

# Stress

*[Isaiah 26:3](#), "You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you because he trusts in you."*

Do you know there is a difference between good stress and bad stress? We all experience stress to some degree in our lives; it is a regular aspect of our busy lives. However, bad stress can impact our physical health, emotional wellbeing, and bring spiritual conflicts in our lives. Good stress can motivate and challenge us toward a more fruitful life. I define stress in my life as feeling like I have seven things I need to get done and feeling like I only have time to do three. We all need to be aware of how we are impacted by stress and ask ourselves a few questions. What is good and bad stress in my life? How do I respond to stress? How does stress impact relationships around me? Am I looking to Christ for help?

*Here are a few things that I evaluate regarding stress and what we can do to help ourselves.*

## **Causes of Stress**

- Perfectionism
- A need for control
- People pleasing
- Unrealistic expectations regarding an expected end
- Failure to plan and prepare for the future

## **Symptoms of Stress**

- Are you having difficulty trusting God in essential areas of your life?
- Do you suffer from neck or backaches, frequent headaches, insomnia, or chest pains?
- Do you have destructive habits, need medication or alcohol to relax?
- Are you frequently tense or irritable?
- Are you tired most of the time?
- Do you often have butterflies or knots in your stomach?
- Are you insensitive to the needs of others around you?

- Do you ever feel like you may explode or lose control sometimes?
- Do you often find yourself either discouraged or depressed?

### **Thirty ways to Help Yourself**

1. Never forget your identity in Christ and that you are God's child, and He loves you and has your best interest at heart. [Ephesians 1:3-6](#); [1 John 4:16](#)
2. Reflect on the reality of the sovereignty of God. He is supreme and in control of everything. [Proverbs 16:9](#); [Psalm 103:19](#); [Romans 8:28](#)
3. Get a complete physical checkup. Only take medicine when advised by a physician. Avoid the use of alcohol, drugs, etc.
4. Start an exercise program at least three times a week for twenty minutes. Remember Jesus walked daily. [I Corinthians 9:27](#)
5. Accept the fact that everyone has stress. Change your attitude about stressful or anxiety-producing situations. [Phil. 4:11](#); [Hebrews 13:5](#)
6. Find a friend or counselor to talk with about your problems. [James 5:16](#); [Proverbs 11:14](#); [15:22](#); [24:6](#)
7. Develop a constructive outlet for your stress. Tension or stress repressed inwardly can result in sickness. [Eph. 4:15](#); [I Cor. 9:27](#).
8. Have a specific procedure for dealing with problems that arise. Prepare for the worst and hope for the best. [Proverbs 2:9-12](#)
9. Work at maintaining a balanced lifestyle and with adequate rest and sleep.
10. Renew your mind with Scripture. [Romans 12:1-2](#); [Psalms 1:2](#); [2 Cor. 10:5](#)
11. Plan daily activities ahead of time and try to stick to your schedule even though you may not feel like it. [Galatians 5:24](#); [James 1:22](#); [Proverbs 6:6-8](#)
12. Join a community group or plan activities involving other people. Participate in planned recreation activities that you enjoy.
13. Set aside time daily for prayer, Bible study, and Scripture memory. [II Timothy 2:15](#); [Psalm 119:11](#)
14. Attend church every week unless physically ill. [Hebrews 10:25](#); [I Cor. 16:1-2](#)
15. Participate in some ministry where you can help others. [Ephesians 4:26](#); [Matthew 5:23-24](#)

16. Resolve anger in relationships before the sun goes down. [Ephesians 4:26](#); [Matthew 5:23-24](#)
17. Appropriately confront your fears with courage and strength. [Proverbs 3:25](#); [Psalm 27:1](#)
18. Set high enough standards for your habits and behavior. Set limits for your life and learn to be assertive. [Psalm 119:105](#); [I Timothy 4:8](#); [II Peter 1:6-7](#); [Eccl. 12:12](#); [Proverbs 4:14-15](#)
19. Set realistic expectations for yourself and those around you and look at the positive aspect of circumstances. [Philippians 4:8](#); [Proverbs 3:8-9](#)
20. Avoid foods that you may have food sensitivities and allergies.
21. Establish specific priorities of things to do for the day by writing them down and placing several important notes next to them with (1) being the most important and (10) being the least important. Delegate to others what others can do.
22. Try to limit major changes in your life to reduce stress.
23. Develop a sense of humor and laugh. [Proverbs 15:13](#); [Proverbs 17:22](#)
24. Learn to forgive and do your best to live at peace with others. [Matthew 6:12, 14, 15](#)
25. Do not dwell on the past but set goals for the future and work towards them. [Philippians 3:13-14](#); [Romans 12:1-2](#)
26. Trust in the Lord to help you with problems that you cannot solve by yourself. Stop trying to control everyone and everything! [Proverbs 3:5-6](#)
27. Have several hobbies or activities to participate in when anxiety or depression starts to set in. Paul made even made tents. Make a list of five things that you will do whenever you start to get anxious that can bring joy.
28. Work on communication by not assuming what others think and simply ask what they are thinking. [James 4:3](#)
29. Are there any lies on the tapes that play in your mind? Address every lie with the truth of God's Word. [Ephesians 6:16](#)
30. Spend less time in front of a screen in the evening. Read a real book before you go to sleep.

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