[IMAGE]

8 Easy Stress Reducers

By Editorial Staff

If you're running around all day trying to fulfill a seemingly endless list of responsibilities, you could be on the verge of a stress-induced breakdown. Before that happens, take five minutes out of your busy schedule for one (or more) of these quick de-stressors, courtesy of CNN.com:

1. *Laugh a little*. Studies suggest laughter lowers levels of the stress hormone cortisol. Of course, it doesn't take an understanding of biochemistry to appreciate that when you're laughing, stress has to take a back seat, at least temporarily.

2. *Lighten up*. When the body absorbs sunlight, it enhances the effect of mood-stabilizing chemicals such as serotonin. So enjoy lunch out in the sunshine or walk a few blocks during your afternoon break.

3. *Go on a (virtual) vacation*. Picture yourself on a tropical island or a serene, majestic mountaintop - wherever you'd rather be instead of *here*, stressing out. It will give you a few minutes to unwind and relax instead of focusing on work.

- Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark 4. *Get moving*. Exercise, even something as simple as jumping rope for a few minutes, triggers your body to release mood-lifting endorphins. The repetitive motion required of most simple exercises also makes you relaxed and focused.

5. Turn up the volume. Go ahead and rock out to the music from your teens. You might even be inspired to dance around the living room.

6. *Take a breath*. Sometimes, just breathing deeply can help center and relax you. Try it the next time you're stuck in traffic or your boss needs that report done "right away."

7. *Find a friend.* Even if it's only for a few minutes, call or e-mail a friend and blow off a bit of steam. Isn't that what friends are for?

8. *Stay cool*. Find a nice, light scent (lavender is always a good choice) to lightly spritz on your face when the heat is on. It will not only cool you down, but also calm your nerves.

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