

De-stress Planning

Have you ever felt “stressed out” helpless, anxious, depressed, or even unsure of how to feel? As stress levels rise, your body produces more of the cortisol hormone. In the brain, high levels of cortisol cause damage to the memory center of the brain and decrease the amount of nutrition reaching your brain. These effects slow your brain down, causing you to be forgetful and have trouble thinking. Stress also causes the choline hormone to decrease. Choline helps you learn by growing brain cells. Because stress decreases this hormone, you might have difficulty with problem-solving or concentrating.



Stress affects your ability to think; therefore you should create a plan to decrease your stress level. Your plan should help you deal with the hassles of everyday life. Here are a few suggestions to help you de-stress:

- Take a moment to quiet your mind with meditation
- Say a prayer like the Reinhold Niebuhr’s Serenity Prayer:
- Focus on something that brings you happiness
- Talk to a friend, doctor, or therapist
- Do something relaxing: take a vacation, walk, or bubble bath
- Practice Yoga
- Socialize with friends and family
- Join a support group
- **LAUGH!**

With a plan, you are more likely to decrease stress and improve your thinking.