

Stress Less!

What is Stress?

Job stress can be defined as the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker. Stress can lead to poor health. Examples of individual and situational factors that can help to reduce the effects of stressful working conditions include the following:

- Balance between work and family or personal life
- A support network of friends and coworkers
- A relaxed and positive outlook



How to Deal With Stress

- **Look Around.** See if there really is something you can change about the situation.
- **Don't Sweat the Small Stuff.** Try to prioritize a few truly important things and let the rest slide.
- **Set Realistic Goals for Yourself.** Reduce the number of events going on in your life and you may reduce the circuit overload.
- **Don't Overwhelm Yourself** by fretting about your entire workload. Handle each task as it comes, or selectively deal with matters in some priority.
- **Do Something for Others** to help get your mind off yourself.
- **Get Enough Sleep.** Lack of rest just aggravates stress.
- **Work Off Stress** with physical activity, whether it's jogging, tennis, or gardening.
- **Selectively Change the Way You React**, but not too much at one time. Focus on one troublesome thing and manage your reactions to it/him/her.
 - **Try to "Use" Stress.** If you can't fight what's bothering you and you can't flee from it, flow with it and try to use it in a productive way.
 - **Try to be Positive.**

Early Warning Signs of Stress

- ◆ Headache
- ◆ Sleep disturbances
- ◆ Difficulty in concentrating
- ◆ Short temper
- ◆ Upset stomach
- ◆ Job dissatisfaction
- ◆ Low morale

Unconventional Stress Relievers

While these methods below may not be among the most common measures for relaxation and stress control, they do seem to work for many people, and might just make your stressful days a bit easier.

♪ **Sing.** Lots of people use the power of music to release tension and stress.

♪ **Try a repetitive activity** such as knitting, crochet, pottery making, or anything with soothing movements.

♪ **Start a garden.** Tending plants and flowers and watching them grow, bloom, or yield fruit and vegetables is rewarding.

♪ **Play with a dog or cat.** Pet owners have longer lives and fewer stress symptoms than non-pet owners.

♪ **Gaze at the stars.** Preferably in a still, dark, and quiet area, sit back and observe the sky. Try to identify some different constellations and planets. Pondering the vastness of the universe in this way can make a lot of problems seem very small.

Correctional Officers

If not handled, stress can result in many problems. Try some of these different stress relievers to find one that may work for you.

- Υ Keep a journal
- Υ Take up exercise and healthy eating
- Υ Do non-prison related things, like watch movies or read
- Υ Craft projects
- Υ Breathe slowly and deeply
- Υ Do something you have been putting off
- Υ Get outside for a brief break
- Υ Maintain good posture
- Υ Reward yourself
- Υ Aerobics
- Υ Hunting and fishing
- Υ Socialize with friends and family

Simple Ways to Control Stress

- 📖 Breathe slowly and deeply. Before reacting to the next stressful occurrence, take three deep breaths and release them slowly.
- 📖 Choose one simple thing you have been putting off and do it immediately. Just taking care of one nagging responsibility can be energizing and can improve your attitude.
- 📖 Get outdoors for a brief break. Don't be deterred by foul weather or a full schedule. Even five minutes on a balcony or terrace can be rejuvenating.
- 📖 Drink plenty of water and eat small, nutritious snacks.
- 📖 Do a quick posture check. Hold your head and shoulders upright and avoid stooping or slumping. Bad posture can lead to muscle tension, pain, and increased stress.
- 📖 Plan something rewarding for the end of your stressful day, even if only a relaxing bath or half an hour with a good book. Put aside work, housekeeping, or family concerns for a brief period before bedtime.