



## CHAPTER 7: CREATIVE WAYS TO COPE WITH STRESS

Stress is the physical, mental, or emotional strain that occurs when a person has trouble coping with a situation, event, or change. In an increasingly busy world, stressors bombard us all. Your goal is not to eliminate all stress entirely, but to find better ways to cope with a normal amount. Try these methods:

1. **Meditation.** There is growing agreement in the medical community that mental factors such as stress significantly contribute to a lack of physical health. Meditation induces a “relaxation response” that includes positive changes in metabolism, heart rate, respiration, blood pressure, and brain chemistry. Learn about meditation at:
  - [www.tm.org](http://www.tm.org)
  - [www.meditationsociety.com](http://www.meditationsociety.com)
  - [www.freemeditations.com](http://www.freemeditations.com)
2. **Deep Breathing.** Breathing supplies over 99% of your entire oxygen and energy supply. Poor breathing can cause or worsen stress, anxiety, depression, fatigue, and headaches. Deep breathing can restore vitality and improve your quality of life. Better breathing is possible for anyone. Develop your breathing with tips from:
  - [www.breathe-mag.co.uk](http://www.breathe-mag.co.uk)
  - [www.ibfnetwork.com](http://www.ibfnetwork.com)
  - [www.drweil.com](http://www.drweil.com)

3. **Yoga.** The ultimate goal of yoga is to reach complete peacefulness in your body and mind. Traditional yoga philosophy requires that students adhere to this mission through behavior, diet, and meditation. Many people in the United States choose a form of yoga known as Hatha Yoga—which can relieve stress, calm the mind, and promote relaxation and flexibility. Learn about the yoga positions at:
  - [www.yogajournal.com](http://www.yogajournal.com)
  - [www.yogatohealth.com](http://www.yogatohealth.com)
  - [www.revolutionhealth.com](http://www.revolutionhealth.com)
4. **Writing in a Journal.** As human beings we like to express ourselves. We do this in many ways, and writing is one of them. Journaling is free from the formalities of traditional writing. It's a personal, free-form means of collecting your thoughts on paper. Studies have shown that people derive great mental and physical healing from writing about events, obstacles, and turning points in their lives. Try journaling here:
  - [www.wordpress.com](http://www.wordpress.com)
  - [www.lifejournal.com](http://www.lifejournal.com)
  - [www.oneyearofwritingandhealing.com](http://www.oneyearofwritingandhealing.com)
5. **Aerobic Activity.** Exercise improves mental health by helping the brain cope better with stress. Aerobic activity generates the “relaxation response,” which helps you feel less anxious and tense. Some people call this response postexercise euphoria. The important thing though is not what it's called, but it does: Exercise improves your mood and leaves you relaxed. Get active here:
  - [www.fitday.com](http://www.fitday.com)
  - [www.fitstep.com](http://www.fitstep.com)
  - [www.easyexercises.com](http://www.easyexercises.com)