

Marriage & Family

Getting Rid of Stress

1. Do something physical. A good rule of thumb is to remember what you did at age five for fun and do it again. Sometimes, when you are just too stressed to talk or think, releasing the endorphins that come from physical activity will relax the body enough to think and discuss more calmly.
2. Do something nice for yourself. In sixty seconds, you can read a joke, listen to part of a favorite or uplifting song, look at pictures of loved ones, color with crayons, savor a taste of a favorite food without guilt, tell a joke or just close your eyes for a sixty-second break.
3. Make a list of things you could do before you blow up next time. Keep your list in a visible place because when you are angry you certainly can't think about what calms you. Different stressors may require different busters, so try different things on your list to see what works for you.
4. Breathe! Just taking a few deep, cleansing breaths may do wonders for keeping your cool. Relax a few seconds, then breathe deeply and fully through your nose and exhale through your mouth slowly, while visualizing blowing a candle out gently. Picture your lungs as balloons that need to be filled and emptied completely with each breath. With each breath, repeat numbers or words that are calming to help you relax.
5. Tense and relax your whole body. Sit in a comfortable chair and close your eyes. Starting at your forehead, tense the muscles there and hold tightly, then concentrate on relaxing them completely. Repeat this as you slowly move from your shoulders, and on to the chest, back, arms, legs, hands, and feet.
6. Make a worry box. Each time you feel worried, write your worry down and put it in a box. At the end of the week, read your worries and divide them into two piles: (1) worries that came true and (2) worries that did not come true. Which pile was larger?
7. Take control. If stress seems overwhelming, sometimes just a little control can get you started in the right direction. Choose one simple task such as organizing one drawer and do it.

Material comes from Martha F. Boggs, "Sixty-Second Stress Busters," The Ohio State University Extension, FLM-FS-19-01.

[Church of Christ Sermons Online: Copyright © Dr. Justin Imel](#)