

- 1. Build “cushion” into your life and into your day for the unexpected.** This means filling your schedule 80% full, and leaving 20% for a sudden family illness, a car that won’t start, a bad-traffic day, and other unexpected surprises.
- 2. Look ahead; think ahead.** Anticipate problems. Communicate your needs up front. If out-of-town guests want to spend a week with you, offer to send them a list of good hotels and recreation activities in your area.
- 3. Don’t feel you need a big block of time to relax or take care of yourself.** A break can be as simple as sitting with your eyes closed and breathing deeply for one minute.
- 4. Don’t let others’ stress become your stress.** Just because someone close to you is miserable doesn’t mean you have to feel that way. In fact, you can help them more if you stay centered.
- 5. Ask for help.** Other people may not know you’re feeling overwhelmed unless you tell them. Sit down together and decide how others might chip in.
- 6. Make lists.** Making a list forces you to gather your thoughts and set priorities – and helps you feel more in control.
- 7. Monitor your stress level hour by hour.** Don’t allow stress to become a monster that must be “managed” at the end of the day. Every few minutes, ask yourself, “What can I do right now to relax/feel better/take care of myself?” This might mean dropping your jaw, changing your posture, taking a walk, or getting a cold drink.
- 8. Try journal writing whenever you feel frustrated, angry, sad, or depressed.** It can help you see things more clearly.

- 9. Take time for “useless” things.** This includes smelling the flowers, lighting candles while washing the dishes, and stopping to pet the neighborhood cat.
- 10. Don’t reach for food for emotional comfort.** Tackle the source of the stress.
- 11. Make one small change if you can’t make a big one.** This can get the ball rolling
- 12. Just say “no.”** This single piece of advice can save you countless problems.
- 13. Give yourself a real break during work breaks.** If you work on your feet, sit down during breaks. If you work sitting down, get up and walk. If you work on the phones, don’t make phone calls during your break. If you work with others, find time to be alone, etc.
- 14. Be yourself; celebrate yourself.** There’s no one else like you anywhere. You have a special purpose for being here. Find out what it is.

HEART HEALTH AWARENESS

RISK FACTORS

Stress
High LDL Cholesterol
Family History
Overweight
Smoking
Diabetes
Physical Inactivity
Gum Disease

PREVENTION

Low Fat Diet
30-min Daily Exercise
Lose Excess Weight
Reduce Sodium
Manage Stress
Limit Alcohol
Stop Smoking
Manage Cholesterol
Regular Checkups

