

WELLBEING

A Monthly Newsletter Covering Health and Wellness

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Simple Strategies for Getting A Grip in Stressful Times

Are you constantly stressed out? Worn down from the demands of work and home? Unsettled by uncertain times?

What if you could exercise some measure of control over the stress-producing events and activities in your life? A good way to start is by recognizing and addressing some of your own behaviors.



Great Expectations

Medical practitioners and life coaches tell us that our expectations are a major cause of stress in our lives. The more you can align what you expect of yourself and of others with achievable results, the more you may be able to limit or lessen the stress

that comes from constant disappointment. (That certainly doesn't mean you should have low or no expectations. It just means you should stop setting unattainable goals or deadlines that Superman/woman couldn't meet.)

Know Your ABCs

You have 10 things to do by noon, and you've made them all A's in priority. Can't be done! The concept of multi-tasking is often misunderstood. You can't do several things at once with the same intensity and accuracy. The secret to successful multi-tasking isn't juggling, it's prioritizing. You have to divide and conquer, setting priorities so you can efficiently focus on each job at hand. Prioritize by ABC or the time that each is due. Of course, new things do come up all day long. But it's easier to slot in new projects or tasks if you have a prioritized structure in place.

Time Is On My Side

Time is a fixed entity. It is not humanly possible to accomplish a two-hour job in one hour, no matter

how good you are. Successful time management starts with accurate time assessment. If you are constantly underestimating the time a project or task or errand will take, you will continue to overbook yourself, show up late and let yourself down because you can't accomplish the impossible. If you are managing other people's time (at home or work) becoming a good time "estimator" is critical.

Don't Forget the Carrot

Most of us are pretty quick to bring out the stick and beat ourselves up for not being perfect. How about producing the carrot once in awhile? Praise yourself for something you DID do right. Acknowledge your accomplishments. You can't control how other people treat you, but you can control how you treat yourself.

Are You Talking To Me?

Communication can be a powerful tool in stress relief. Your boss, your kids and your spouse can't read your mind. And they are probably not going to stop giving you work or letting you do things for them unless you

say something. (Preferably before you get to the point of volcanic explosion.) We all know employees or parents who say, "I'm not going to make waves. It's just easier if I do it myself." No, it's not. It's not easier, and it's not fair. The "doer" is under stress and is going to blow up or mess up. The other people involved don't know (or don't want to know) there is a problem until "the wheels come off." Enlighten them before you lose it.

Watch Your Language

Words like could have, should have or must can fan the flames of stress. You have total control over your internal conversations. Make self-talk work to your advantage. Tack up empowering messages at work or home that will remind you to get a grip: "Nice job." "You can totally do this."

Letting stress take hold of you becomes a habit. Do yourself a favor. Start creating some new habits you can live with — less stressfully! ☺

Feet Don't Fail Me Now: How To Tone Those Tootsies

What have you done for your feet lately? Pedicures, clipping toenails and sprinkling on baby powder are nice, but those faithful dogs deserve a lot more.

On any given day, your two feet withstand a cumulative force of several hundred tons. The average person will walk on his/her feet about four miles a day or 115,000 miles in a lifetime. Of course, that number doesn't account for the millions of feet owners who have become regular runners or marathoners.

Kind of makes sense that your feet would benefit from a regular exercise routine of their own. Strength and flexibility training can put more spring in your step, help you avoid injury and keep those tootsies in tip-top condition. Here are a few moves that should be part of your daily regimen.

Did you know?

The foot contains 26 bones, 33 joints, over 100 ligaments, 19 muscles and 250,000 sweat glands (in the pair).

Doctors say the vast majority of people are not born with foot problems. We cultivate our own foot troubles through neglect and improper care.



with your eyes closed. Then try balancing on something that is not stable: a foam block, wobble-board, mini-trampoline or a BOSU (those half-ball devices you may use at the gym).

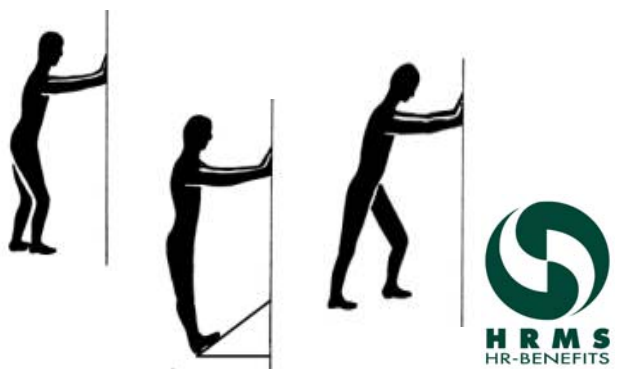
Dancer's Stretch

Sit on the floor with legs stretched out in front of you. Point and flex the feet. Hold the flex. Relax and repeat 10 times.

In the same sitting position, loop a towel or exercise band around your feet. Pull the toes toward you. Hold for 5 seconds and release. Repeat several times.

Calf Stretches – for your feet

Stretching the calf muscles increases circulation to the feet and reduces concentrated pressure on the heel or the balls of the feet, by as much as 50%. Stretch the calves at different angles. Lean against a wall and slightly bend both knees. Lean against a wall and put one leg back with the leg straight. Stand on the edge of a step or on a slanted board and push the heels down.



Pick Up

Practice picking up a variety of objects with your toes -- marbles, pencils and small towels or washcloths. Gently massaging feet and toes every day can help you become more flexible and make those tasks easier.

Balancing Act

Yoga poses and other balancing postures strengthen feet and ankles as well as your core. Start with easier moves and make them more challenging by moving to unstable surfaces. Balance on one foot with your eyes open. When that is easy to do for one minute, try it