

[IMAGE]

## Escape the STRESS web

By Larry Duboff, DC

Life is challenging. Day after day, you must manage your time to meet the demands of your job, family and personal life. Your relationships keep creating new challenges that can be stressful, and dealing with unexpected, unpleasant circumstances may cause you distress as well. Stress in many forms is common in society, and it's a problem because it can rob you of your health, happiness and potential for greater success.

Stress affects nearly everyone, but some people handle it better than others. And the simple truth is the people who are good at dealing with stress live healthier and happier lives compared to people who struggle with stress. The good news is if you are one of the many people who get caught up in life's sticky web of stress, you can get untangled and stay untangled. Keep these seven tips in mind the next time you're feeling the pressure:

**1. Stay clear of the drama.** You don't have to get caught up in chaos just because everyone else is up to their necks in it. As Rudyard Kipling writes in his poem "If," if you can "keep your head when all about you are losing theirs and blaming it on you," you'll be able to keep your cool under pressure and tackle your challenges much more effectively.

**2. Define your higher purpose.** More than a goal or a set of goals, *purpose* is a driving force that gives your life meaning and direction, preventing you from drifting aimlessly. It also gives you a reason to pick yourself up when life knocks you down. What drives you forward each day? Dedicated service to others? Making a difference in the world? Discover your purpose and then work to achieve it.

image - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark **3. Lighten up!** When was the last time you worried about something that never actually happened? Many of the things you worry about won't occur, and worrying cannot help those problems that invariably do take place.

**4. Develop present-time consciousness.** Focus your attention on the activity in which you are currently involved. Don't allow your mind to dwell on any previous problems or possible challenges.

Present-time consciousness allows you to be more efficient and productive, and also helps you eliminate unnecessary stress.

**5. Override your pride.** Think of a time in your life when you insisted that you were right and another person was wrong. Did this really bring you more happiness, or did it just create more stress for both of you? The next time you find yourself in a similar situation, find the best way to move forward with as little stress as possible.

**6. Say or do the opposite of what you are feeling.** When someone or something pushes your hot buttons, you may feel justified to react with anger, but this negative reaction only brings more stress to the situation. A better approach is to stop yourself from overreacting and instead say or do something positive that can defuse the situation.

**7. Appreciate life's little detours.** Like it or not, you will be knocked off course occasionally. Most often this is a blessing in disguise. Each time you have to pick yourself up to get back on track, you learn important lessons and develop new skills that will help you in life.

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