

Stress Management/Self Care Suggestions

- Leave the office for lunch
- Take three slow, deep breaths. Breathe in through your nose and deepen the breaths (in your belly)
- Get enough sleep
- Take day trips or mini-vacations
- Eat regularly and eat healthy
- Get regular medical care
- Learn how to stretch properly at your desk
- Get up and go for a 10 minute brisk walk. This will give you as much energy as a cup of coffee
- Listen to music through headphones (classical music or soundtracks without words)
- Practice a relaxation exercise (progressive relaxation, controlled breathing or imagery)
- Look up from your desk and focus on a distant object to rest your eyes
- Delegate at least one task on your to-do list
- Say “no” to extra responsibilities sometimes or to difficult people. Set limits.
- Head for the gym after work or out on a walk/hike
- If home is chaotic, build in a 15-25 minute buffer of peace between work and home (i.e. go for a walk or the gym, listen to uplifting/calming music in the car, listen to a podcast, call a supportive friend or family member, engage with nature or just sit quietly)
- Choose leisure activities that balance the unique stressors of your job. For example, if your job involves a lot of sitting and concentrating, incorporate aerobic exercise. If your job involves a lot of time communicating with others, choose an activity that is more solitary and reflective.
- Remind yourself of the importance and value of the work that you do
- Notice and deliberately pay attention to the “little things” – small moments like sipping coffee, the sound of the wind in the trees, or brief connections with others.
- Mark transitions, celebrate joys and mourn losses with people you care about
- Make time for self-reflection (e.g. by reading, prayer, journaling or meditation)
- Participate in growth-promoting activities (learning, writing in a journal, being creative and artistic)
- Connect with a friend (call, text, plan a trip, organize a party, celebrate a milestone, etc.)
- Pamper yourself (get a haircut, schedule a massage, take a long bath, go to a spa, etc.)
- Engage your senses (cook your favorite meal, learn a new recipe, take a cooking class, go out to eat)
- Join a group (a favorite hobby, a favorite sport, an internet dating site, a support group, etc.)
- Eat chocolate (it’s good for you!) or eat something else you like
- Laugh (watch a funny movie, reruns of your favorite TV shows, or YouTube Channel)
- Read a book. Learn something new. Visit your favorite web sites.
- Play a game. Do a puzzle. Plant a garden. Be outside. Be open to inspiration.
- Sing. Join a choir. Sing in the shower. Karaoke.
- Dance. Turn on your favorite music and dance. Take a dance class.
- Learn a new language. Learn to play an instrument. Be curious.
- Take pictures. Make a movie. Draw. Paint. Take an art class. Go see live theater. Go to a museum.
- Fix something. Work on your house, car, bike, truck. Build something.
- Spend time with others whose company you enjoy.
- Give yourself affirmations. Love yourself!

ACT = ACTION CHANGES THINGS