



My Road to Better Health

Relax

Relax every day to rid your body of tension and stress.

Relax. Play. Recharge. Reenergize. Nurture your mind and body. Whatever you call it — make time to relax. A little stress can be a good thing. It may even help you do your best. But high levels of stress over long periods of time may lead to serious health problems, such as high blood pressure and heart disease. **Take time to relax every day. It can help balance your stress.**

Everyone has stress.

Everyone handles stress differently. If something causes you to have physical reactions, like tight muscles, headaches, a faster heart rate, faster breathing, etc., it's probably stressful for you. If you have emotional reactions, like anxiety, frustration, anger, or depression, it's probably stressful. Some stressors bother people so often that the person no longer notices the physical or mental signs of stress.

How does relaxing help?

Relaxing is not just “not being stressed.” It’s a deeper feeling than that. Real relaxation calms your brain and body. This may help bring balance to your body and your life. And that may help you feel better and have a better outlook. Do you notice that you have a better attitude — do you relate to people and life’s events better — when you feel relaxed? That’s one of the easiest benefits of relaxation to notice.

Tips for relaxing

Everyone relaxes differently. For some people, it’s gardening or rocking in a chair. For others, it may be yoga or volunteering. Use these tips to make a commitment to relaxing.

- **Make yourself a priority.** You have permission. It’s key to your physical and emotional health and wellness.
- **Be resilient.** Remember that there are many things in life you can’t control. Take action on what is within your control. And learn to let go of the rest.
- **Think about the three ways you can recharge.** Physically: stretch, walk, run, do yoga, etc. Socially: connect with friends, go dancing, etc. Time for self: make yourself a priority, think about what will help you relax, rest as needed, etc. How do you choose to recharge?
- **Make a plan.** Note how you will relax when you only have 5 to 10 minutes. What can you do when you have 30 to 60 minutes? What about your regular, daily relaxation efforts? Consider contacting a health/fitness facility, life coach, church, or community education program for ideas and help in learning how to relax. Schedule this time for yourself. You deserve it!

What will you do to reenergize yourself?



Take **S M A R T** steps for better health

- Specific** What am I going to do?
- Measurable** How will I track my progress?
- Achievable** What steps will I take to make this happen?
- Relevant** Is this important enough to me to want to do it?
- Time-framed** When will I do this?

What is the first step you are willing to take in the next few days?

Rate your confidence

How much do you believe you can do this? Circle your answer here.

| Not at all confident | | | | | | | Extremely confident | | | |
|----------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|---------------------|----------|----------|-----------|
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

If you rate your confidence below a 7, consider changing your plan.