

RELAXATION TIPS

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Warning Signs of Stress: headaches – stomachaches – sleep problems – sweaty palms – dizziness – back pain – muscle tension – restlessness – tiredness – grinding teeth – compulsive eating – excessive smoking, drinking or working – anger – crying – feeling powerless – nervous /anxiety – boredom – easily upset – lack of creativity – trouble thinking clearly – digestive problems – shallow breathing – thoughts of running away – forgetfulness – weight change -

Ways to Relax and De-Stress

BODY: Decrease Caffeine: Eliminate or reduce as much caffeine from your diet as possible. (i.e. coffee, tea, chocolate, colas). Caffeine stimulates your nervous system and increases stress.

Returning Home: Take off your work clothes to complete your transition home. When you can, take a hot bath with scented bath oil and light candles in the bathroom a few times a week.

Essential Oils: Useful as soothing scents for aromatherapy and healing agents for moods & wellness.

Diaphragm Breathing: Slowly fill up your chest and abdomen with a full gentle breath. Bring your breath in through your nose to the count of 4 and out through your nose to the count of 8. Do 5-10 cycles of this. It will help calm inner turmoil.

Balance Work & Play: Workout, Jog, take a Yoga, Tai Chi or Dance class.

MIND: Check For *Negative* Self Talk. Notice if the inner Worrier, Critic, Victim or Perfectionist is part of your inner self- talk. Look for patterns by noticing warning signs of stress in your body. Then replace the *negative* self-talk with *positive* self-talk. Practice accepting yourself and others. Remember, no one is perfect.

Mini Mind Break: Take 5 minutes several times a day and close your eyes. Do 5 cycles of the diaphragm breathing. Imagine yourself in your favorite vacation place. Then begin normal breathing and focus your mind on your normal breathing. If thoughts come in, let them go and return your attention to your normal breathing. You can do this in your office, in the bathroom, in your car, a nearby church, at your desk, at home, etc.

SPIRIT: Learn Meditation, Pray, and/or Be Out In Nature. Remind yourself we all struggle with similar challenges in the world. Take a moment each day to feel grateful that you have a job, friends and enough to eat.

Stress Reduction & Wellness Recordings: Inexpensive, convenient and effective ways to decrease stress and improve health. Guided imagery, Hypnosis and Meditation recordings for Stress Reduction; Loss Inner Wisdom; Boosting Energy; Better Sleep; Weight Loss; Help Before, During and After Medical Procedures; Pain Management; Health & Wellness and Quit Smoking, etc. available for sale at www.donnabird.com.