

Ten Top Tips to De-Stress Your Life

Top Tip 1

Massage

When our minds are working overtime it can create a physical tension in the body, our muscles contract and blood flow decreases causing aches, pains and tension. By treating yourself to a regular massage you are giving yourself space to “let go” and re-balance. Massage will encourage the muscles to relax and more oxygenated blood will burst into this space creating a sense of well being.

Top Tip 2

Breathe

Breathing incorrectly can cause a whole host of health problems including dizziness, headaches, digestive disorders and feelings of panic. It is important to stop everyday for say 10 minutes and focus on our breath. Sit or lie quietly where you will not be disturbed and watch the flow of your breath. A technique I find useful is to breathe in counting to 7 directing the breath towards the base of our body and extending the belly, take a brief pause and then slowly exhale counting again to 7 letting the belly relax and watching the breath gently flow towards the crown and out through the top of your scalp. The longer you practice this breathing technique the more you can extend the exhalation until you are counting to 11. The 7-11 breath will help you regain peace of mind if practiced regularly.

Top Tip 3

Yoga

Yoga has been one of my most beneficial activities for releasing stress. Practicing yoga on a regular basis can relieve tension that builds up in the muscles, will regulate your breathing, increase energy, improve circulation of blood and lymph flow, improves posture and will have a calming effect on the body, mind and soul. If you can manage just 15 minutes a day you will see an improvement in your general well being. The morning is the best time to practice as yoga prepares you for the day beautifully. You will feel more grounded and energised. Practice on an empty stomach before breakfast. I am currently studying to be a yoga teacher and have already built up a wealth of knowledge in this subject. If you would like some tips on postures and breathing techniques then please contact Louise 07776136733.

Top tip 4

Mindfulness

Thinking about the future and the past can create feelings of anxiety or sadness. Concentrate on the present moment and you will find that life becomes much more tolerable. You can be in touch with the “now” by really feeling into the activity you are engaged in at that time or just practice “being”. We are so busy darting from one place to the next distracting from the beauty of now that we don’t really know how we actually feel. Each step you take in mindfulness can help you release tension in

your body, release the tension in your feelings and bring about a more joyful existence. Notice your thoughts and if you find them jumping into the future or ruminating over the past then breathe and bring yourself back into the present moment. Focus on the now and your stress levels will truly plummet and your happiness levels will rise.

Top tip 5

Diet

What we eat has a huge effect on the way we feel. By improving our diet and by choosing healthy, low sugar, foods we can calm the body naturally. A well balanced diet is important in preserving health and helping to reduce stress. Certain foods and drinks act as powerful stimulants to the body and hence are a direct cause of stress. This stimulation can overwork the liver, upset blood sugar levels and cause chronic disease such as diabetes and heart failure.

Caffeine causes the release of adrenaline, thus increasing the level of stress so it is important that you limit your intake of coffee, cola, chocolate and tea. Switch to calming camomile tea, decaffeinated coffee, water with a slice of lemon or liquorice tea which helps to support the adrenal system.

Sugar and alcohol also exhausts the adrenal system and can cause irritability, poor concentration and depression.

Foods which support the adrenal system and are beneficial for stress reduction are celery, brown rice, cabbage, almonds, berries, sesame seeds, cucumbers, garlic and avocados to name a few. These foods will help lift your mood, lower cortisol (stress hormone) levels, strengthen the nervous system, lower the blood pressure and protect the heart.

Top tip 6

Exercise

Exercise is one of the simplest and most effective ways of stress management. The human body is designed for movement so we need to remain physically active if we want to keep our life in balance. Any form of exercise can counteract your body's natural stress response. Most importantly find an exercise which you enjoy. Yoga, walking, dancing and swimming are the activities I enjoy the most and sometimes if my stress levels are high and I have a lot of nervous tension jumping around my body I just love to go for a run to bring me back down to earth and ground my soul. Exercise releases endorphins which creates a feeling of well being, decreases muscle tension, rids your body of toxins, combats insomnia, and improves energy levels blood flow to the Brain. Try and exercise for 30 minutes 5 times a week and watch your stress levels fall and energy levels rise!

Top Tip 7

Acceptance

When we choose to accept and let go into any situation the anxious feeling becomes more manageable. I see this alot in the work i do, for instance when we tell ourselves that we suffer pain

in a certain area of our bodies we are building resistance, everything we resist persists. If we accept the pain and relax into the space the pain most certainly disappears. Throughout our lives we have a habit of trying to control situations to protect ourselves from feeling anxious but this actually causes the anxiety to build. By practicing acceptance you will most certainly see your anxiety levels decrease. Accept EVERYTHING even the times you feel sad, irritable and anxious. Accept what is and you will notice that these feelings will disappear a whole lot quicker and this will allow more joy to enter your existence.

Top tip 8

Human Support

We are not meant to tread these streets alone. Build a supportive network of friends that you can speak openly too and plan regular meet ups. Having a laugh with friends or family is the best medicine available. Ditch the emotional vampires and surround yourself with positive, openminded individuals which can be part of your amazing life journey. In my view people come in and out of your life for a purpose, even the negative experiences can teach you something. You will notice strong connections with certain people, cherish these souls and love and laugh big and remember we truly are all in this together. Every action and thought will affect the outcome so choose wisely and forgive quickly.

Top tip 9

Meditation and chant

If everybody found time to meditate the world would become a much more peaceful space. We can become so distracted with, work, technology, shopping, etc rarely do we just sit and be with ourselves and our thoughts. Meditation is not about clearing our minds, that is impossible, our brains are constantly churning out thoughts. Meditation is about being with self. Accepting our thoughts and watching them pass without getting involved. The more we practice meditation the less we shall become attached to our brain chatter and the mind will naturally become a more peaceful place. The most useful type of meditative practice is from the Buddhist tradition and is called Vipassana. Vipassana meditation is the practice of simply tuning into our awareness, watching the breath rise and fall without trying to influence or change anything. Trying to control our thoughts or breath creates tension. By observing the breath it will naturally deepen and we relax as a natural by product of anchoring our attention in a curious, non judgemental way. If we set aside some time each day we find ourselves becoming a lot calmer.

Top Tip 10

Connect with Mother Earth

When I'm feeling uptight the one thing that gives me the most pleasure is connecting with nature. Grab your walking shoes and head out to a quiet spot and listen to the beautiful sounds of a natural environment. Breathe in the fresh air and better still stand barefoot on the ground and let the earth's energy re-charge and rejuvenate your being.

**To make an appointment or ask for advice, please call
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