

# 100 STRESS REDUCERS

*"The greatest weapon against stress is our ability to choose one thought over another."* William James

1. Slow your pace of life – try 80% of normal
2. Lower your expectations of self and others
3. Pick three stress-reducers from this list and do them daily until they become a habit
4. Take fifteen-minute breaks twice a day and do something enjoyable
5. Start your day by reminding yourself: "Easy does it, one thing at a time."
6. Stay mindful of your stress level throughout the day and intervene as soon as possible
7. Exercise moderately with intense intervals and allow for recovery time after exercise
8. Eliminate internal demands ("should, must, have to, need to...") and substitute "I want to..."
9. Take deep breaths that cause your belly to rise, then release them slowly. Repeat this 12 times.
10. Stretch several times a day
11. Touch others and be touched
12. Don't watch stimulating movies
13. Stop doing adrenalin rush activities
14. Get serious about and accountable to someone about electronic device management
15. Enjoy relaxing music
16. Hum a favorite song
17. Take a walk outside
18. Drive less than the speed limit
19. Interact with an animal
20. Play with a child
21. Be less emotionally reactive (take time outs for self-care, think positive thoughts, etc.)
22. Do progressive relaxation once a day
23. Practice opposites (from cool to warm, tense to relaxed, sitting to standing, alone to connected)
24. Know your emotional and physical limits and don't exceed them
25. Pray about everything – try lots of short prayers throughout the day versus one long prayer
26. Be generous to others and enjoy their smile
27. Be thankful to God for the small things of life
28. Learn who you are in Christ and say these truths to yourself daily
29. Think encouraging thoughts (see Philippians 4:8-9)
30. Meditate on words, images, and sounds that induce a state of calmness and peacefulness
31. Spend time with supportive family and friends
32. Ask God for peace and calmness every time you need it, receive it, then thank Him for his gift
33. Monitor your heart beat and breathing rate – learn to bring them under your conscious control
34. Consume less caffeine and sugar
35. Practice good sleep habits
36. Marvel at God's creation and take photos of beautiful things
37. Realize you always have options – you never have to stay stuck mentally or emotionally
38. Do relaxing things you enjoy doing – lay in a hammock, go for a walk in the park, phone a friend
39. See your doctor and be willing to take prescription medicine if you can't control anxiety
40. Ground yourself when you get overly anxious by using the "54321 Method":
  - a. Name 5 things you can see in the room you're in (e.g., chair, painting)
  - b. Name 4 things you can feel (e.g., my feet on the floor, cool air on my skin)
  - c. Name 3 things you can hear right now (e.g., wind blowing, others talking, traffic noises)
  - d. Name 2 things you can smell right now (e.g., fabric softener, someone's lunch, the dog)

- e. Name 1 good thing about yourself (e.g., I am God's child, clever, thoughtful, etc.)
41. Invent and use a short phrase that calms you down (e.g., "There's no hurry, just breathe...")
  42. Stop trying to get others to do what you want them to do
  43. Say to yourself, "If God allows it, I will accept it" and mean it
  44. Make peace a higher value than status, money, and being right
  45. Be humble, gentle, patient, and compassionate
  46. Go for a Sunday drive and eat your favorite food
  47. Accept about yourself everything God says is true of you
  48. Do creative activities and lose yourself in them
  49. Daily commit your life to something meaningful and purposeful
  50. Love and forgive others as Christ loves and forgives you
  51. Rejoice in the Lord always (see Philippians 4:4)
  52. Be gentle to yourself and others
  53. Eat dark chocolate in moderation
  54. Help someone else
  55. Write a letter to yourself from God affirming His love for you
  56. Distract yourself from tasks that require focus - do it intentionally just for the fun of it
  57. Take a nap
  58. See a therapist or a life coach to make a stress-reduction plan
  59. Use Christian apps like *Abide* – for meditation, prayer, and peace
  60. Eliminate as much "white stress" as possible (noise, annoyances, intrusions, etc.)
  61. Journal your stressful experiences and the stress reducers you use to overcome them
  62. Peel and eat an orange – the smell has been found to reduce stress
  63. Try aromatherapy using vanilla scent
  64. Read Psalm 27
  65. Have better boundaries with those who take advantage of you – say "No" more quickly
  66. Take a warm bath or shower, enjoy it and say, "Aahhhhh..." over and over again
  67. Re-organize your personal space and smile at the "room to breathe" you now have
  68. Stop multi-tasking – do just one thing at a time and do it well
  69. Go to the mountains or the beach to get away
  70. Walk away from stressful situations and people – don't let stress or negativity into your heart
  71. Prioritize your to-do list for the day and be happy if you accomplish the top 50% of the tasks
  72. Ask yourself, "What CAN I control right now?" and focus solely on that
  73. Look out the window or keep a picture of the blue sky nearby and take in its beauty and serenity
  74. Sit in the sun and soak it up
  75. Play a musical instrument
  76. Enjoy a massage, even if you have to give yourself a foot or neck massage
  77. Watch a humorous movie
  78. Delegate what you find stressful to someone else if you can do this without harming them
  79. Blow off steam with a safe person
  80. Go on a picnic or take lunch outside
  81. Sit around a campfire
  82. Go to the zoo
  83. Gaze at the stars
  84. Get up a little earlier in the morning so you don't feel so rushed
  85. Literally count your blessings every day
  86. Look at someone you don't know and silently say, "I love you." This will amaze you!
  87. Explore your options – ask yourself questions like, "What else could I do?"

88. Picture yourself in your favorite place then try to reconstruct it with all your senses
89. Keep colored pencils nearby and draw / color a picture
90. Make your favorite food and play like you are a famous chef – do it with style and finesse
91. Dance around to music – even if you “can’t dance”
92. Enjoy a hobby
93. Remove any stressors you can then post a list of those you have overcome on your fridge
94. Join a support group or start your own – many people struggle with the same stress you do
95. Stop watching / listening to the news
96. Don’t depend on alcohol to relax – there is a cost to pay later that produces extra stress
97. Chew gum
98. Drink green tea
99. Do more of what you’re good at and like to do – feeling competent reduces stress
100. Realize that your body is God’s temple and your heart is where the Holy Spirit lives – meet with Him there often and ask for love, joy, peace, faith, hope, strength, and guidance