

## 20 PROVEN STRESS REDUCERS

1. Get up fifteen minutes earlier in the morning. The inevitable morning mishaps will be less stressful.
2. Don't rely on your memory. Write down appointment times, when to pick up the laundry, when library books are due, etc. ("the palest ink is better than the most retentive memory." ...Old Chinese proverb.)
3. Procrastination is stressful. Whatever you want to do tomorrow, do today; whatever you want to do today, do it now.
4. Plan ahead. Don't let the gas tank get below on-quarter full, keep a well stocked "emergency shelf" of home staples, don't wait until you're down to your last bus token or postage stamp to buy more, etc.
5. Don't put up with something that doesn't work right. If your alarm clock, wallet, shoe laces, windshield wipers—whatever—are a constant aggravation, get them fixed or get new ones.
6. Be prepared to wait. A paperback can make a wait in a post office line almost pleasant.
7. Pollyanna-Power! For everything that goes wrong, there are probably 10 or 50 blessings. Count them!
8. Turn "needs" into preferences. Our basic physical needs translate into food and water, and keeping warm. Everything else is a preference. Don't get attached to preferences.
9. Simplify, Simplify, simplify.
10. Make friends with nonworriers. Nothing can get you into the habit of worrying faster than associating with chronic worries.
11. Create order out of chaos. Organize your home and workspace so that you always know exactly where things are. Put things away where they belong and you won't have to go through the stress of losing things.
12. Add an ounce of love to everything you do.
13. Become more flexible. Some things are worth not doing perfectly and some issues are well to compromise upon.
14. Eliminate destructive self-talk: "I'm too old....," "I'm too fat....," etc.
15. "Worry about the pennies and the dollars will take care of themselves." That's another way of saying: Take care of the todays as best as you can and the yesterdays and the tomorrows will take care of themselves.
16. Do one thing at a time. When you are with someone, be with that person and with no one or nothing else. When you are busy with a project, concentrate on doing that project and forget about everything else you have to do.
17. If an especially "unpleasant" task faces you, do it early in the day and get it over with. Then the rest of your day will be free of anxiety.
18. Learn to delegate responsibility to capable others.
19. Forget about counting to 10. Count to 1,000 before doing something or saying anything that could make matters worse.
20. Have a forgiving view of events and people. Accept the fact that we live in an imperfect world.