Proven Stress Reducers

- Get up 15 minutes earlier in the morning. Leave time to be early for appointments. Unexpected delays will be less stressful.

- Don’t rely on your memory. Write down appointment times, due dates, etc.

- Learn to delegate responsibility to others who are capable.

- Plan ahead. Don’t let the gas tank get below ¼ full. Don’t wait until you’re down to your last postage stamp to buy more.

- Do not neglect to repair or replace items used on a daily basis. For example, if your alarm clock, billfold, zippers, sink, windshield wipers, shower, cell phone, laptop are not working properly, repair or (if possible), replace them.

- We are often confronted with situations where we are kept waiting. Be prepared. Something to read can make the wait less frustrating and help us relax.

- If an especially unpleasant task faces you, do it early in the day and get it over with. Then the rest of the day will be free of that anxiety.

- Make friends with non‐worriers. Nothing gets you into the habit of worrying faster than associating with a chronic worrier.

- For one thing that goes wrong, identify 10 things that go right.

- Putting things off is stressful. Whatever you want to do tomorrow, do today. Whatever you want to do today, do now.

- Become more flexible. Remember: The only person you can control is you.

- Focus your energy on one thing at a time.

- Vicarious trauma is a potential side effect in our work. Find a friend, family member, support group and/or professional counselor with whom you can freely express your feelings. Do not isolate yourself. Let others on the team know when you are in need of some “time out” and support.

- Get a new haircut. Smile and tell yourself something nice!

Provided By: Oakwood Crisis Response Team
Proven Stress Reducers Continued

- Create order out of chaos. Organize your home and work space so you always know exactly where items are. “A place for everything and everything in its place” helps to lower stress.

- Go outside once a day, if possible, and enjoy the simple things in life – the scenery, the weather, birds, and more. See, listen, and feel nature and all it’s bounty.

- Participate in social activities, even if you don’t feel like it. These activities should have nothing to do with the traumatic experience. Rediscover your favorite hobbies, spend time with your pets, watch a funny movie, dance, sing, read, walk, swim, bicycle, play board games, paint by number, clean a closet, etc...

- Take notice of the tension in your body during the day. When you catch your mind racing and worrying, try this Instant Stress Reliever:
  - Draw in a full breath through your nose
  - Exhale s-l-o-w-l-y through your mouth, drop your shoulders, and allow all of your muscles to relax. Notice the tension leaving your body.
  - Repeat

- Memorize a joke and share it.

- Remember: We each have different ways of coping and different needs in response to a traumatic event. Be gentle with yourself.

Useful Websites

www.fragrantheart.com/cms/free-audio-meditations
www.enhancedhealing.com
www.capesidemusic.com
http://www.relaxationworldnetwork.com/gardening-for-relaxation.html
http://stress.about.com/od/generaltechniques/a/gardening.htm
http://www.centerforloss.com/companioning-philosophy/
http://www.counselling.cam.ac.uk/staffcouns/leaflets/criticalincident
http://www.trauma-pages.com/trauma.php#coping
http://sites.google.com/site/charlesfigley/Home/traumatologyinstitute/research/cf
www.caringbridge.org