

3 Simple Ways to Reduce Your Stress and Improve Your Health **Guaranteed!**

By Jim Accetta, www.TrulyHumanCoaching.com

The Challenge

I have entitled this paper a “28 day challenge” because I want to challenge you. I want to challenge you to incorporate these practices for 28 days, period.

You know all about habits, especially the bad ones, and how hard they have been to break. Well guess what, good habits are hard to break too. Once you have them down, once you have taken the conscious effort to build them into your life, they happen, sometime automatically, sometimes with a little nudge. So I challenge you to start. If you want some help, [write me](#), I’ll help you get started.

Stress... things to do, projects to finish, appointments. In our fast paced world and in what many people have called uncertain economic times, stress is something we live with every day. Stress affects our health: our physical, emotional, & spiritual health. Stress effects our personal and business relationships, the time we spend in them AND the quality of our communication.

One might not think it possible- 3 simple ways to reduce stress and improve your health? Yes, it really is that simple. I talk with people every day, you’ve heard the words: “In this economy...” and likely experienced some of the same stress related to these economic times. We are a busy hard working people, often neglecting some of the simplest ways we can take care of ourselves. Use 5 minutes to find out how.

- 1. Meditate**
- 2. Eat 3 well balanced meals**
- 3. Smile**

1. Meditate

Meditation, just 5 minutes a day. Just starting with a minute or two is a good start. Meditation is really very simple and will help you clear the clutter in your head, reduce your heart rate, and if done regularly, will reduce your stress, your blood pressure, and allow you more peace. And that’s just the beginning. Meditation is a small way to begin training your own brain by learning to control your thoughts-the primary vehicle we humans use to create stress!

- Use 5 minutes per day to meditate. I like to meditate most in the morning, many of my clients remember just before they go to sleep and then use 5 minutes or more, as they lay in bed to meditate (What a great way to relax your body and fall asleep too!) Here are a few specifics about the meditation that will help you direct your brain toward the intentions and achievements you desire.
- Before you begin meditating, focus on your desire. What do you want for your day? Keep it simple, one word or two. Your unconscious mind is much like a very powerful small child. Keep it simple and it will follow. So, create an intention: it can be: achievement, gentle, determined, loving, peaceful, really, whatever you want.
- Now, begin to imagine that which you desire. If it is gentle, then imagine gentle: see yourself and others being gentle, hear the gentle tones of voice, experience the feeling of gentle.
- Now begin your meditation by focusing on your breath. Breath in through your nose and out through your mouth. As you breath, breath in for the mental count of 4, pause for the mental count of 1, then breath out for the mental count of 4. Do this repeatedly for one minute. If ever you find your mind wandering, you can always focus on your breath again.
- As you relax, again think of your intention, allow yourself to dream of your intention and desire ***as if it were happening naturally, easily, without a hitch!***
- Just like shampoo, repeat the process.
- NOTE: If you have trouble meditating, you can purchase my Compassion Exercise CD; attend my upcoming meditation classes or [write me](#) for a complimentary coaching sample and I will teach you how!

2. Eat 3 balanced meals per day.

There are two parts to this: There is the part about eating well AND taking a separate time to eat, to nourish your self.

You get to pick your food and your portion size. These are key-it starts with what you fill your kitchen and pantry with. Grocery stores and restaurants will provide you with “their” version of portion sizes. When I was working as a hypnotist and weight loss coach portion size and regular meals were one of the top priorities. Reducing sugar, carbohydrates, white flour, caffeine and alcohol in your diet can go a long way towards getting your body back into a healthful balance.

Breakfast is the most important meal, yes it is true. If you have been skipping breakfast you have been training your body to store fat! It’s true! Your body goes into a ‘starvation’ mode; your body doesn’t know your busy, or you’ll eat later. It has been programmed over thousands of years, through genetics, that if you don’t eat often enough, it will begin to store fats to protect you. Yay for survival, ouch for health.

Then there is the part of 'taking the time' to eat. Now this might 'cut into your day', however, when you think about it, don't you AND your body deserve just a bit of time to nourish yourself? And even if you don't believe it now, when you stop your activity to take the time to eat, you are allowing yourself a small and needed respite from 'the daily grind' AND in a very real way, telling yourself: "I'm important enough to give myself time and nourishment". Giving yourself this time 3 times per day for 28 days will reap great results for your physical, emotional and spiritual health. There's more about a challenge for you at the end of the article.

3. Smile.

OK, this seems too simple right? This is the part about using our own brain to control our stress. Most people have not thought of their brain as something we are in control of. We get to decide! If you're not directing your own thoughts, think about it, who is? Our brains are glands; they manufacture many chemicals that have a direct impact on our mood and our bodies.

Isn't it then 'common sense' that we use every possible strategy available to learn how to use our brain and direct our thinking to reduce our levels of stress & anxiety and to have many more great experiences? (See article: [Who Knows What is Good and What is Bad?](#))

Dr Robert Ornstein and David Sobel in their book, *The Healing Brain*, say we tend to think of the brain as primarily an organ of rational thought but it is also a gland. "Research has indicated that laughter used on a daily basis causes the following beneficial biochemical and physiological changes in our body; it lowers levels of the stress hormones cortisol, adrenaline and noradrenalin, it lowers blood pressure, induces muscles to relax, improves respiration, massages internal organs like the heart and lungs, it boosts the immune system, makes us more resistant to stress, reduces pain, calms the nervous system, improves digestion, boosts mood relieving and pain relieving internal morphine-like chemicals called endorphins, it speeds the healing process, improves circulation, helps to relieve stress, anxiety and depression, increases blood oxygenation, helps the body release the pleasure chemical dopamine, lowers heart rate. It has also been found to reduce work related sickness by 50% by improving our psychological and physiological health.

Chronic stress increases our blood pressure, weakens our immune system and makes us more vulnerable to suffering colds, flu, glandular fever, herpes types infections, increases cortisol levels (a chemical thought to be one factor involved in causing/exacerbating depression and anxiety by affecting serotonin levels)" (from <http://stresshelp.tripod.com/id11.html>)

Again, many of us have been conditioned to 'take things seriously'. Even as I write the sentence, my brow begins to furrow, I feel tension in my neck, and suddenly things are more serious. For this guy, not a real comfortable way of being AND very conducive to health

problems-seriously do you like worry, fret and the like? Don't you just want to have more fun, enjoy your moments and be wonderfully successful too?

4. Exercise

Ok, I threw in a 4th one. Really you can reduce your stress significantly using the first 3 techniques. Exercise is a great 4th, if you want to make the time. We have all heard the benefits of exercise yet claim to 'not have the time'. Walking 20 minutes per day can change body chemistry in a way that calms the nervous system and reduces stress levels. Any exercise will work: A friend of mine enjoys jumping rope; another Latin Salsa; Aerobic exercise is especially good for producing endorphins in the body - which are natural soothing hormones released during sustained exercise.

No time for exercise? [Write me](#), I can help...magically, you can have more time 😊

Summary

Thank you for using your time for you! Now that you have been exposed to MANY ways that you can reduce your stress and increase your health, it is up to you. Your time, your decisions, your life-that simple, what do you want? Let me make it easy, I suggest:

1. Start with the 5 minutes of meditation. It will have immediate effects that after a short time you will begin to become conscious of.
2. If you want to include other parts of the 'ways to reduce stress and increase your health', start including one at a time in your daily intention. For example, your intention can be: I will take the time today to nourish myself with healthy food and fresh water, etc...
3. [Write me](#) for a FREE complimentary coaching consult. I will get you started!

The Challenge:

I have entitled this paper a "28 day challenge" because I want to challenge you. I want to challenge you to incorporate these practices for 28 days, period.

You know all about habits, especially the bad ones, and how hard they have been to break. Well guess what, good habits are hard to break too. Once you have them; once you have taken the conscious effort to build them into your life they just happen automatically, it can be just that easy for you too.

So I challenge you to start. If you want some help, [write me](#), I'll help you get started today.