



Helpful Tips

Lyndsay T. Wilson 5.7K reads

Practical Ways to Support a Stressed Body and Mind

Hopefully, you've identified a few ways to enhance your personal resilience and techniques to manage the inevitable daily stress that life brings. But remember that even the most serene, well-balanced person will take strain if they're put in an environment that is simply not conducive to mental wellbeing.

To conclude this series, we'll look at small, practical ways to enhance the environment around you. It might not always be possible to completely change jobs or move house, but modest changes to lifestyle can sometimes have the greatest impact.

The banner features the Explorable logo at the top center, with the text "EXPLORABLE" in a large, white, sans-serif font and "Quiz Time!" in a white, cursive font below it. Below the logo are three square quiz cards with white borders. The first card shows a pair of red roller skates on a wooden deck, with the text "Quiz: Psychology 101 Part 2" below it. The second card shows a fan of colorful pens, with the text "Quiz: Psychology 101 Part 2" below it. The third card shows a Ferris wheel at sunset, with the text "Quiz: Flags in Europe" below it. To the right of the cards is a white arrow pointing right with the text "See all quizzes =>".

Practical Ideas

- Consider using technology to help with time management. Install apps that cut down on distractions (for example those that prevent you from mindless surfing online during specified hours) or note-keeping and calendar apps to help you keep track of a busy schedule.
- It's standard advice but still good advice: exercise. Anything that raises the pulse and gets you sweating will raise endorphin levels – perhaps there's also something about mastery of the physical self that makes mastery of the mental self seem easier.
- Ask for help. Even if nothing comes of you sharing your troubles with a friend, merely

expressing yourself will lighten the load and help you feel connected to and supported by others. Sharing your troubles also gives you some perspective since you realize you're actually not alone.

- Delegate. Look at your to do list and eliminate one thing that doesn't really need to be there, or ask someone better qualified to do it instead. Ask yourself seriously how much of the stress you choose to carry is really necessary.
- Don't deliberately work against your body when it comes to stress – cut down on or eliminate caffeine entirely. Caffeine is a stimulant and the feeling of increased energy it provides can easily push an already stressed body over the edge. A possibility is to wean yourself off a caffeine addiction by switching to tea or decaf coffee.
- Examine your boundaries. Often, we stress on behalf of someone else in the guise of caring for them. Worrying about something that you logically have no control over is not an expression of concern for someone else and will only leave you feeling depleted. Reinforce boundaries that defend your free time and examine whether you routinely allow others to violate these boundaries.
- Consider drinking calming chamomile, valerian tea, or dabble a little in aromatherapy to make your immediate surroundings more comfortable.
- Try your best to reduce the amount of time you have to commute to work, or find ways to make the trip less stressful. Take the train and listen to audiobooks to make use of the time, or wake up earlier to cut 20 minutes off the morning rush.
- Let go of perfectionism. Stressing about having things 100% right is usually just a question of control. Re-examine what is truly under your control, forgive mistakes you make and pour energy into moving forward instead.
- Make sure your bedroom is set up to allow for proper sleep. Invest in blackout curtains, a good mattress and quality bedding so you can give yourself the best chances to recuperate after each day.
- Get into the habit of converting worry into action – and discarding those worrisome thoughts that can't be converted to anything useful. Worry spends a lot of mental effort but isn't in itself an action, and might even prevent you from acting. If you routinely worry about your health, get a full check-up to put your mind at ease, or make positive, healthy changes to your lifestyle, for example.
- Wherever possible, cut out heavily refined foods and processed sugar from your diet. These spike insulin levels and can leave you feeling burnt out and irritable.
- As corny as it sounds, laughter really is the best medicine. Go out to an open mic comedy night, play practical jokes on your work colleagues and laugh at yourself when you make a mistake. Being able to see the absurd side of life is a true mark of a resilient person.

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