

Reducing Job Stress

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Our surroundings directly affect our health and wellness: consider that we spend 40 or more hours on the job weekly. Creating an inspiring environment for wellbeing in our working space is crucial to living a long and meaningful life.

Inner Peace on the Job: 7 Ways to Minimize Stress

Although it is not possible to eliminate stress completely, there are some things we can do to reduce it. Here are effective ways to reduce stress in your day.

1. Slow down and be in the present. It is natural to believe that the harder you work, the more you will get done. However, though it may seem paradoxical, if you work at a slow and steady pace with full awareness, you will most likely turn out better work with fewer mistakes - and feel better while doing it!

2. Set boundaries. Are you the go-to person for every favor and question that is needed in your workplace? Learn to respectfully set your boundaries and say no. Also, take a look at your calendar and make sure you are not over-scheduling yourself after work. Write in one night a week for yourself, and treat yourself to a tai chi or meditation class, a bath, or just an evening curled up with a good book.

3. Remember to breathe deeply all day. Most people who are under a lot of stress or tension breathe shallowly, up in the throat area. When you breathe deeply into your lungs, you are naturally bringing in more oxygen and activating energy in your body.

Try this to remember to breathe: set your intention to take 10 deep breaths once every hour. (If necessary, set a timer to help you remember.) It will only take a minute, but the rewards will be tenfold.

4. Bring nature inside. As much as possible, let natural light and fresh air permeate your workspace. Surround yourself with the inspiring colors of beautiful flowers, which have a powerful influence on a person's mind-set. A beautiful bouquet can lift a less-than-lovely mood and even eliminate stress. In fact, one study showed that people who sat next to an arrangement of colorful flowers were able to relax more during a five-minute typing assignment than those who sat near foliage-only plants.

5. Give yourself a time-out. Take the breaks that are given to you. In this high-paced world, people often work through their breaks, claiming they have too much work to do - this will lead to serious repercussions in the future.

Remember that you are a human, not a machine. Even a machine needs downtime for maintenance! Try taking a 15-minute powernap on your lunch break. If you only have five minutes to spare, just close your eyes. Even this

brief rest can reduce stress and help you relax.

6. Meditation brings relaxation. Meditation gives your body a rest and produces slower brain waves that are similar to sleep, effectively combating tension. Regular practice of meditation, tai chi, or yoga can help you slow down and bring peace, not only in your job, but also in your life. To learn more about how to use meditation to decrease stress, [click here](#).

7. Perk up naturally!

Skip the second latte, which stimulates your central nervous system, makes your mind race, and adds to your stress. Instead, try these simple and natural pick-me-ups:

- Take a tea break. Instead of coffee, go for teas that gently boost your energy, such as ginseng, eucalyptus, or ginger.
- Find ways to keep moving all day. Take the stairs instead of the elevator. Drink a glass of water from the water cooler every hour. Park your car a few blocks away from where you're going. Not only will this perk up your energy, it will also improve your mood.
- If it's a nice day outside, eat lunch outdoors or just take a walk around the block. The fresh air and the break from routine will be an invigorating addition to your workday.
- Get sustainable energy with snacks. Eat a snack at mid-morning and another one at mid-afternoon consisting of nuts, seeds, fruits, or protein-rich foods like humus made from beans will help you sustain your energy and prevent low blood sugar from setting in.

I hope you find the ways to minimize stress in your work environment! I invite you to visit often and share your own personal health and longevity tips with me.

May you live long, live strong, and live happy!

-Dr. Mao



To learn more about Dr. Mao and other natural health tips, go to askdrmao.com.

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