positive relaxation. Make time each day to rest your mind and body completely for, at least, 20 minutes. You can relax sitting in a chair or lying down. Just do it. You begin by closing your eyes and taking three, deep, slow breaths. As you exhale feel and visualize your body and mind letting go and peace and tranquillity rushing in and dwelling within you.

41. Exercise:
Get moving, physically. Start by going for a walk. Gradually increase the time, distance and speed of your walk. I like the old saying,, “In the morning work awhile; in the afternoon rest awhile and after dinner walk a mile.” Walking has been called nature’s tranquillizer for good reason. Great things happen when we go for a walk. As your fitness improves you might want to include other exercises. This is fine, providing you check it out with your family doctor.

42. Diet:
People in North America today are overfed, undernourished and overweight. We consume far too much sugar, fat, and empty carbohydrates. When you combine this with increased stress and lack of exercise it becomes clear why we aren’t well. Something as simple as cutting down on non-nourishing foods and increasing the amount of fresh fruit and vegetables we consume can be a good first step towards stress management and wellness.

43. Commit yourself to putting the fun back into your life. Whatever it is that’s fun for you do it, and do it often.

44. Laugh more. Become a laughologist. Watch funny movies and sitcoms. Collect and display funny cartoons. Isn’t that what a refrigerator door is for?

45. Be patient with people. Try to foster a more patient, accepting, attitude towards the behaviour of others.

46. Go for a brisk walk in nature. You will feel good and you will put yourself in touch with your lost sense of wonder. There is nothing that lifts my drooping spirits faster than a nature walk.

47. Reach out and help someone. I believe that we are never more fully alive than when we reach out to help another human being. True happiness comes from investing your energy in caring for others and creation.

48. Eat an apple a day. Studies have discovered that the quercetin in apples works to help manage stress.

We must strive for the calm supremacy of the mind over circumstance.

~ Anon

49. Adopt the Live and Let Live philosophy. People are not the main source of our stress. Our response to people is. Live and let live helps us have a more patient, accepting response to the behaviour of others.

50. Manage your time more effectively. When you feel overwhelmed... you are and having too much on your plate does contribute to feeling overwhelmed.

51. Look for and marvel at rainbows and butterflies. If you are a spiritual person you know that a rainbow is a sign of God's presence. It is also a sign of hope. Butterflies are a sign of resurrection. Just looking at and admiring both give you a sense of calmness and peace.

52. Have a frequent news fast. It doesn't take a genius to know that the daily news is frustrating, violent, destructive and negative. Thus the news can be stress inducing and harmful to our health.

53. Learn to laugh at yourself. If you don't, you leave the job to someone else. "Life is too serious to be taken seriously." C.S. Lewis



Mike Moore's Motivational Plus

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mike Moore is a popular speaker/humourist and cartoonist on humour, motivation and human potential. His work has appeared in newspapers, and magazines throughout Canada and the USA.

Mike works with teachers, healthcare providers, business leaders government employees and community organizations on the subject of Humour in the Workplace, Humour and Wellness and Humour and Human Potential. He believes that laughter is a universal language that always makes great things happen.

For information about having Mike speak to your group or to order copies of this booklet...

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