

# A NATUROPATHIC GUIDE TO MANAGING STRESS IN YOUR EVERY DAY LIFE.

**Stress comes in a variety of ways and is not as some people think a sign of weakness. Stress is the compound build-up of an effect that can range from physical stress like sitting at a computer for long periods of time to emotional stress like relationship issues. Regardless of the cause the results are the same and result in the bodies gradual degradation in its ability to cope.**

Some of the side effects of stress can include: physical pain and immobility, digestive disturbances such as reflux, diarrhoea, constipation, insomnia, anxiety, depression, fatigue, hypertension, weight gain/loss, poor memory, low libido, and infertility .

Stress is a natural part of life and something we will all have to cope with in different degrees. Learning how to apply effective stress management techniques will help you be able to live a healthier and happier life.

## HERE ARE 10 SIMPLE TIPS TO HELP YOU COMBAT THE EFFECT OF STRESS TO HELP YOU BECOME HEALTHIER AND HAPPIER

**1. Be organised-** in many cases cause of stress are a result of being overwhelmed. Particularly in our fast paced society, high demands are placed on our time. Being organised means you are more efficient with your use of time and therefore less stressed. Write things down on paper, get things out of your head.

**2. Positive reinforcement-** positive thinking helps create positive feelings. If you are constantly berating yourself of thinking negative thoughts, then this will directly affect your mood and your ability to function effectively. Positive thinking while not being the answer to every situation can be a powerful tool in helping reduce stress.

**3. Meditation-** meditation has been proved to reduce stress in the body and assist the body to cope with stress more effectively. If you don't know how to find a course that can teach you, try downloading a mediation app that can be found on the web. Remember expecting perfection if you have never meditated is an unreasonable so be kind to yourself. It has been said that even the great masters of meditation are only able to achieve a deep meditative state 40% of the time so there is hope for the likes of us. I recommend a minimum of 10 minutes per day first thing in the morning as a start point.

**4. Exercise -** regular exercise enhances the bodies ability to manage and cope with stress by improving cardiovascular and nervous system function. You don't have to run a marathon just 45 minutes per day has been shown to have significant benefits. Try walking, yoga, bike riding, swimming, running or a team sport.

**5. Diet -** there is a huge variety of diets out in the market place and it can be a minefield trying to identify the right one for you. Try to keep it simple. Fresh is best, organic is better. Reduce your reliance on packet

foods and eat fresh food whenever possible. Avoid bulking agents like bread, paste and white foods- making the majority of your diet lean protein, fresh fruits and vegetables. And as in step one- being organised prevents you from falling into temptation.

**6. Sleep hygiene** - with a much larger reliance on technology today giving your nervous system a break from technology is vital. Try going technology free from 7pm to allow your body to gradually relax. That means no TV, computer, phone or video games. I recommend reading with some light jazz, classical or relaxation music in the background to soothe your body toward sleep. Making sure you get at least eight hours sleep per night.

**7. Health care plan** - weekly treatments to a mix of massage therapist, acupuncture, reiki, kinesiology and naturopath practitioners. A good support group of practitioners will not just provide treatments but also support and encouragement toward healthier lifestyle habits.

**8. Time off** - all work and no play. Taking time out to rejuvenate is an important part of any stress management program. If you are working all the time this is not a balanced life and at some point the wheels will come off. Remember to have fun. Having time off helps you to get a perspective on things and realise that things that seem so important right now probably aren't in the long run. Sometimes walking away from difficult situations and taking a breath can help you come up with better long term solutions.

**9. Be social** - take time out to spend with your loved ones, it enhances every aspect of your life and helps you realise what the important things really are.

**10. Avoidance is futile** - avoiding problems doesn't make them go away. We all have things occur in our lives we don't want to face but by dealing with them in an appropriate time frame means you can move on with your life and stop worrying. If you need support talking to a friend or professional counselor can help clarify the issues and the right solution.

