



STRESS LESS QUEST

Week 5: Top Priority—*You*

For many people, keeping up with the demands of work, home, and loved ones is a leading cause of stress. Beyond a take-charge approach and a positive attitude, you can reduce stress in your life by nurturing yourself. If you regularly make time for fun and relaxation, you'll be in a better place to handle life's stressors when they inevitably come.



Healthy Ways to Relax and Recharge

- Go for a walk.
- Spend time in nature.
- Call a good friend.
- Sweat out tension with a good workout.
- Write in your journal.
- Take a long bath.
- Watch a comedy.
- Play with a pet.
- Work in your garden.
- Get a massage.
- Curl up with a good book.
- Listen to music.



Don't get so caught up in the hustle and bustle of life that you forget to take care of your own needs. Nurturing yourself is a necessity, not a luxury.

- **Set aside relaxation time.** Include rest and relaxation in your daily schedule. Don't allow other obligations to invade your "you" time. This is your time to take a break from all responsibilities and recharge your batteries.
- **Connect with others.** Spend time with positive people who enhance your life. A strong support system will buffer you from the negative effects of stress.
- **Do something you enjoy every day.** Make time for leisure activities that bring you joy.
- **Keep your sense of humor.** This includes the ability to laugh at yourself. The act of laughing helps your body fight stress in many ways.

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Weekly Activity: You Time

Jot down some ideas of things you'd like to do during *you* time. Make it a point to set aside time each day to do them.

- _____
- _____
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Stress Management Tip: Accept the Things You Can't Change

Some sources of stress are unavoidable. You can't prevent or change stressors, such as the death of a loved one, a serious illness, or a national recession. In such cases, the best way to cope with stress is to accept things as they are. Acceptance may be difficult, but in the long run, it's easier than railing against a situation you can't change.

- **Don't try to control the uncontrollable.** Many things in life are beyond our control—particularly other peoples' behavior. Rather than stressing out over them, focus on the things you can control, such as the way you choose to react to problems.
- **Look for the upside.** When facing major challenges, try to look at them as opportunities for personal growth. If your own poor choices contributed to a stressful situation, reflect on them and learn from your mistakes.
- **Share your feelings.** Talk to a trusted friend or make an appointment with a counselor. Expressing what you're going through can be very liberating, even if there's nothing you can do to alter the stressful situation.
- **Learn to forgive.** Accept the fact that we live in an imperfect world and that people make mistakes. Let go of anger and resentment. Free yourself from negative energy by forgiving and moving on.

Source: HelpGuide.org