

(Contd) it clears your head. It also has the added effect of making us tired which helps us get a decent night's sleep.. another one of the best ways to reduce the effects of stress. Getting enough sleep is difficult to do sometimes, it requires one to completely shut off ones mind, not dwell on what happened today or what one has to do tomorrow, but it is possible. There are many ways to settle into a sleepy time mode, read a book, listen to relaxing music, and while some experts may say television is not a good thing to have on before trying to sleep, sometimes having something boring on may serve to lull you into a deep slumber. Things to avoid would more likely be surfing the internet and other activities that tend to lead to a higher level of brain stimulation. There are also natural sleep enhancers including some herbal teas and melatonin which can help one to get to sleep, when other methods do not seem to help. Again over-reliance on OTC or prescription medicines are probably not going to help you in the long term, carry a diverse amount of side effects, and mostly only serve to enrich large pharmaceutical companies.

While getting enough sleep is important for relieving stress levels, it goes hand in hand with managing one's overall diet and exercise routine. A healthy diet contributes to a greater sense of energy, which in turn may help a person deal with the smaller stresses. A diet that includes a healthy mix of foods, including fruits, veggies, and whole grains can increase energy and in turn help you focus on what you have to. Many people when stressed, mindlessly eat fast or processed convenience food which contain many ingredients that make you want to just take a nap. This in turn, may lead to an increased stress level as you just can't finish everything you need to.

Lastly, did you ever find at the end of the day, that you didn't have enough hours in the day? Try to go to sleep and think, I have to do what I didn't do today, AND what they want me to do tomorrow? It's called time management, (I'm speaking to

the procrastinators among you). Putting off till tomorrow what you could very well do today seldom helps one's state of mind. Although some may look at it as being somewhat anile, making a list of the day's tasks and sticking with it can go a long way to ensure peace of mind. Do the things you hate most and work your way up from there. That way by the end of your list you're just doing what you want to instead of the odious tasks you have to do.

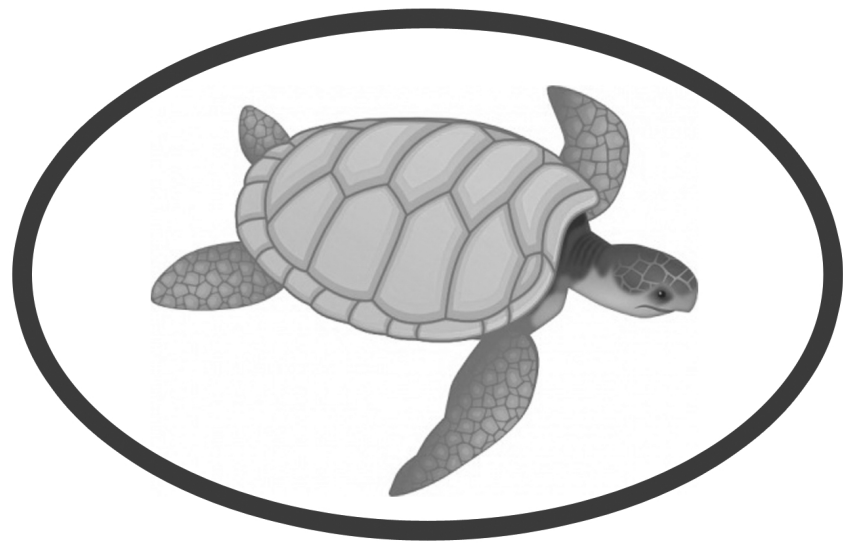
Lastly take a vacation every once in a while, and I mean a real vacation. Of all the things it is hard to do in this modern era it is to take an actual vacation. Unlike vacations of the past when you were basically incommunicado for a week or so, most of today's jobs are at least somewhat technology based, good for being able to work at home every once in a while, but then work travels with you every where you go. Additionally with the downsizing of the workforce, those remaining have no one to do the work for them while they take a day or so off, so even if you choose to not work at all during a vacation, it's still there for you when you get back, and within a couple of days you have forgotten you were ever on vacation. This is a time to set limits, do what you can or want to but don't let it drive you crazy.

So there you have it, problem solved, as much as it can be. The most of important thing to remember is you may not ever be able to solve all the world's problems, and only some of your own, but if your work yourself into a tizzy and end up stroking out, you aren't really going to solve anything.

For more information about the APA's study and stress management:

<http://www.webmd.com/balance/stress-management/news/20081008/as-economy-worsens-so-does-stress>
<http://thehealthcareblog.com/blog/2008/10/08/economic-stress-bad-for-your-health/>

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