

AccessEAP®

*People in Focus*



# 10 TIPS FOR HANDLING STRESS

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## 1. Work out your priorities

Write them down each morning, rank them and take one thing at a time. Include the important people in your life as priorities and attend to these relationships. Make tasks achievable.

## 2. Practice saying 'no'

If you feel overloaded, think hard before committing to other people's expectations. Talk this over with someone you trust. Practice saying "Not immediately, but next hour/day/week/month" to buy yourself time.

## 3. Accept that change is a part of life

Make allowances for the fact that stress can make you more sensitive in reacting to others. Discuss your feelings with the person responsible for your agitation. If it's impossible to talk it out, do some physical activity at the end of the working day to relieve tensions.

## 4. Don't dwell on the past

Feelings of guilt, remorse and regret

cannot change the past, they sap your energy and make the present difficult. Make an effort to do something to change your mood when you feel yourself drifting into regrets about past actions (e.g activity you enjoy). Learn from it and have strategies in place for next time. Learn to forgive yourself.

## 5. Priorities relaxation and exercise

Set aside time each day for recreation and exercise. These are not optional extras for handling stress, they are essential. Gentle exercises such as walking, swimming, cycling, meditation, yoga, dance and even hobbies are all excellent. Find what suits you best.

## 6. Don't let people rush you

Allow extra time for the unexpected, slow down your pace, slow down your breathing. If you are frantic, you actually reduce your efficiency at work.

## 7. Identify your stress situations

Make a list of events that leave you emotionally drained, with ways to reduce the stress for each. When they occur, use them as an opportunity to practise

stress relief. Keep notes on what works.

## 8. Learn to "reframe" statements

It is a waste of time and energy to be over-sensitive to imagined insults, innuendo or sarcasm. Give people the benefit of the doubt. Talk over the situation with someone. They may have another spin on what was said.

## 9. Practice Mindfulness

This is where you let your frantic thinking be put aside and notice the present moment, without making any judgments, good or bad. Try this; pause for a moment, look around and notice five things you can see. Name them. Notice five things you can hear. Name them. Notice five things you can feel in contact with your body. Name them.

## 10. Enjoy Circuit Breakers

Reduce stress by taking breaks, talk to someone, have a bath, have a massage, laugh regularly, read for pleasure or even learn something new (language/musical instrument etc).

**For more information or assistance,  
contact us on 1800 818 728.**

CALL  
1800 818 728

Email  
info@accesseap.com.au

WEB  
accesseap.com.au

APP  
AccessMyEAP

