

'FIRST CLASS' RESULTS

- using top tips from the pro's



First Class Results for Managing Stress

'59% of adults feel life is more stressful today, than 5 years ago'

Mental Health Foundation, UK

Stress can have devastating effects on both the mind and the body and it's important to have strategies in place to avoid the negatives consequences. We are all individuals and what stresses one person, might not stress another. By identifying your sources of stress you can learn ways to positively manage the levels and minimize the effects it can have on your mental and physical health. Bear in mind that stress can come at you from many angles – your environment (work & home), your own attitude (how you respond), your social surroundings (friends & family) and your health (hormonal imbalances).

1. TIME Ever wondered how some people seem to sail through their day, managing their time, achieving all their goals and still have time to enjoy themselves? Well for sure they don't have more time in their day than you; they just prioritise their time more efficiently and focus on what matters. Start organising your tasks into 4 quadrants – Urgent, Important, Not Important and Never and work on the things that have the biggest impact.

2. HEALTHY CHOICES There's an expression called 'Junk in = Junk out' and it's also true for our bodies too. Certain food will give you a more fuzzy brain so make sure you are making healthier choices and getting enough rest and exercise to FUEL your tanks, not deplete it. Alcohol, nicotine, caffeine, energy drinks and other substances are not the answer – only crutches. The problem is still there when the effects wear off. Solving the stress can make it go away permanently 😊

3. THE ROOT CAUSE Do you actually know what is stressing you? Take some time out with a notepad and pen and give some thought to what it is. Identify the problem and then treat it like it was someone else's problem and brainstorm possible solutions. Then pick 3 actions to take you further towards your goal (and away from the stress). If this were your best friend's problem, what would you advise them to do?

4. LEISURE, EXERCISE AND SLEEP Often taking a little bit of time out to do something that is fun or relaxing, can recharge the batteries in an extraordinary way. Never underestimate just how good even a 15-minute break can be or how exercise can reduce stress. Check out meditation, laughing and deep breathing exercises too (or blow up a balloon)! And do ensure that you get some deep restful sleep to give your body time to recuperate and process thoughts.

5. KNOW YOUR LIMITATIONS Saying no can seem hard, but sometimes it has to be done. Learning to say no in a polite manner can be easy – use wording like "I'd really love to help you with that, but I can't at the moment – if that situation changes, I'll happily come back to you and let you know".

6. A PROBLEM SHARED ... is a problem halved. Sometimes just talking through your problems and stresses can help you see a way out and is cathartic in that you can get it off your chest and out in the open. Find a trusted friend who will let you unload – they don't have to offer solutions, just listen. Talking also helps you process your thought patterns.

7. AND BREATHE ... Try this simple breathing exercise to overcome stress or nerves. Breathe in through the nose for the count of 4, hold for a count of 4 and breathe out through the mouth for a count of 6, for 3 minutes - slowly and rhythmically. This calms the mind, gets you back in control and stops you from feeling frazzled!