

## UNSTRESS Yourself

And while most of us love, love to keep busy, sometimes the pace can be simply too much - being crazy-busy all the time is oh so **stressful!** Stress can do serious internal bodily harm, especially over prolonged periods of time without relief - so don't do it! Easier said than done you say? Well here are some quick tricks, physiologically based, that should work to get your body into a better, less stressed place.



First idea - go out for coffee with your friends! Or have a group coffee break at work. **Enjoying group caffeine lowers stress**, whereas grabbing a cup of java by your desk solo *raises stress!* So don't go it alone and think that you have so much to do that you have to gulp your coffee on the run by yourself - instead enjoy the helpful benefits of group caffeine, take time to have that break with friends and co-workers and your stress levels will decline. Really. And remember that caffeine can be found in chocolate (hot or cold) and soda, not just in coffee.

Another idea is to rent a comedy or plan to go see a funny movie - but make your plans well in advance because the **anticipation of watching comedy** is where the benefit comes in. Yup, just anticipating watch a funny show reduces stress up to 70%!! Wow, the great benefits of endorphins! Just *thinking* expectantly of what's to come, visualizing your enjoyment, fools the brain into the same reaction as the real thing, because the brain doesn't distinguish between a real event and an imagined event. It's all the same - with the benefit of lowering stress as a result. And when the real event happens, you are at the movies or watching the funny rental, be sure to laugh full out and hard - it is oh so good for you!! Have some deep belly laughs and you can't possibly feel stressful.



One interesting way to unwind is to **massage the earlobes**. These little appendages are packed with nerve endings - rubbing them helps to relieve tension. (caution! may not work if you're THIS woman - with the world's biggest earlobes - and you have stretched out and totally dulled all your earlobe nerve endings!!)



**Exercise your neck** regularly by rolling your head slowly and gently but full extension in a complete circle several times in each direction. This helps to relieve the tension we tend to store in our neck, which inhibits blood passage to our head, often resulting in a tension headache!

**Listen to music** that you enjoy and music for a few minutes every day. brain - the calm, non-hectic side. stressed while you are one with your



really allow yourself to get lost in the Music pulls from the right side of the You simply can't be frantic and favorite song.

As the book title says: Don't Sweat the Small Stuff - but if you can't seem to help yourself and simply *must* stress --- these tips to the rescue to reduce some of that built-up stress. If you can't change the pace of your life right now, at least Incorporate some of these ideas into daily habits.