



plain talk
about...
**handling
stress**

STRESSED OUT? TRY THIS !!!

With a new school year getting into full swing now, you may find yourself constantly on the run. Running to and from classes, work, school, and social events may produce undesirable and unpleasant side effects such as headaches, anxiety, insomnia, and fatigue. A good way to offset all this excess tension is to build up a habit of relaxation. With Progressive Muscle Relaxation you can learn to relax the large muscle groups in your body, thus helping to relieve yourself of tension and stress build-up.

The method requires you to tense (tighten up and hold the tension) and then relax the muscle. Everytime you do this, concentrate on the difference in body sensations and feelings between the tension and relaxation. Identifying these feelings will help you become aware of any tense muscles which you can relax.

Try to practice this exercise two times daily to build up your habit of relaxation:

- Right hand and forearm - 2 times
- Left hand and forearm - 2 times
- Biceps - bend elbow - once
- Triceps - arms stretch out - once
- Forehead - wrinkle up - once
- Forehead - wrinkle down - once
- Eyes - close tightly - once
- Tongue - press up to roof of mouth - once
- Neck - head pressed back - once
- Neck - head pressed back - rolling head to the left and to the right - 2 times
- Shoulders - shrugged up - 2 times
- Chest - deep breath, hold it, exhale slowly - 2 times
- Stomach - hold it in - 2 times
- Stomach - hold it out - 2 times
- Lower back - arch it up (not too far!) - 2 times
- Thighs - press down on heels - 2 times
- Calves - toes forward - 2 times
- Shins - toes up and back - 2 times

Linda Thiel
Stress Management Peer Health Advisor

MANAGE YOUR STRESS

Everyday we are confronted with a variety of situations that can induce stress. As college students we seem to have more than our share: research papers, mid-terms, living away from home, little or no sleep, relationship problems, and fear of failure. These can all work together to compound stress.

It's important to recognize the first signs of stress and work towards alleviating these stresses. Headaches, increased irritability, upset stomach, and inability to sleep, are all warning signals your body gives you.

To begin reducing these stressors you can learn to budget your time, and stop procrastinating! It's also important to allow yourself free time to relax and perhaps schedule your day's activities. In other words, GET ORGANIZED! Also, of equal importance, is to eat a well balanced diet and to get enough sleep.

By implementing these strategies into your life, you cannot only succeed in reducing stress, you can maintain them as building blocks to a healthier lifestyle.

Diane Lancaster
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