Best Methods for Reducing Stress at Work

For most Americans, work-related stress is a part of daily reality. Whether stress is caused by looming deadlines, a toxic work environment or unrealistic expectations, it affects us both in and out of the workplace. We carry stress with us when we go home and if not managed, it can lead to insomnia, depression, addiction and a host of other health problems.

Unfortunately, stress is not likely to go away anytime soon. The good news is that it can be managed for our sake and the sake of those around us.

Start Your Day off Right

If you're like millions of Americans, the first thing you do when you wake up is grab your phone and start looking at email. This habit is sure to start your day out with unneeded stress. You'll likely be short with your spouse and kids before you head out the door. Then you'll end up with road rage in traffic. By the time you get to work you'll have already set yourself up for a day of continued stress.

To help start your day off right, take the time necessary to eat a nutritious breakfast, make time for a few minutes of physical activity and don't look at your phone. Taking just a few small steps in the morning will likely diminish the stress you feel at work throughout the day.

Stay Organized

Have you ever noticed who has the messiest desk in the office? This person is the poster child for stress in the workplace. They always seem to be in a hurry, may forget important tasks and are on edge.

Clutter is a major trigger of stress. A good habit to get into is making sure everything is properly organized when you leave work. That way when you arrive in the morning, you won't have to spend precious time searching for a spreadsheet you need first thing.

Make Sure You're Comfortable

Most workers spend all day seated at their desk behind a computer screen. Sitting for extended periods of time can lead to poor posture, bad circulation, back pain and undue stress. Though you may not notice stress being uncomfortable in the moment, you'll likely be more easily agitated throughout the day. The use of ergonomic furniture like a standing desk or elevated keyboard can work wonders to improve health and reduce stress.

Get Up at Move Around at Lunch

Lunch hour exists for a reason. Sadly, too many people spend their lunch eating at their desk continuing to work. Even if this is the only major break you take during the day, it's important to clear your mind. Many workplaces have monthly step goals and will make time at lunch for employees to leave the office and get some light physical exercise. Participating in a program like this not only relieves stress but boosts morale and collegiality.

Stay Away from Office Gossip

There's one person in every workplace who loves to talk about everyone else's business. While it's easy to get sucked in and might feel good to be in the know, gossip and rumors have a way of causing unnecessary conflict and drama that stresses everyone out. Always act professionally and courteous but keep these people at a distance. Doing so will alleviate stress and allow you to stay focused

on what's important.

Time Block

Remember that guy with the messy desk? It's a disaster for a reason. He immediately reacts to whatever comes his way often leaving tasks unfinished. By the end of the day, he's started plenty of things but finished very few.

Setting aside blocks of time for specific tasks will allow you maintain focus, be more efficient throughout day and reduce stress.

Stress is here to stay. You're going to experience bad days, weeks and maybe even months. Some things are simply out of your control. You do have a choice in how you manage that stress though. Implementing even just a few healthy habits will surely reduce the amount of stress you feel and will likely lead to better health, increased productivity and a happier you.