



STRESS BUSTERS

✦ **Exercise**, especially outside—bike, jog, take a brisk walk. This clears your head, gives you energy, and can change your mood. Some studies show regular exercise is just as effective as taking anti-depressants!

✦ **Breathe**—if you feel overwhelmed, upset, etc., try taking 3 to 5 deep, slow breaths. It really can help.

✦ **Prioritize & Plan Your Time**--Make a list of things you must do, number them in order of importance, and schedule time to work on them. Do high priority tasks BEFORE things that can wait, like checking email. Break big jobs down into smaller, more manageable tasks. Work for an hour or so, then take a 10-15 minute break (try one of the things on this list during your break!).

✦ **Practice Good Sleep Habits**—try to go to sleep & get up around the same time most days. Leave time to unwind before bed. If you have insomnia, get out of bed & do something relaxing, like reading. Trying to push yourself when you're really tired often takes more time and results in poor work, while if you went to sleep & set your alarm earlier, you could get up and do a better job in less time.

✦ **Make Quiet Time**—just sitting quietly in a peaceful spot for 10-15 minutes once a day, letting go & calming your mind, can help you feel more clear-headed.

✦ **Make a List of Fun Things & Make Time for Fun**—if you get depressed or stressed, it can be hard to remember how to have fun! Make a list of fun/relaxing things to do (call a friend; take a long, hot shower; dance, etc.) & keep it where you can see it. Write time for fun and relaxation into your schedule.

✦ **Watch a Funny Movie/Read a Funny Book**—laughing improves your mood & gives you energy.



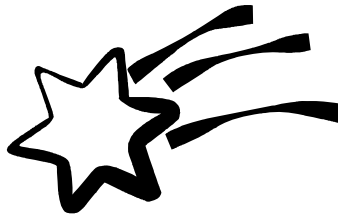
✨ **Hang Out with a Friend or Friends**-- especially positive people.

✨ **Avoid Excess Caffeine, Alcohol, and Other Drugs**--Too much caffeine can interfere with sleep and make anxiety worse for some people. If you feel down, alcohol (a depressant) can exaggerate it.

✨ **Eat Well**--Good nutrition improves energy and mood. If you don't have the time or skill to cook, try nutritious frozen foods & energy bars. Buy a blender and make smoothies.

✨ **Keep Perspective**-- As a peer tutor put it, remember a "B" isn't bone cancer! Ask yourself if this thing you are stressing over is really going to make much difference a year from now or in the big picture.

✨ **Get Help** from a counselor if you feel chronically anxious or sad, notice lasting changes in your eating and/or sleeping patterns, or totally lose your sense of humor.



Be Patient With Yourself

...and with any strategy you try. One walk in the woods can make you feel better for the afternoon, but won't solve all problems. Yet, if you exercise every week for a while, you will probably feel better about everything. Keep using & trying new strategies to find things that work for you!