

Seven Tips for Stress Management and Self-Care for Women

"Each player must accept the cards life deals him or her. But once they are in hand, he or she alone must decide how to play the cards in order to win the game".

-Voltaire

Where to start:

It seems like it comes almost naturally for women to take care of others before they take care of themselves. But then, what happens to us? We get sick physically, emotionally or spiritually. Our symptoms look like fatigue, irritability, resentment, depression, anxiety, a sense of always feeling rushed, unsatisfied and unhappy. We begin to feel that things are out of control, we have no time for ourselves and we feel like stress is running our lives.

What we can do :

1. Realize that if we don't take charge and make changes, nothing will get better.
2. Look at your daily calendar and note the categories where you spend your time: e.g.: job, children or other family responsibilities, housework, commuting, husband, healthy activities or time for yourself. Notice which areas dominate and which are suffering. Daily tasks can always be readjusted to make room for something that is more important. Decide that your self-care is important.
3. Rate how you make choices in the following areas as good, fair or poor :
 - o rest
 - o nutrition
 - o exercise
 - o self-regenerating activities
 - o sleep

How can you make better choices for the areas you want to improve?

"Time is the coin of your life. It is the only coin you have, and only you can determine how it will be spent. Be careful lest you let other people spend it for you."

- Carl Sandburg

4. Make a list of 5 things that brings you joy in life; now add 5 more
5. Put this list next to your calendar & schedule at least 2 of these activities daily.
6. Write down what, if anything, might prevent you from starting to make these changes. Look at that word or phrase; decide if you want to give it the power to make you unhealthy, unhappy or stressed.
7. If you have decided to take charge of your life and your stress, what will be your first change? When will you start? Mark it on your calendar. What can you do today?

"At any moment I could start being a better person - but which moment should I choose?" - Ashleigh Brilliant, Potshots No. 1521