

Ten Ways to Reduce Stress at Work

By Dr. John Schorling, Director of the UVA Mindfulness Center

1. Take a few minutes in the morning to be quiet and to focus on the present. If driving to work, try turning off the radio. If walking, walk slowly. Take time to notice your breathing and center yourself.
2. Monitor body sensations and tension during the day. Take a moment if tension builds to focus on the breath.
3. Take several short breaks throughout the day and, if possible, try stretching or mindful walking.
4. Stop for a few minutes every hour to re-center, focus on the breath and notice body sensations.
5. Take time during the day to discuss non work-related topics with close colleagues.
6. Notice concerns as they arise. Are they things over which you have control? Focus energy on those things under your control and practice letting go of those you can't control.
7. If a difficult encounter arises with another person, notice your reaction. Are you reacting to the issue or the person? See if you can observe the two separately. An issue is often subject to negotiation. People tend to be more stubborn.
8. Take time during the day to note at least one person you appreciate and let them know it.
9. At the end of the day, take time to recap. Write down three good things that happened and their causes.
10. When you get home, take time to come back to the present. Prepare yourself for being with your family or others at home.