

Your Stress-Relief Road Map

Get a complete stress-reduction plan at WholeLiving.com/less-stress, and track your progress here. Start with the strategies in step 1, and build on them week after week by setting new goals, learning to cope, and making lasting changes.

STEP 1: IDENTIFY YOUR STRESS TRIGGERS

Quantify Your Health Risks: In what ways is stress having an unhealthy impact on your life?

Start a Journal: Every day for one or two weeks, write down your sources of stress and unhappiness -- and your sources of pleasure and joy. What patterns do you see?

Take Our Quiz: What kind of worrier are you? How can you better manage these worries?

STEP 2: SET GOALS

Find Work-Life Balance: Assess the amount of work you take home (and the amount of non-work-related issues you deal with on the job) and decide what boundaries you'll set in place.

Manage Financial Stress: What are some ways you can better control your finances?

Cultivate Healthy Relationships: Which of your friendships are rewarding and fulfilling -- and which affect you negatively? What can you do to improve or let go of stressful relationships?



De-Clutter Your Life: What unnecessary sources of stress -- both physical and emotional -- are weighing you down? How can you “clean house” and resolve these problems?

STEP 3: LEARN TO COPE

Get Moving: Add rejuvenating stretches to your schedule, and try exercising when you feel fatigued or wired from stress. Record how these activities make you feel, and whether you notice lasting effects.

Try Meditation: Experiment with deep breathing, guided imagery, and other meditation techniques. Gradually increase the time spent and your level of concentration, and keep track of your results.

Negotiate: Discuss with your boss, your colleagues, your family, and your friends about how and when you'll delegate, draw boundaries, and deal with stressful events.

Get Some Sleep: Stress hormones can keep you awake at night and run you down during the day. Keeping a sleep journal can help you figure out what habits might help or hinder your shut-eye.

STEP 4: MAKE LASTING CHANGE

Eat the Right Foods: Eating whole-food sources of essential amino acids can keep you balanced -- try chicken, yogurt, avocado, spinach, oats, and nuts. Record your food challenges here.



Maintain Healthy Habits: Stay connected to what's important -- community, faith, your health, and your passions -- by honoring daily and weekly rituals. What habits help keep you grounded?

Practice Gratitude: Devote five minutes a day to giving thanks for the gifts in your life -- whether that means writing them down in a journal, reflecting on them during meditation, or discussing them with friends.

Reassess Your Stress Levels: After spending a few weeks on our Stress-Less Plan, re-examine your stress triggers and coping strategies. Where have you improved? What will you continue to work toward?

