



MANAGE STRESS

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Manage
STRESS



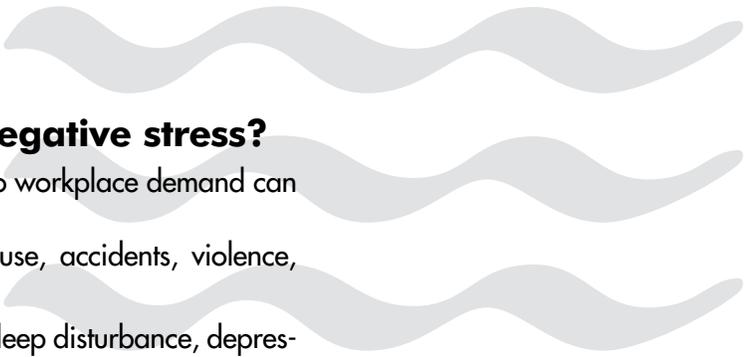
WHY MANAGE STRESS?

What is stress?

- Stress is a naturally occurring reaction of your body to psychological or physical demands of the environment.
- Stress reaction increases blood pressure, heart rate and respiration as well as other changes to major body systems. These reactions prepare the body for “fight or flight” from physically dangerous or psychologically threatening situations.
- Stress reaction can be positive or negative.
 - Positive stress reaction** leads to increased performance, feelings of success and confidence and allows the body to return to the normal, non-stress state.
 - Negative stress or mismanaged stress**, keeps the physical reaction of the body turned on and does not let the body completely recover to the non-stress state.¹

What causes stress reaction in the workplace?²

- Task demands—having to repeatedly learn new processes, meeting unrealistic deadlines.
- Time demands—frequent deadlines, schedule conflicts, “too much to do,” interruptions and unpredictable schedules (particularly for employees who have daily rhythms in shift work).
- Physical demands—environment (weather, noise, vibration) and activity (standing, walking, bending, lifting).
- Role demands—added responsibility in supervision or leadership.
- Interpersonal demands—interacting with public, customers, co-workers.



What are the consequences of negative stress?

Negative stress or mismanaged stress reactions to workplace demand can be grouped as:

- Behavioral—may include alcohol or drug abuse, accidents, violence, and eating disorders.
- Psychological—may include family problems, sleep disturbance, depression, burnout syndrome.
- Medical—may include heart disease, stroke, headache, cancer.

Long-term effects of negative stress can lead to exhaustion, reduced ability of the immune system to fight off illness and disease and put the employee at risk for health problems and work performance issues.

Your worksite wellness committee can initiate programs and activities to help employees manage their stress and gain skills to manage the demands of the work environment.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Policy exists to serve employees and employers in resolving workplace performance and conduct for troubled employees (*State Personnel Manual, Workplace Environment and Health, Section 8, Page 26*). For additional EAP resources, contact the State Office of Personnel or area Mental Health Agency.

REFERENCES

1. Whitney, E., Hamilton, E. 1984. *Understanding Nutrition*. 183-191.
2. Quick, J.C. and Quick, J.D. 1984. "Preventing Distress Through Better Working Relationships." *Management Review*. 30(4).

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SECTION I

HealthStart Activity

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HealthStart Activity

All Work and No Play... Is Not the Healthy Way

PURPOSE

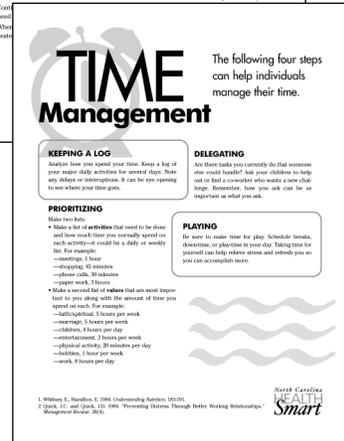
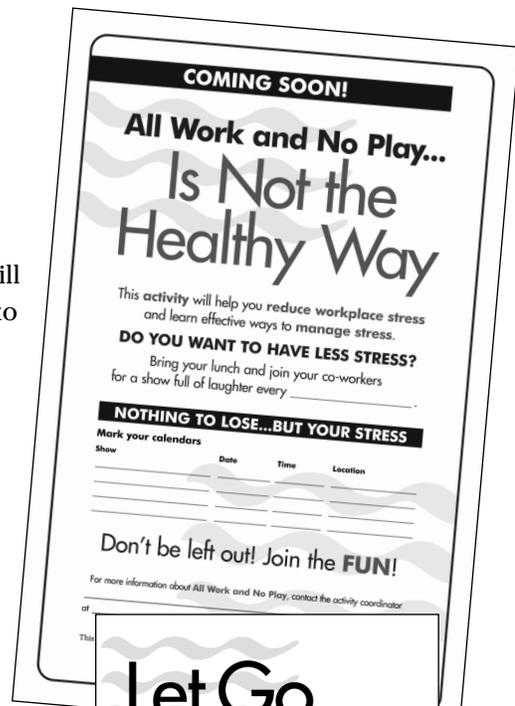
The “All Work and No Play...Is Not the Healthy Way” activity will help employees experience less stress and learn effective ways to manage stress at the workplace.

MATERIALS

- Notice to announce the activity (**Appendix G**)
- Motivational signs/posters (**Appendices D and E**)
- Stress management handouts (**Appendix F**)
- Television, video/DVD and video/DVD player

ACTION ITEMS FOR BROWN BAG DAY ACTIVITY

1. Select “All Work and No Play” Coordinator(s) _____ . (May be more than one person depending upon the size of the worksite.)
2. Adopt one day of the week as the “Laugh Day.” Invite employees to bring their own lunch and join others during a movie show of a funny movie during the lunch break. Plan to continue the activity for 4-6 week period.
3. Announce the show dates, time and location to the employees well in advance (at least two weeks prior to the start of the event). This will give employees time to adjust their schedule so that they can be a part of the fun.
4. Display posters and motivational signs at several locations in the worksite that address stress management. Some sample posters are provided in **Appendices D and E**. You may choose to use these or get your own from other sources.

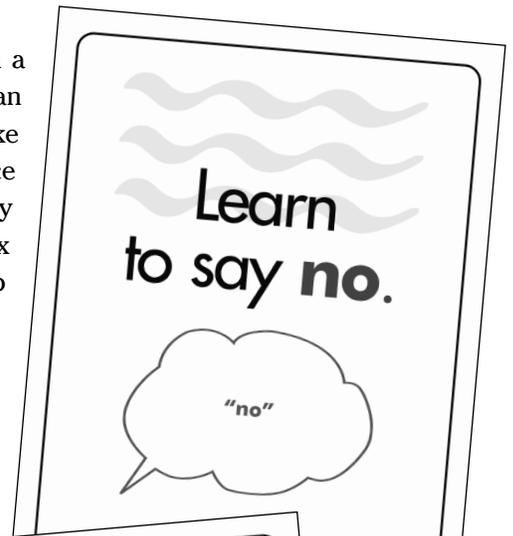


5. On the assigned “Laugh Day(s)” arrange for the movie show in a comfortable room; this may be an auditorium, the lunchroom or an empty office with enough space to accommodate people. Make sure that the required equipment to show the movie is in place and working before the show time. Choose to show funny movies/cartoons (Three Stooges, Laurel and Hardy, Marx Brothers, Tom and Jerry). Have the wellness committee develop criteria of “approved” programs/movies.
6. Depending upon the available resources at your worksite, the worksite wellness committee may be able to arrange for some small refreshments such as 100% fruit juice, fresh fruits, pretzels, etc.
7. Distribute a different stress management handout every week after the show.

EXTRA:

Depending upon the level of support from upper management and the availability of resources for wellness activities at your worksite, the wellness committee may incorporate the following as an add on to the activity.

- **Management Input**—Request someone from top management to join employees during the movie to show their support for the activity and management’s interest in enhancing the health of the employees.
- **Incentives**—Employees who participate in the activity each week during the entire activity period may be given incentives such as a t-shirt, relaxation music CD, gift certificate to a local spa or cash bonus depending upon the availability of funds.



SECTION II

Individual and Group Resources

Manage STRESS

- Breathe in through your nose gently pushing your stomach out.
- Breathe out through your mouth and let your stomach relax.
- Continue for 10-20 minutes. Open your eyes as needed to check time, but do not set a time.
- When finished, open your eyes but remain seated for a couple of minutes.

PROGRESSIVE RELAXATION

The following is a physical activity that can be used by individuals or a group for releasing muscle tension triggered as a response to stress.

- Lie flat on a soft surface or floor with your eyes closed and knees bent.
- Beginning with your right foot, press foot firmly to the floor for five seconds, relax for five seconds; repeat with the left foot.
- Straighten legs out and press back of lower right leg firmly to the floor for five seconds, relax for five seconds; repeat with left leg.
- Press each of the following areas firmly to the floor for five seconds, relax for five seconds (One at a time):
 - Back of thighs and buttocks
 - Lower back and shoulder blades
 - Arms
 - Back of head
- Breathe normally as you press and relax.

SIMPLE YOGA STRETCH

The following physical activity can be used by individuals or a group for releasing muscle tension triggered as a response to stress.

- Stand relaxed, arms hanging at sides and feet about one foot apart.
- Tilt head back and hold for five seconds
- Roll head forward and hold for five seconds.
- Curl chest and stomach forward as you bend at the waist; arms dangling for five seconds.
- Inhale slowly through mouth as you straighten up. Raise arms overhead; drop arms slowly to sides as you exhale slowly through your mouth.

CONTROLLED BREATHING

The following activity can be used by individuals or a group for releasing muscle tension triggered as a response to stress.

- Lie down with your back flat on the floor; place a book or large magazine on your stomach.
- Bend your knees and close your eyes.
- Push your stomach up 2-3 inches and hold for five seconds, then exhale. Repeat several times. Each time you exhale, say “I am relaxed.” Avoid lifting your chest.

SOCIAL SUPPORT

Social support is a recognized way for people to deal with stress. Peer groups are composed of people with similar interests (cooking, quilting, cycling, reading, community service, bridge, etc.) who can share and provide a sound board for common experiences. Educational intervention groups are designed to meet for a specific number of times to cover specific educational or skills building content. Employees who share similar stress challenges may voluntarily come together to provide mutual support and skill building. Here are a few suggestions for increasing social support:

- Join a club or group with similar interests to your own.
- Make a date to do something with a positive person. Negative people zap your energy—seek out positive people who can motivate, inspire, and support you.
- Be a good neighbor. Try to meet those who live near you. Have a block party, invite neighbors over for a cookout, take cookies over, offer to care for a pet, the yard, or pick up mail while neighbors are away.
- Speak kind words to family and friends—those we love most are often those we treat the worst.
- Confide in others—this opens up the door for sharing.
- Send a note to someone recognizing a special talent or time they were particularly helpful. So often we think positive thoughts, but do not communicate them.
- Practice being a good listener. Strive to be “other-centered.”

RECOVER, REFOCUS, REGENERATE

(Parlay International, 1990)

Major life changes occur in all of our lives: promotions, relocations, parenthood, lay offs, divorces, deaths, etc. Whether these events are welcomed or unwelcomed, they can all be very stressful. To help us thrive, it is important to take time to recover, refocus, and regenerate following major life changes.

- **Recovering**—New situations are often stressful, challenging, and unfamiliar—step back from your new situation. Plan a weekend getaway or just some time for yourself. Take small breaks to go to the movie, exercise, or share your feelings with others. These activities can reduce your stress level and help you get back on track.
- **Refocus**—By looking at the “big picture” you can gain a greater peace of mind about the change in your life. Think about what has happened, why,

and what it might mean in the realm of your life. You may find you have mixed emotions. For example, a promotion may increase your salary, but give you uncomfortable or excessive responsibilities. You may feel frustrated, sad, or angry about having to let go of familiar people or routines. In time, these feelings will change. Talking to a trusted friend, family member, counselor, or human resource professional may speed the healing process.

- **Regenerate**—All change is stressful to your body. Your body needs time to heal after a stressful event. Be sure to get plenty of rest, avoid alcohol and cigarettes, and eat properly. Try to increase your circle of social support—connect with new people or reinforce old friendships. Enroll in a class or start a new hobby, often the city Parks and Recreation Department offers low-cost classes in pottery, painting, etc. A class at a community college or university may be a way to connect with new people.

Group Classes

THE WORKSITE WELLNESS COMMITTEE may offer scheduled classes for employees to support/encourage them to be effectively manage their workplace stress.

The educational sessions may be presented as a series of Lunch & Learn presentations. This is a

popular means of providing basic or advanced level information on a selected topic of interest. A guest speaker may be invited to share the information with the employees or a video presentation may be scheduled during the lunch break period.

Guest Speakers

- One advantage of having a guest speaker come and talk to employees is that questions can be answered during or after the session.
- The speaker needs to know the audience. Different presentations may be appropriate for all women groups, or all men groups, or employees who are interested in specific topics. When marketing the session, provide a brief explanation of the target groups the session is trying to reach. Other participants can attend, but at least they will understand why the content is presented to a narrow audience.
- The speaker needs to know the time frame. If the Lunch & Learn presentation is not designed to take the entire meal break, then staying on schedule is important.
- Ask the guest speaker if skills can be practiced or handout materials can be provided. Encourage the speaker to include interactive sessions appropriate for adult learners.
- The guest speaker should be a recognized authority with appropriate credentials and experience

POTENTIAL LUNCH & LEARN SPEAKERS FOR STRESS MANAGEMENT MIGHT INCLUDE:

**Office of State Personnel, Human Resource
Development Group**

**[http://www.osp.state.nc.us/trancata/hrd-oe/
InstructorBios.htm](http://www.osp.state.nc.us/trancata/hrd-oe/InstructorBios.htm)**

Public Health Department Staff

- Health Promotion Coordinator
- Health Educator (local and state consultant)
- Nurse
- Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Coordinator
- Healthy Carolinians Task Force Member

NC Cooperative Extension Agent

National Mental Health Association

<http://www.nmha.org>

American Cancer Society www.cancer.org

American Heart Association www.americanheart.org

Local university and college faculty

Local school counselors

County-specific contact information for some of the above listed professionals can be found at

<http://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com/contacts>

on managing stress or general health topics. For example, a social worker, psychologist or mental health professional.

Video Presentations

- Presenting information to employees using a videotape is an easy and convenient means of conducting Lunch & Learn sessions.
- Before using the video make sure that it is from a reputable source and the information contained in it is accurate.
- Select videos that fit the Lunch & Learn time frame and are designed for adults.
- Preview the video to assure that it is appropriate for your worksite and the audience. Remember health issues are seen differently by different cultures and materials chosen should respect diversity.
- The following resources may be explored for ordering stress management videos. You may view and order the products online or call and request a product catalog.

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/stress>

<http://www.krames.com> (1-800-333-3032)

<http://www.hopehealth.com> (1-800-334-4094)

<http://www.welcoa.org> (1-402-827-3590)

<http://www.parlay.com> (1-800-457-2752)

NC Industrial Commission Safety Education Section <http://www.comp.state.nc.us/ncic/pages/vidtitle.htm>

—Ergonomics: Back Exercises, 10 min.

—Ergonomics: Lifting, 10 min.

—Ergonomics: Materials Handling, 10 min.

—Ergonomics Awareness, 10 min.

—Ergonomics: Back Exercises, 10 min.

—Ergonomics: Computer Usage, 10 min.

—Ergonomics: Lifting, 10 min.

—Ergonomics: Materials Handling, 10 min.

—Ergonomics: Workstation Adjustment, 10 min.

—Heat Stress, 16 min.

—Heat Stress Prevention, 14 min.

—Hypothermia: Cold Weather Prevention, 12 min.

—Norman Checks In, 11 min

—Stress And Safety, 13 min

—Stretch Out, 13 min

<http://www.collagevideo.com>(1-800-433-6769)

SUGGESTED TOPICS FOR GUEST SPEAKERS/VIDEO PRESENTATIONS

Stress management

Time management

- Being organized, reducing clutter
- Setting priorities
- Creating “to do” lists

Planning and organization

Parenting Skills (PET—Parent Effectiveness Training)

Elder Care Issues

Using Humor to Manage Stress

Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy as Stress Management Tool

Conflict Resolution

Positive Attitude

Mediation

Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs)—

What they are and how to establish one in your agency.

SECTION III

Resources for Worksite Policies

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What is meant by a policy?

A POLICY CAN BE A LAW OR A REGULATION. It can be a written rule, or a common practice. Policies can support healthy behaviors and lead to healthy reactions to the psychological and physical demands of daily living.

We can write policy at any level. Organizations such as worksites, and communities such as a school district, can have policy. On a higher level,

state law can be policy. Policies can create change in our surroundings that help us improve our overall outlook on life. For example, an informal worksite policy could be to keep employees informed of and provide opportunities to build coping skills that may help them deal more effectively with stress in the workplace and at home.

Why do we need policies for managing stress in the workplace?

The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (US Department of Health and Human Services, 1999) review of surveys from insurance companies and universities revealed:

- 40% of workers reported their job was very or extremely stressful;
- 25% view their jobs as the number one stressor in their lives;
- 75% of employees believe that workers have more on-the-job stress than a generation ago;
- 29% of workers felt quite a bit or extremely stressed at work;
- 26% of workers said they were “often or very often burned out or stressed” by their work;
- Job stress is more strongly associated with health complaints than financial or family problems.

The 2000 annual “Attitudes in the American Workplace VI” Gallup Poll sponsored by the Marlin Company found that:

- 80% of workers feel stress on the job,
- nearly half say they need help in learning how to manage stress and
- 42% say their coworkers need such help;
- 14% of respondents had felt like striking a coworker in the past year, but didn’t;
- 25% have felt like screaming or shouting because of job stress,
- 10% are concerned about an individual at work they fear could become violent.

See **Appendix B** for policies already in place for North Carolina State Government that primarily address the workplace demands of employees.

What are informal policies?

Some employees may agree to implement “informal” policies to support addressing the demands of the workplace and promoting positive stress reactions by employees. These policies may or may not be written but should be publicly supported and widely communicated to employees during staff meetings, etc. Participation and compliance to these policies would be voluntary.

An example of an informal workplace policy for stress management might be the use of lunchroom for stretching and relieving stress by individual employees during coffee breaks. Another informal means of reducing stress may be the creation of support groups among co-workers to get support and encouragement to deal with job pressures.

What are formal policies?

An informal policy often times leads to a formal written policy. A formal policy would include a statement of intent by the employer and would be applicable to all employees. For instance, some employees might be using their coffee breaks for relaxation and body stretching. Senior management may see that this informal policy should become a formal, written policy for all employees that offers them resources for relaxation and reducing stress. Examples of some formal policies are provided below:

- Effective (*date*) it is the policy of (*this worksite*) to recognize that workplace demands may at times exceed an employee’s ability to meet those demands. To reduce work place stress and effectively manage work place demands, employees will be informed of existing personnel policies that relate to environment and health, and management performance.
- Effective (*date*) it is the policy of (*this worksite*) to keep employees informed of and provide opportunities to build coping skills that may help them more effectively deal with stress in the workplace and at home.
- Effective (*date*) it is the policy of (*this worksite*) to recognize and support healthy ways for employees to cope with stress through the use of relaxation response, humor and physical activity.
- Effective (*date*) it is the policy of (*this worksite*) to create a workplace environment that encourages employees to incorporate stress management into their daily routine and that values employee wellness as an essential part of both personal and corporate well-being.

SECTION IV

Resources for Worksite Environments

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Ergonomic Review of Work Space

ERGONOMICS IS THE STUDY OF WORK. The goal of ergonomics is to make workspace more comfortable and to improve both the health and productivity of the worker. To meet these goals, the capabilities and limitations of workers and their

tools, equipment and furniture are considered in conjunction with how they relate to particular tasks. The information provided below deals mainly with office space and computers, but is also applicable to home and school computer use.

PHYSICAL

Achieving a good fit between the worker and the computer workstation can make work experience more comfortable. It can also make the employee more productive. Varying tasks throughout the day helps to avoid fatigue.

ENVIRONMENTAL

Eliminating glare on the monitor screen makes it more comfortable and easier to read information displayed on the screen.

EMOTIONAL

Occasional breaks, taken throughout the day in conjunction with stretching exercises, help to restore energy and increase productivity. Proper organization can help to reduce the stress that frequent deadlines often cause.

See **Appendix C** for ways to *assess* individual workspace and simple steps that can *reduce* health risks by changing posture, process, workspace and movement. The worksite wellness committee may choose to photocopy/print the checklist and suggestions in this Appendix and distribute among employees at the worksite.

Workspace Evaluation

Use the following checklist to identify whether your workspace is ergonomically suitable for reducing the risks for musculo-skeletal disorders and repetitive motion strain. If you answer "no" to any item follow the corresponding suggestions given after the checklist.

1. Are you able to change position throughout the day (e.g. alternate sitting or standing)?
 Yes No
2. Do you adjust your keyboard and/or monitor position as appropriate when you change posture?
 Yes No
3. Do you incorporate variety into your daily schedule (e.g. texting, talking on the phone, photocopying, moving around or changing postures)?
 Yes No
4. Does the back of your chair provide good lumbar support to the arch in the small of your back?
 Yes No
5. When you sit in your chair with your back against the backrest, is there clearance between the backs of your knees and the edge of your chair?
 Yes No
6. When you sit in your chair, are your thighs approximately parallel to the floor?
 Yes No
7. Are your feet supported by the floor or a footrest when you sit in your chair?
 Yes No
8. When seated at your workstation is there sufficient room underneath the work surface or keyboard tray for your legs and knees?
 Yes No
9. Are your monitor and documents located directly in front of you and in the recommended viewing area?
 Yes No
10. If you often talk on the phone for long periods of time, or while texting or writing, do you have access to headsets or speakerphones?
 Yes No
11. Are your shoulders relaxed with elbows close to your torso while keying?
 Yes No
12. Are your elbows relaxed and resting by your torso when you key or use a mouse?
 Yes No
13. Do you key and mouse with your hands and wrists in a neutral position? (Forearm, wrist and hand form a fairly straight line)
 Yes No
14. Would you describe your typing style as a "light" touch on the keys?
 Yes No
15. Is your viewing distance to your monitor 20 inches (50 cm) or more?
 Yes No
16. Are there any reflections or glare on your monitor screen or is light shining into your eyes?
 Yes No
17. Do you have appropriate illumination when reading printed materials or when reading from your monitor?
 Yes No
18. Have you had an eye exam in the last two years?
 Yes No
19. If you wear bifocals or trifocals, can you see the monitor comfortably?
 Yes No

North Carolina
HEALTH
Smart



Physical Spaces

USE THE FOLLOWING SUGGESTIONS for creating relaxing physical spaces at your worksite:

- Identify “a break area” at the worksite where employees can take a break from their assigned duty station to de-stress. Use posters to remind employees of healthful choices for dealing with stress. (See **Appendix D** for sample posters)
- Address noise reduction—acoustic tiles, room dividers, even strategically placed curtains or hanging posters.
- Check for adequate lighting—consider both ambient and task lighting; hallway lighting.
- Review comfortable temperature settings for heating and cooling.
- Examine building and office entries/exits—consider passages and sidewalks into building for slippage, lighting, visibility; consider the use of door mats and adequate signage.
- Provide rocking chairs or recliners in a lounge or common space.
- Incorporate artwork on walls such as fine art, paintings, fabric wall hangings, stained glass, etc. If employees want to contribute, then you can have an “employee showcase.”
- Display photographs of employees at work or play (with their permission), or even artistic and interesting photos of the worksite.
- Purchase or have employees donate plants, preferably live ones, but high quality artificial plants may be used. Nature is a powerful stress reliever.
- Incorporate an aquarium at your worksite.
- Provide employee bulletin board(s) where quizzes or contests can take place. For example, place five (5) pictures of employees when they were children and see who can identify them.
- Provide a physical space at the worksite for an employee spotlight or recognition. May showcase vacations or hobbies, etc.
- Organize to set up a graffiti board once a week/month. This may be done by tacking up a white board and writing a starting statement or question for employees to respond to. For example, *What is your favorite flower that blooms in spring?* Or *What do you wish you were eating for dinner this week?* Be sure to establish committee guidelines for topics that are suitable for posting.
- Post humorous quotes, cartoons or jokes on the employee notice board or other such place. May have wellness committee representative to “screen” if employees donate.
- Building a landscape near the entrance/exits doors or public window that provides a good view of blooming plants or shrubs that change color with season, etc. may be relaxing. Also, consider placing bird feeders at windows, where appropriate, for nature watching.
- Create a list/board for inspirational books. Employees can recommend books that were inspirational to them (brief statement). Entry could include: title, rating (1–5) scale, topic/description, type of book, i.e. biography, novel, non-fiction, etc.



Cultural Space

APART FROM INDIVIDUAL WORKSPACE and the general physical space at the workplace it is also important that employees are offered enough and supportive cultural space. The worksite wellness committee may use the following suggestions for creating relaxing cultural space at the worksite:

- Suggest flexible time scheduling for employees—this reduces stress by enabling people to cope with traffic, childcare, etc.
 - Select a carpool coordinator for the worksite—traffic is a major stressor for many individuals. Carpooling is more successful if there is a designated “office coordinator” to facilitate. For example, your local transit authority can work with local offices to facilitate carpools.
 - Select a Community Care coordinator for your worksite—this is someone who can “publish” (email/bulletin board or combination) employee events such as marriages, births, deaths, illness, surgery, etc. (with permission of the individual of course). It is a good idea to ask what people prefer—“no mention, please share, cards welcome but no visitors, email appreciated but no phone calls,” etc.
 - Recognize employee birthdays—this can be a very inexpensive but nice way to make employees feel valued. Keep it simple—a “happy birthday” wish affirms the individual just for being born! Another example for birthday recognition is for individual offices to hold a celebration once per month for employee birthdays. Again, it is suggested to select a coordinator.
- Establish an employee recognition program—this may already be in place at a local, regional or state level. Employees can never receive too much praise. Giving employees opportunities to be recognized helps to spread good feelings all around. Examples include:
 - Employee of the Month:** this becomes meaningful if accompanied by a perk and these do not have to cost money. Worksites should be creative with what is valued at their space. Some possibilities might include a reserved parking space near the door, having the “rocking chair” or recliner in their office for the month or at least having first “dibs” on it in the break or lounge area, being excused from making the coffee for the month (if that is an office duty that rotates), etc.
 - Employee Spotlight:** provide a bulletin board or monthly newsletter that features a member of the staff and shares some personal information about the employee.
 - Yearly Recognition Program:** a “brag” program for services well performed.
 - Appreciation Week:** some local businesses may be willing to give “coupons” for 10% off, a free visit, buy one-get one free, etc.



HEALTH MESSAGES displayed in high traffic areas can inform employees of facts and reinforce healthy behaviors.

The poster needs to be changed regularly depending on the number of times employees pass by the message. **After seeing the same poster 10-20 times, people become desensitized to it and no longer “see” it.** A good rule of thumb would be to change posters (messages) about once a month. Leaving the poster “spot” empty for a couple of weeks will also increase response to a new poster message.

See **Appendix D** for sample posters/ messages that can be printed from the CD-ROM provided with the toolkit.

Appendix E contains samples of several motivating quotes related to stress and relaxation. These quotes are provided as a ready-to-print size in the CD-ROM. Post different quotes at different places at your worksite and switch around every week or post the same quote at several places and change it after 1-2 weeks.

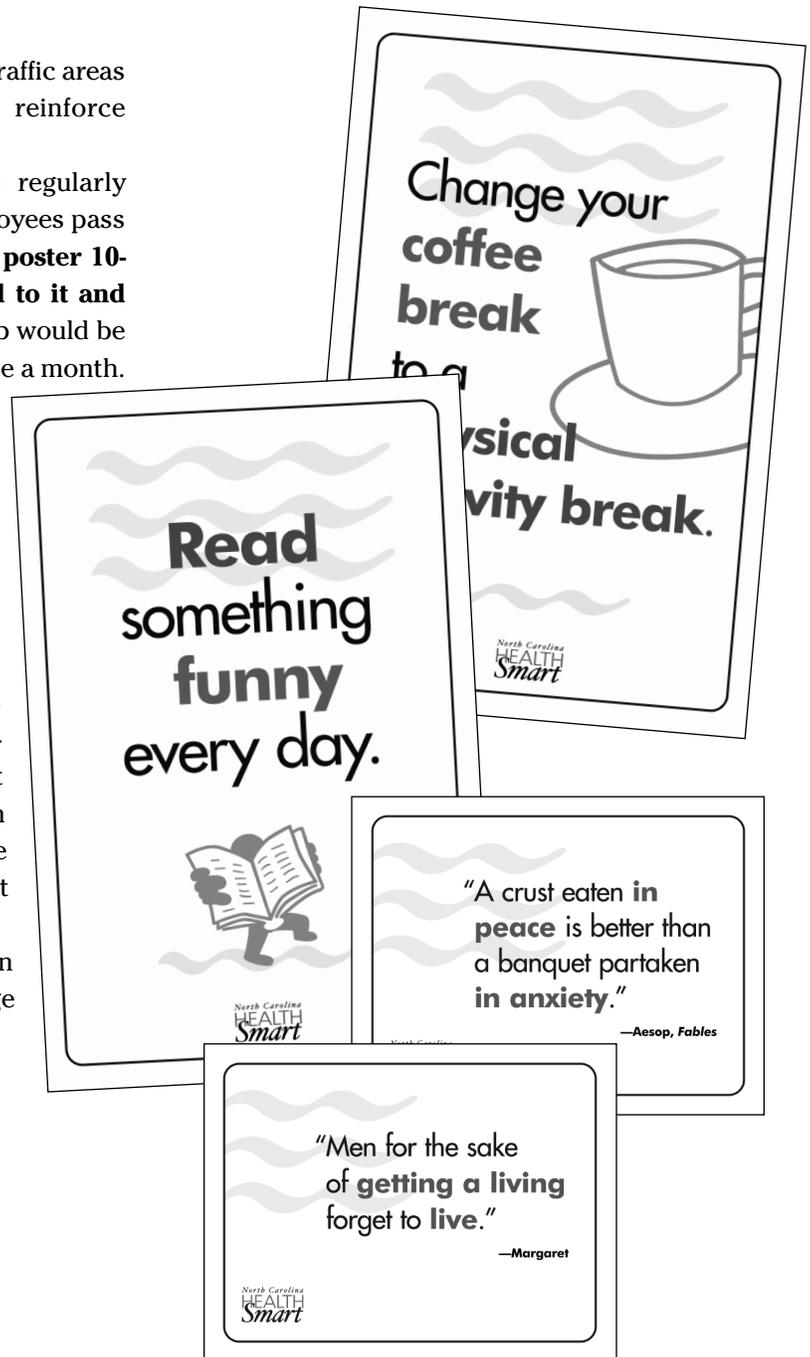
Posters on stress management can also be downloaded or ordered for charge from the following online sources:

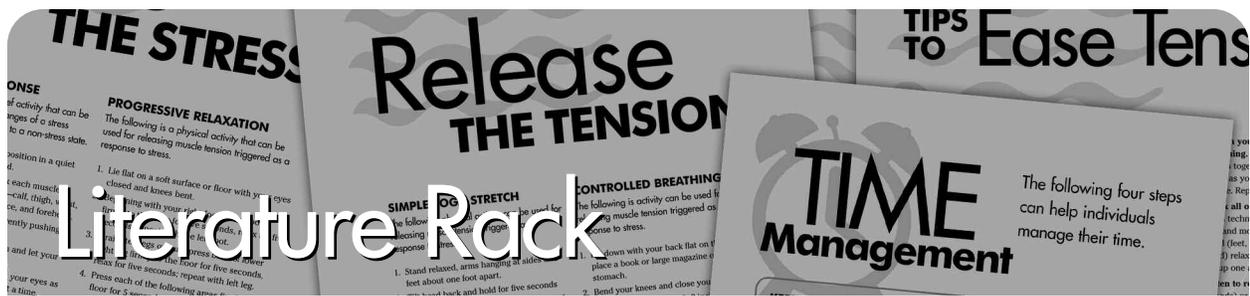
RELATED LINKS

<http://www.krames.com>

<http://www.parlay.com>

<http://www.hopehealth.com>





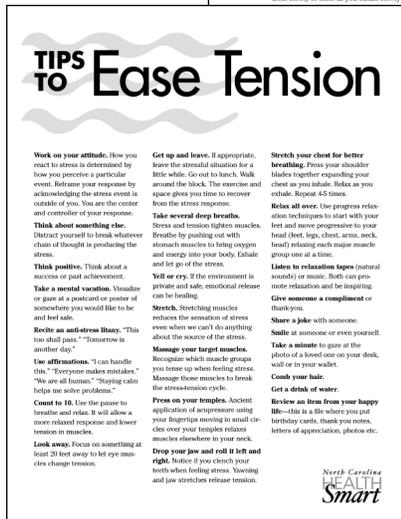
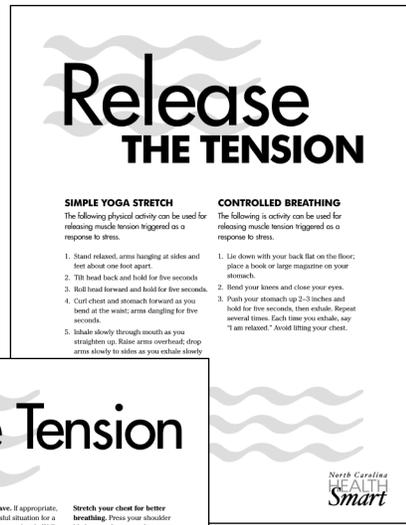
LITERATURE RACKS can be a convenient way to keep the idea of managing and reducing stress visible in the workplace. Commercial literature racks are available from office and library supply stores. Simple literature holders can be made from attractive plastic or ceramic flowerpots, baskets or other household items.

Use an attractive holder in a highly visible location to hold handouts/one-pagers, brochures and pamphlets on managing or reducing stress. Some sample handouts are provided in **Appendix F**. These handouts are also included in the toolkit CD-ROM for printing.

Brochures, booklets and pamphlets on several other topics related to stress management can be downloaded for free or ordered for charge from the list of related links given below.

RELATED LINKS

- <http://www.krames.com>
- <http://www.parlay.com>
- <http://www.welcoa.org>
- <http://www.personalbest.com>
- <http://www.hopehealth.com>
- <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/stress>





Lending Library

ESTABLISHING A LENDING LIBRARY of videos and books for employees is one way to support efforts to manage stress on and off the job site.

The following are suggestions on how and where to get stress management video and audio tapes for the lending library:

- **Public Library**—Many public libraries carry an extensive collection of books and videos on topics including stress management and relaxation. Contact the public library in your area for information. Then make the list available via the internet or on bulletin boards at your worksite.
- **Employees**—Employees may own books, videos or audiotapes and would be willing to “dust them off” or bring them in to share with others. Sharing comedy, relaxation or motivational tapes with a group using employee owned videos gives employees a chance to contribute to the activity. Trading books, videos, or audiotapes can add variety as well as help employees discover which stress relievers work best for them.



SECTION V

Additional Resources

Manage
STRESS

Additional Resources

3M *Innovation*

3 M INNOVATION

3 M Innovation is a office ergonomics self-help site that offers an educational program to teach the fundamentals of office ergonomics, including physical, environmental and emotional elements. It suggests improvements that individuals can apply to customize their workstations and tasks.

Website: <http://www.3m.com/cws/selfhelp>



American Psychological Association

AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

The American Psychological Association is a scientific and professional organization that represents psychology. The website offers information on several psychology-related topics including stress.

Website: <http://www.apa.org/topics/topicstress.html>

JOB STRESS NETWORK

The purpose of this site is to bring together, for public dissemination, information about and related to Job Strain (specifically) and Work Stress (in general).

Website: <http://www.workhealth.org>

MINDTOOLS

The stress management section of Mind Tools gives information on how to survive and thrive under the intense stress that comes with a challenging career.

The website offers a range of stress management techniques and tools including



MINDTOOLS

articles, stress diary, newsletter and other resources. Stress management products are available for a fee along with online counseling service.

Website: <http://www.mindtools.com/smpage.html>



National Institute of Mental Health

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MENTAL HEALTH

The National Institute of Mental Health, a part of the National Institutes of Health works to improve mental health through biomedical research on mind, brain, and behavior. The website provides factsheets on stress related topics and other information.

Website: <http://www.nimh.nih.gov>



National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health

The “Stress At Work” section of the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health provides several resources for workplace stress including a video, booklet, publications, survey to assess quality of worklife and links to other resources.

Website: <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/stress>

STRESS LESS

Stress Less offers a wide selection of high quality stress reduction products and programs for use in coping

with the devastating mental, emotional and physical effects of excess stress. It offers a free Stress Assessment Questionnaire that can be used online by individuals. Among other products are a comprehensive stress reduction program, body and mind relaxation tapes, on-line anxiety program, relaxation music, stress reducing vitamins and herbs, weight reduction program, and newsletters. On-line counseling service is also available which

The logo for Stress Less, featuring the word "Stress" in a large, elegant, cursive font above the word "Less" in a smaller, simpler font. A registered trademark symbol (®) is located to the right of "Less".

allows you the privacy and convenience of talking to a Licensed Psychologist, Registered Dietitian, Exercise Physiologist, or Career Counselor.

Website: <http://www.stressless.com>

THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF STRESS



The American Institute of Stress provides information to enhance the understanding of the role of stress in health and illness.

Website: <http://www.stress.org>

APPENDICES

Manage STRESS

Determine Your Humor Quotient

Circle **7** if the statement is very **characteristic** of you.

Circle **1** if the statement is very **uncharacteristic** of you.

1. My boss would describe me as a “Humor Asset”	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
2. My co-workers & family would list my sense of humor as one of my best assets.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
3. I avoid sarcasm, ethnic or negative humor except in private conversations with close friends.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
4. I can laugh at my own mistakes and enjoy occasionally being poked fun at.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
5. I laugh alone when I feel something is funny.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
6. As a humor consumer, I easily laugh and enjoy laughing at jokes and stories others share.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
7. I seek out cartoons, comedy shows, comedians and other humor stimulants.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
9. I write down humorous stories and keep cartoons and articles that promote humor.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
10. When stressed on the job, my sense of humor helps me keep my perspective.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
11. I spontaneously look for the funny side of life and share it with others.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
12. I send humorous notes and cartoons to friends, co-workers and customers.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
13. My sense of humor makes it hard for people to stay mad at me.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
14. I love to tell humorous stories to make my point in on-the-job communication.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
15. I sometimes act silly at unexpected times.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
16. I am comfortable laughing out loud with co-workers.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
17. I use humor to help myself and others recall important things.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

Add up your score: _____

120-140 You are lying or can't read!

91-119 You're a Humor Pro, keep up the good work.

71-90 You're fertile ground, just need humor cultivation.

45-70 Very serious condition, you suffer from AADS (Acquired Amusement Deficiency Syndrome)

Below 45 Drastic measures needed. You have TS (Terminal Seriousness)

North Carolina
HEALTH
Smart

Source: Paulson, Terry. 1989. Making Humor Work.

How Well Do You Listen?

Rate the following 10 statements on a scale of 1 to 5 with **1 = lowest** and **5 = highest**.

1. I always attempt to give every person I speak to equal time to talk.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I really enjoy what other people have to say.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I never have difficulty waiting until someone finishes talking so that I can have my say.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I listen even when I do not particularly like the person talking.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I listen even when I do not agree with what the person who is talking is saying.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I put away what I am doing while someone is talking.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I always look directly at the person who is talking and give that person my full attention.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I encourage other people to talk by my nonverbal messages, such as gestures, facial expressions and posture.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I ask for clarification of words and ideas I do not understand.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I respect every person's right to his or her opinions, even if I disagree with them.	1	2	3	4	5

Scoring:

Add all the points above to arrive at your score _____

40-50	Terrific listener
30-39	Pretty good listener
20-20	Not listening well to others
19 or under	Very poor listener

North Carolina State Government Policies

Policies already in place in the North Carolina State Government primarily address the workplace demands on employees.

- Performance Management System Policy (annual work plan) addresses task and role demands. This policy ensures that all employees are aware of what is expected of them, are provided with continuous feedback about their performance, are provided with opportunities for education, training, and development, and are rewarded in a fair and equitable manner (*State Personnel Manual, Performance Management, Section 10, page 1*).
- Occupational Health and Safety Policy addresses tasks and physical demands (*State Personnel Manual, Workplace Environment and Health, Section 8, Page 20*).
- Personal Protective Equipment Policy address tasks and physical demands (*State Personnel Manual, Workplace Environment and Health, Section 8, Page 4*).
- Workplace Harassment Policy address role and interpersonal demands of the workplace (*State Personnel Manual, Workplace Environment and Health, Section 8, Page 17*).
- Workplace Violence Policy address role and interpersonal demands of the workplace (*State Personnel Manual, Workplace Environment and Health, Section 8, Page 30*).
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Policy exists to serve employees and employers in resolving workplace performance and conduct for troubled employees (*State Personnel Manual, Workplace Environment and Health, Section 8, Page 26*). For additional EAP resources, contact the State Office of Personnel or area Mental Health Agency.

Workspace Evaluation

Use the following checklist to identify whether your workspace is ergonomically suitable for reducing the risks for musculo-skeletal disorders and repetitive motion strain. If you answer “no” to any item follow the corresponding suggestions given after the checklist.

1. Are you able to change position throughout the day (e.g. alternate sitting or standing)?
 Yes No
2. Do you adjust your keyboard and/or monitor position as appropriate when you change posture?
 Yes No
3. Do you incorporate variety into your daily schedule (e.g. keying, talking on the phone, photocopying, moving around or changing postures)?
 Yes No
4. Does the back of your chair provide good lumbar support to the arch in the small of your back?
 Yes No
5. When you sit in your chair with your back against the backrest, is there clearance between the backs of your knees and the edge of your chair?
 Yes No
6. When you sit in your chair, are your thighs approximately parallel to the floor?
 Yes No
7. Are your feet supported by the floor or a footrest when you sit in your chair?
 Yes No
8. When seated at your workstation is there sufficient room underneath the work surface or keyboard tray for your legs and knees?
 Yes No
9. Are your monitor and documents located directly in front of you and in the recommended viewing area?
 Yes No
10. If you often talk on the phone for long periods of time, or while keying or writing, do you have access to headsets or speakerphones?
 Yes No
11. Are your shoulders relaxed with elbows close to your torso while keying?
 Yes No
12. Are your elbows relaxed and resting by your torso when you key or use a mouse?
 Yes No
13. Do you key and mouse with your hands and wrists in a neutral position? (Forearm, wrist and hand form a fairly straight line)
 Yes No
14. Would you describe your typing style as a “light” touch on the keys?
 Yes No
15. Is your viewing distance to your monitor 20 inches (50 cm) or more?
 Yes No
16. Are there any reflections or glare on your monitor screen or is light shining into your eyes?
 Yes No
17. Do you have appropriate illumination when reading printed materials or when reading from your monitor?
 Yes No
18. Have you had an eye exam in the last two years?
 Yes No
19. If you wear bifocals or trifocals, can you see the monitor comfortably?
 Yes No

Suggested Solutions



If you answered “no” for any item in the checklist, it means that you can take simple steps to reduce the risk and improve your workspace.

1. **Change Positions:** You should stand up to perform a stretch or two each hour while working on your computer. Alternate tasks during the day (e.g., from keying to copying to making phone calls, etc.). Incorporating movement into your day improves circulation and helps prevent fatigue and discomfort.
2. **Adjust Workstation:** Changing postures may require you to readjust your chair, keyboard or monitor for overall comfort, circulation and fatigue reduction. For example, moving from the upright to the reclined posture may require you to lower your seat height to maintain foot support.
3. **Varied Activities:** Alternate tasks during the day (e.g., keying to copying to making phone calls, etc.). Incorporating movement into your day improves circulation and helps prevent fatigue and discomfort.
4. **Lumbar Support:** If possible, adjust the back of your chair to reposition the lumbar area to better fit your lower back. Use a lumbar support (cushion or pillow).
5. **Seat Depth:** If possible, adjust your chair seat depth so you can sit fully back in your chair. Sometimes this is accomplished by moving the seat back and forth, and sometimes by repositioning the back of the chair. Obtain a lumbar accessory that will position you farther forward in your chair and still provide good back support.
6. **Seat Height:** Raise or lower your chair seat until your thighs and buttocks are evenly supported. If raising your chair, make sure your feet remain supported. If your chair doesn’t adjust low enough, use a foot rest.
7. **Foot Support:** Lower your chair until you feel the floor supporting your feet. Maintain proper orientation to the keyboard/mouse. If not possible, obtain a footrest.
8. **Leg Room:** An adjustable keyboard tray may provide more thigh clearance. Lower your chair. Raise your work surface. Clear out materials, wires, equipment, and papers stored within your leg space.
9. **Monitor Position:** Move your monitor directly behind your keyboard. The only exception to this rule is if you view your copy more than your monitor. Then, consider placing the copy directly behind your keyboard and the monitor slightly off to one side. Use a copy holder which accommodates the printed material you are reading (e.g., double wide or extra sturdy for heavy items). Position copy within easy view
10. **Phone Use:** If you *infrequently* cradle the phone between your head and shoulder, consider attaching a phone hand cradle. If you *frequently* cradle the phone between your head and shoulder, consider obtaining a phone head set.
11. **Relaxed Shoulders:** Adjust the armrests on your chair so your arms are gently supported. Adjust the height of your keyboard, mouse or other input devices to closely match your seated elbow height.
12. **Arms by Your Side:** Relocate your keyboard and mouse so you can reach them with your upper arms relaxed by your side. Sit closer to your keyboard and mouse. This may require you to adjust your armrests, work surface height, and other equipment. Make sure you maintain adequate thigh clearance.
13. **Keying:** Adjust your chair or keyboard tray so your wrists and forearms are in a neutral position, where forearm, wrist and hand form a straight line. Install an articulating keyboard tray. Obtain a wrist rest.
14. **Keying:** Develop a “light” touch when keying and using the mouse. Enlist the aid of a coworker to help you notice when you are “attacking” the keys. Be especially watchful when working

APPENDIX C: Workspace Evaluation, page 3

in a stressful situation, such as working under a deadline. Shake your hands, stretch, or massage them to relax your fingers and hands.

15. **Viewing Distance:** Adjust your viewing distance so there is at least 20" between you and your monitor. Make sure you can clearly see the characters on your monitor. Adjust your monitor brightness and contrast settings to display characters clearly. Clean your screen.
16. **Monitor Glare:** Here are ways to reduce glare on your monitor: Decrease overall background lighting, relocate overhead and task lighting, install or adjust window curtains and blinds, install a glare screen on your monitor, change the colors on your monitor. Lighter background colors tend to reflect less. Change the brightness and contrast settings on your monitor to maximize contrast and make the characters easier to see. Your monitor is best viewed when
17. **Lighting:** Reduce background lighting to a level suitable for reading the monitor. Add task lighting where more illumination is required to read printed materials.
18. **Vision Correction:** Schedule an eye exam and tell your eye care professional how much time you spend working at a computer. Measure the distance from your eyes to your monitor and inform your eye care professional. Talk with your eye care professional about vision correction options for computer use.
19. **Bifocals/Trifocals:** Talk with your eye care professional about vision correction options for computer use.

(Source: 3M Office Ergonomics Self-Help Site. Workspace Evaluation. Available at <http://www.3m.com/cws/selfhelp/audit.html>)

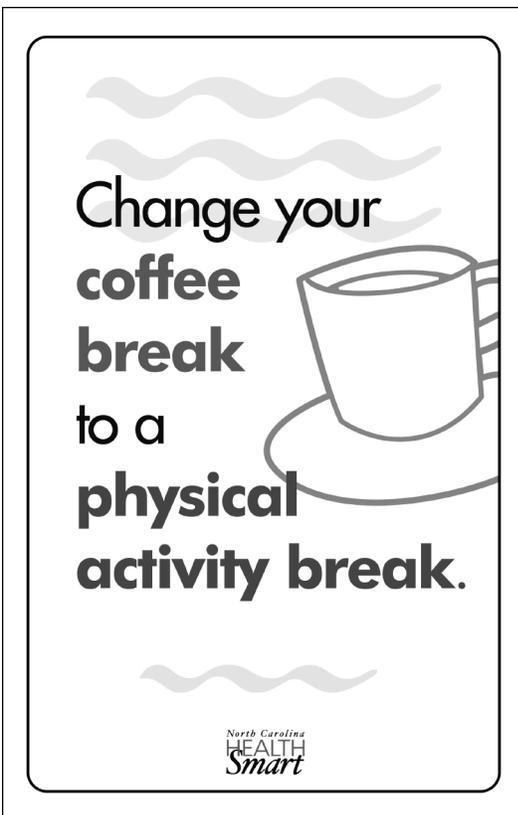
North Carolina
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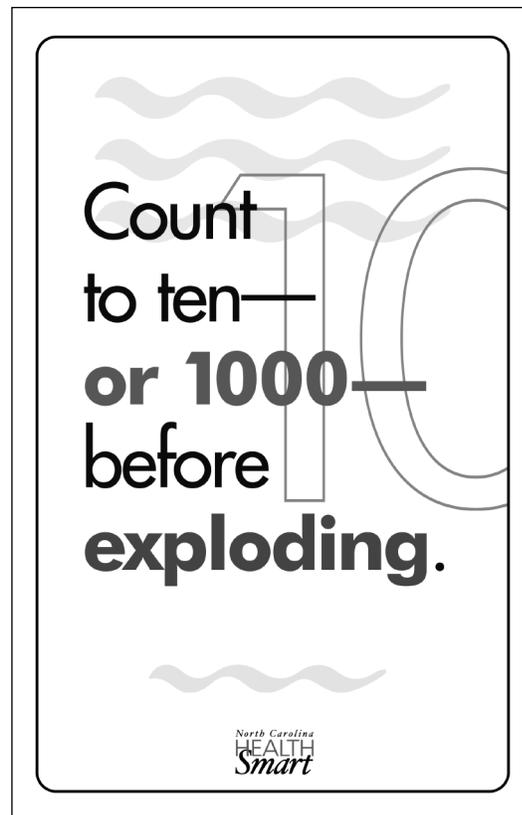
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MS.Poster3Change.pdf



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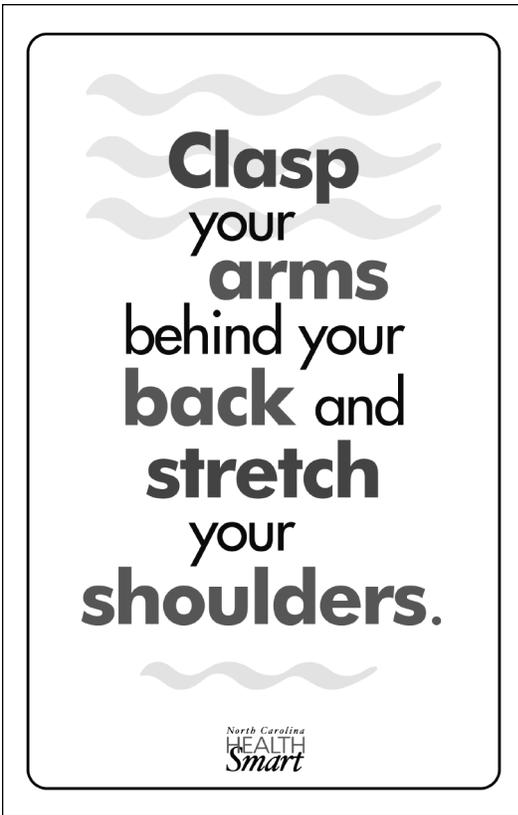
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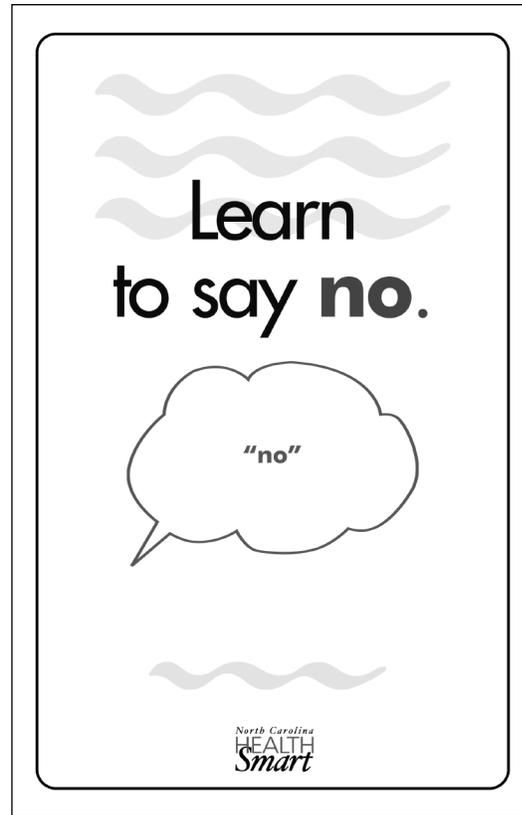
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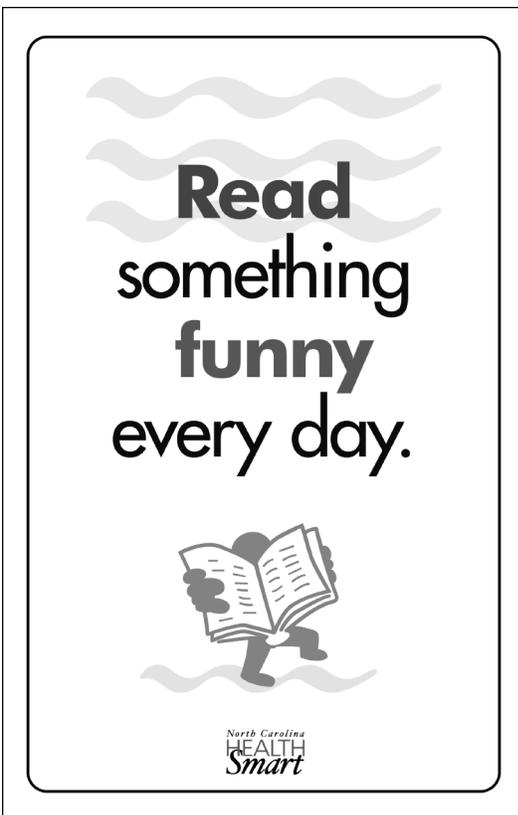
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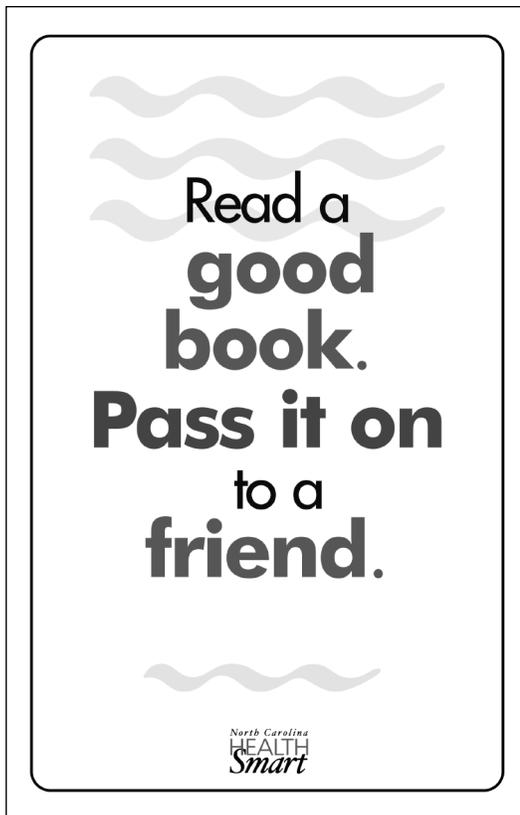
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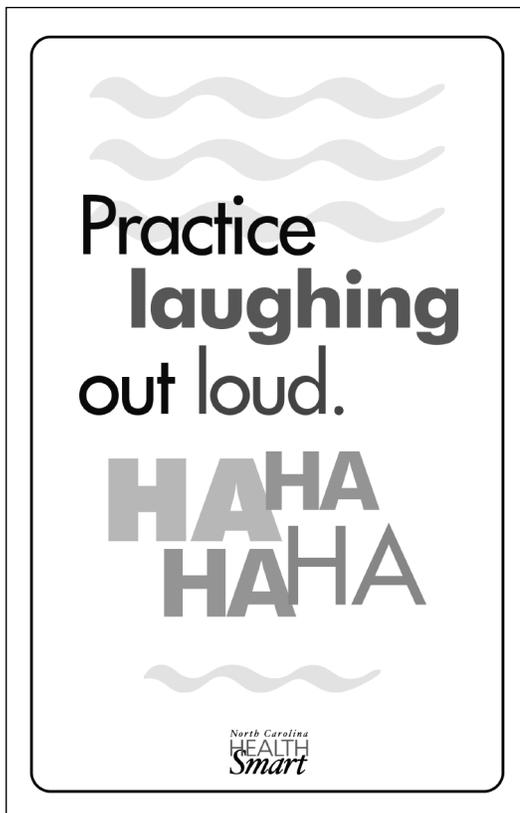
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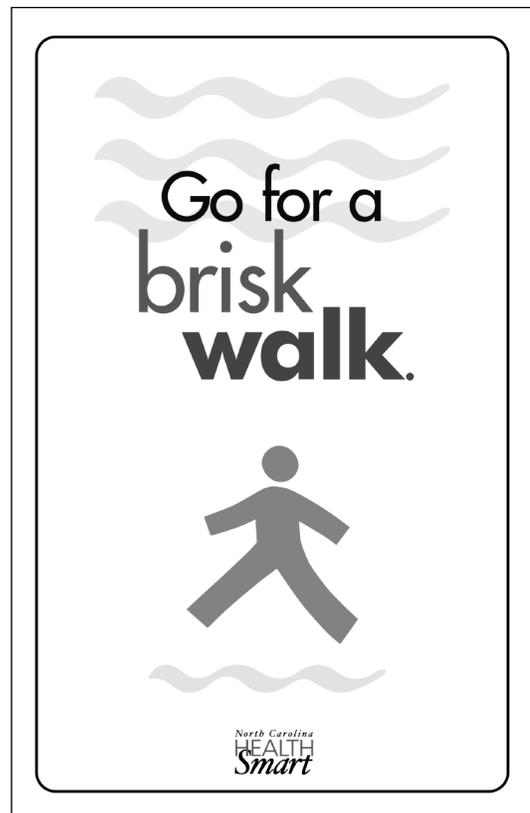
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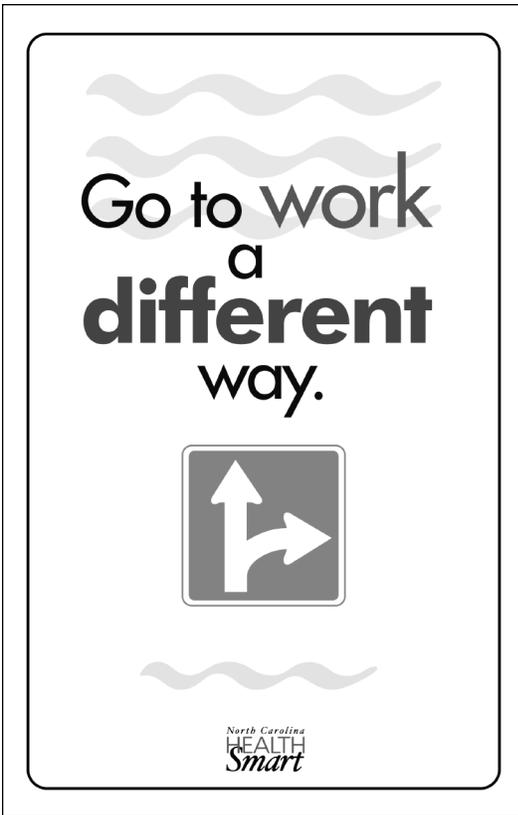
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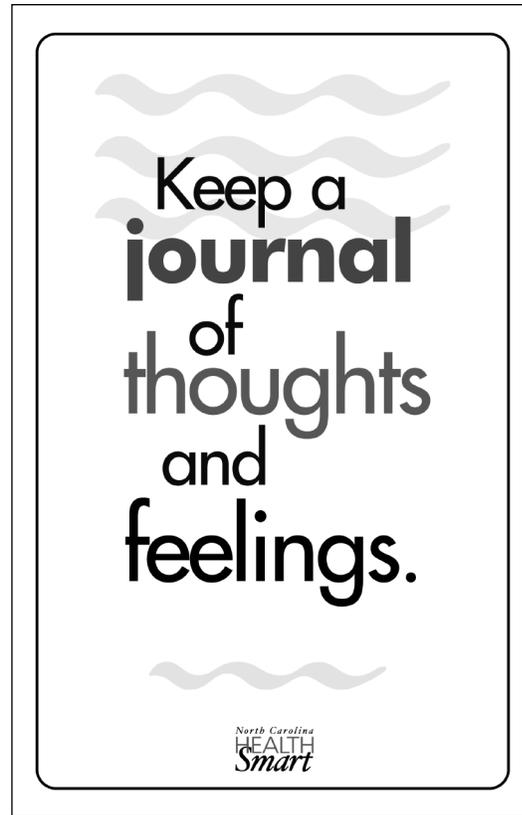
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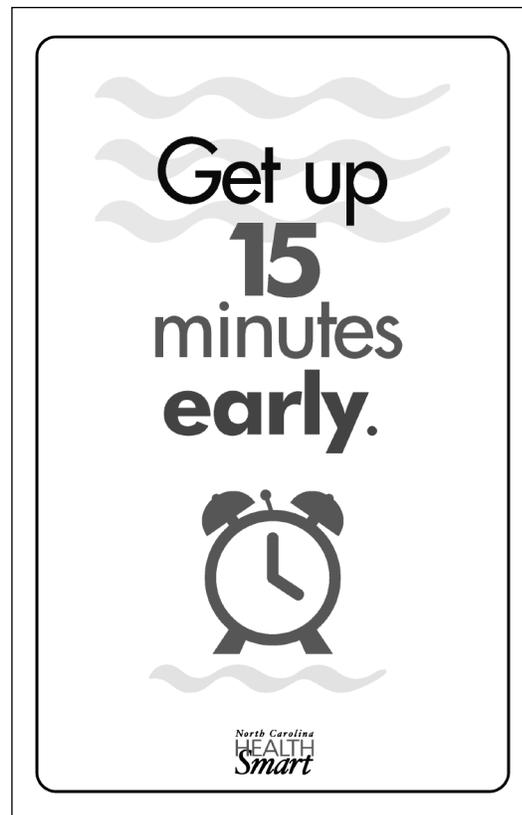
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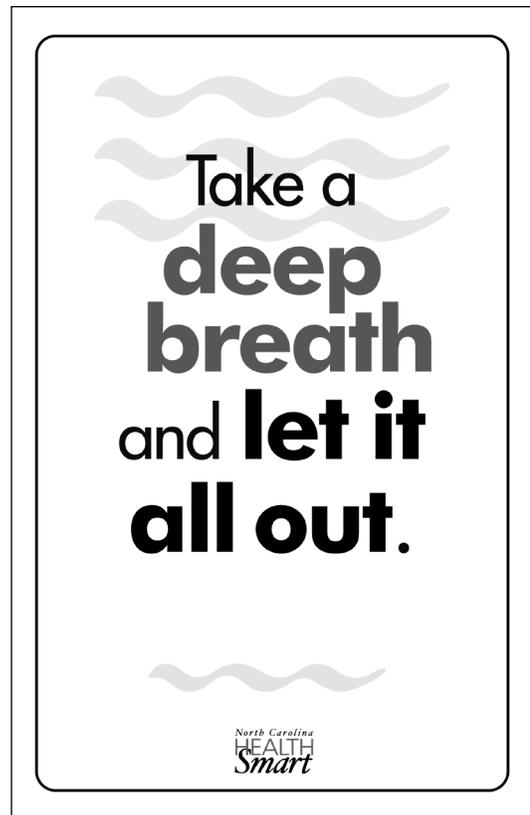
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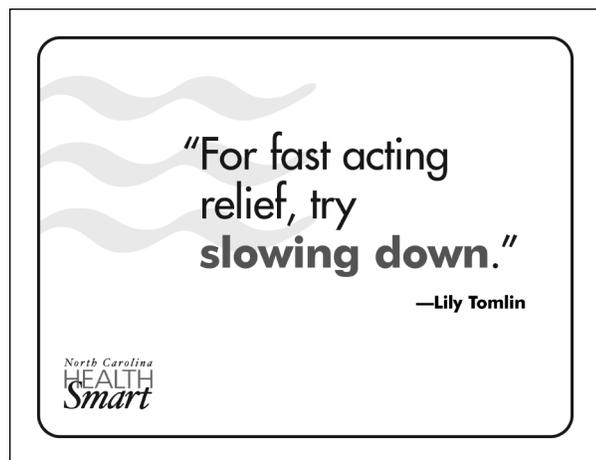
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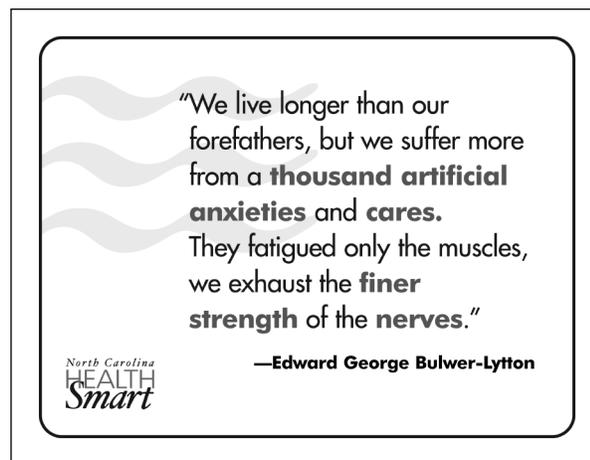
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APPENDIX E: Motivational Quotes

The following motivational quotes can be printed as single copies from the CD-ROM.



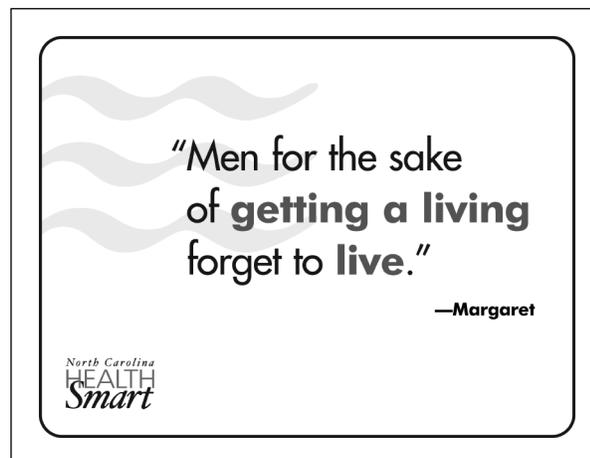
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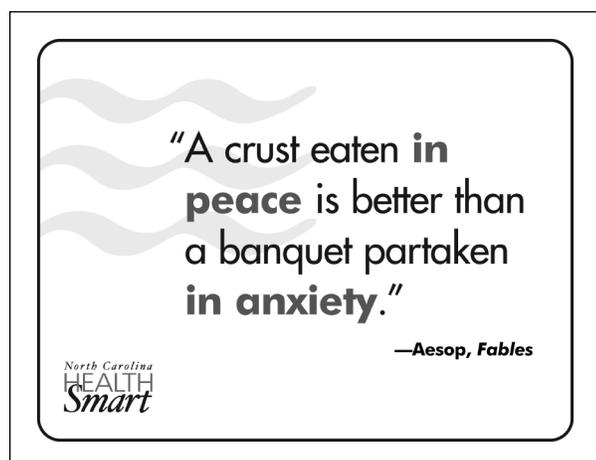
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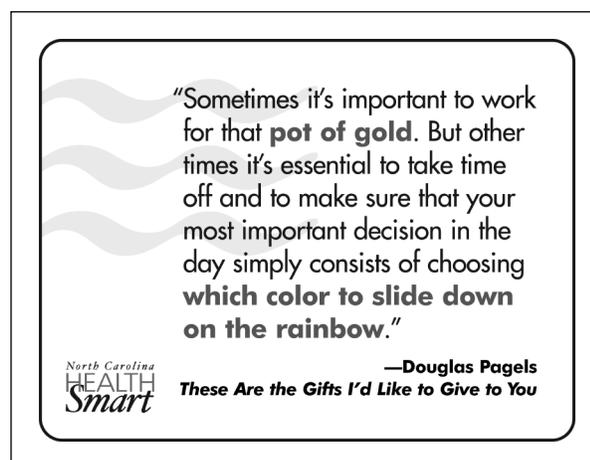
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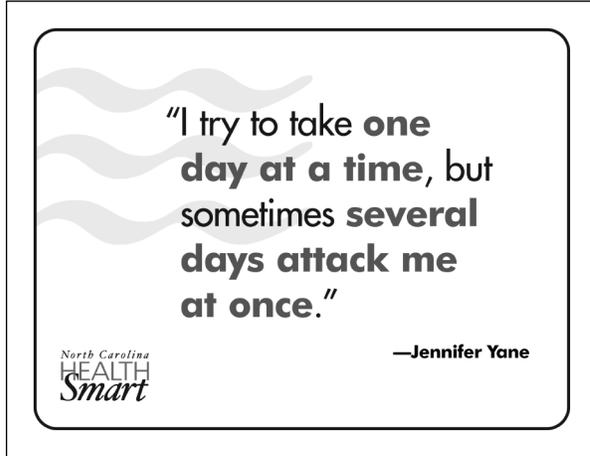


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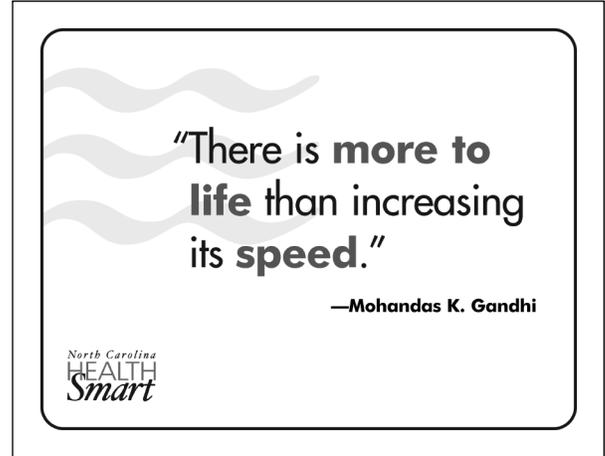


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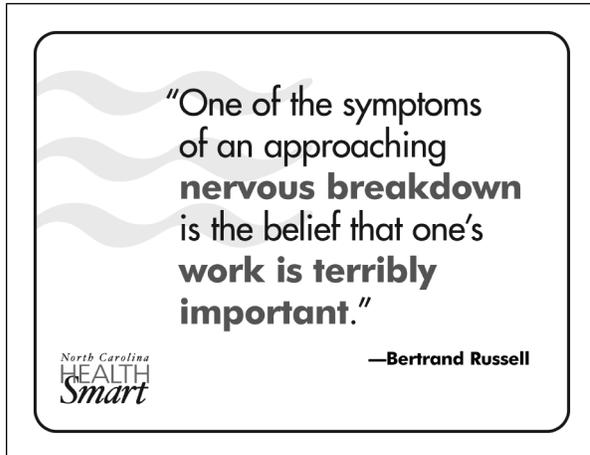
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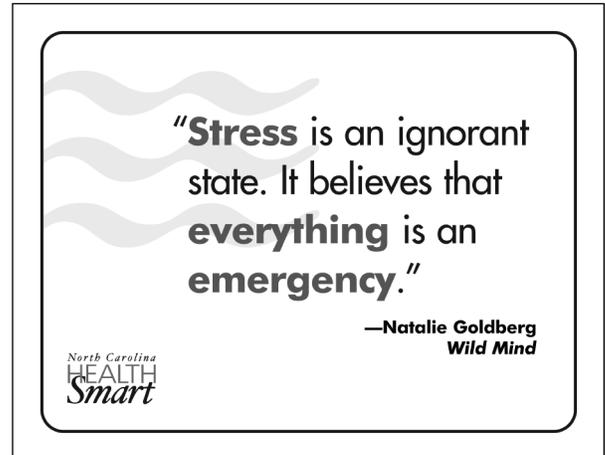
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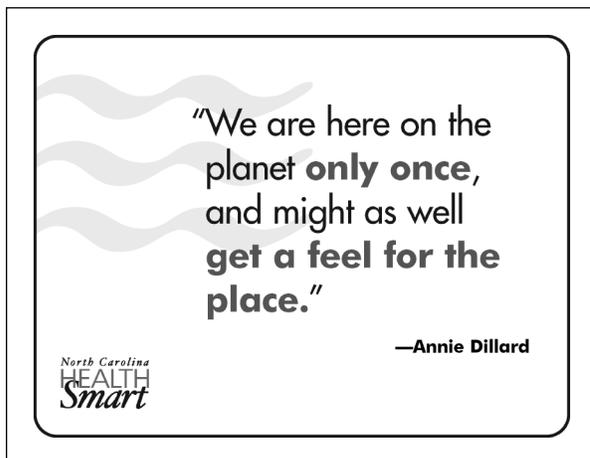
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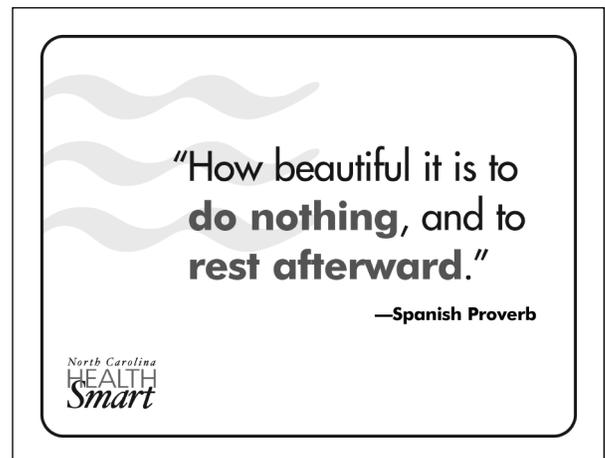
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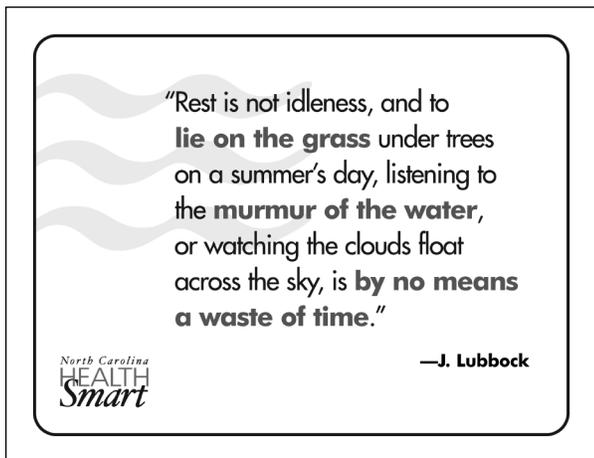


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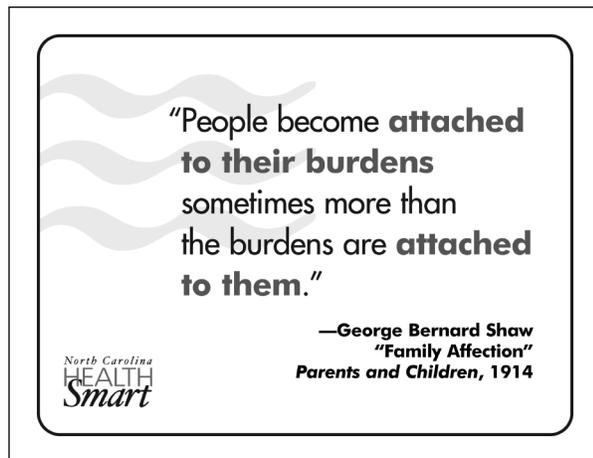


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APPENDIX E: Motivational Quotes



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MSQuote14Burdens.pdf

TIPS TO Ease Tension

Work on your attitude. How you react to stress is determined by how you perceive a particular event. Reframe your response by acknowledging that the stress event is outside of you. You are the center and controller of your response.

Think about something else. Distract yourself to break whatever chain of thought is producing the stress.

Think positively. Think about a success or past achievement.

Take a mental vacation. Visualize or gaze at a postcard or poster of somewhere you would like to be and feel safe.

Recite an anti-stress litany. “This too shall pass.” “Tomorrow is another day.”

Use affirmations. “I can handle this.” “Everyone makes mistakes.” “We are all human.” “Staying calm helps me solve problems.”

Count to 10. Use the pause to breathe and relax. It will allow a more relaxed response and lower tension in muscles.

Look away. Focus on something at least 20 feet away to let eye muscles change tension.

Get up and leave. If appropriate, leave the stressful situation for a little while. Go out to lunch. Walk around the block. The exercise and space gives you time to recover from the stress response.

Take several deep breaths. Stress and tension tighten muscles. Breathe by pushing out with stomach muscles to bring oxygen and energy into your body. Exhale and let go of the stress.

Yell or cry. If the environment is private and safe, emotional release can be healing.

Stretch. Stretching muscles reduces the sensation of stress even when we can’t do anything about the source of the stress.

Massage your target muscles. Recognize which muscle groups you tense up when feeling stress. Massage those muscles to break the stress-tension cycle.

Press on your temples. Ancient application of acupressure using your fingertips moving in small circles over your temples relaxes muscles elsewhere in your neck.

Drop your jaw and roll it left and right. Notice if you clench your teeth when feeling stress. Yawning and jaw stretches release tension.

Stretch your chest for better breathing. Press your shoulder blades together expanding your chest as you inhale. Relax as you exhale. Repeat 4-5 times.

Relax all over. Use progress relaxation techniques to start with your feet and move progressively to your head (feet, legs, chest, arms, neck, head) relaxing each major muscle group one at a time.

Listen to relaxation tapes (natural sounds) or music. Both can promote relaxation and be inspiring.

Give someone a compliment or thank-you.

Share a joke with someone.

Smile at someone or even yourself.

Take a minute to gaze at the photo of a loved one on your desk, wall or in your wallet.

Comb your hair.

Get a drink of water.

Review an item from your happy file—this is a file where you put birthday cards, thank you notes, letters of appreciation, photos, etc.

TIME Management

The following four steps can help individuals manage their time.

KEEPING A LOG

Analyze how you spend your time. Keep a log of your major daily activities for several days. Note any delays or interruptions. It can be eye opening to see where your time goes.

DELEGATING

Are there tasks you currently do that someone else could handle? Ask your children to help out or find a co-worker who wants a new challenge. Remember, how you ask can be as important as what you ask.

PRIORITIZING

Make two lists:

- Make a list of **activities** that need to be done and how much time you normally spend on each activity—it could be a daily or weekly list. For example:
 - meetings, 1 hour
 - shopping, 45 minutes
 - phone calls, 30 minutes
 - paper work, 3 hours
- Make a second list of **values** that are most important to you along with the amount of time you spend on each. For example:
 - faith/spiritual, 5 hours per week
 - marriage, 5 hours per week
 - children, 4 hours per day
 - entertainment, 2 hours per week
 - physical activity, 20 minutes per day
 - hobbies, 1 hour per week
 - work, 8 hours per day

PLAYING

Be sure to make time for play. Schedule breaks, down-time, or play-time in your day. Taking time for yourself can help relieve stress and refresh you so you can accomplish more.

1. Whitney, E., Hamilton, E. 1984. *Understanding Nutrition*. 183-191.
2. Quick, J.C. and Quick, J.D. 1984. "Preventing Distress Through Better Working Relationships." *Management Review*. 30(4).

Let Go THE STRESS

RELAXATION RESPONSE

The following is a simple, brief activity that can be used to allow the physical changes of a stress reaction to subside and return to a non-stress state.

1. Sit (or lie) in a comfortable position in a quiet environment with eyes closed.
2. Begin with your feet and relax each muscle group moving up to the head—calf, thigh, waist, stomach, arms, chest, neck, face, and forehead.
3. Breathe in through your nose gently pushing your stomach out.
4. Breathe out through your mouth and let your stomach relax.
5. Continue for 10-20 minutes. Open your eyes as need to check time, but do not set a time.
6. When finished, open your eyes but remain seated for a couple of minutes.

PROGRESSIVE RELAXATION

The following is a physical activity that can be used for releasing muscle tension triggered as a response to stress.

1. Lie flat on a soft surface or floor with your eyes closed and knees bent.
2. Beginning with your right foot, press foot firmly to the floor for five seconds, relax for five seconds; repeat with the left foot.
3. Straighten legs out and press back of lower right leg firmly to the floor for five seconds, relax for five seconds; repeat with left leg.
4. Press each of the following areas firmly to the floor for 5 seconds, relax for five seconds (one at a time):
 - Back of thighs and buttocks
 - Lower back and shoulder blades
 - Arms
 - Back of head
5. Breathe normally as you press and relax.

Release THE TENSION

SIMPLE YOGA STRETCH

The following physical activity can be used for releasing muscle tension triggered as a response to stress.

1. Stand relaxed, arms hanging at sides and feet about one foot apart.
2. Tilt head back and hold for five seconds
3. Roll head forward and hold for five seconds.
4. Curl chest and stomach forward as you bend at the waist; arms dangling for five seconds.
5. Inhale slowly through mouth as you straighten up. Raise arms overhead; drop arms slowly to sides as you exhale slowly through your mouth.

CONTROLLED BREATHING

The following activity can be used for releasing muscle tension triggered as a response to stress.

1. Lie down with your back flat on the floor; place a book or large magazine on your stomach.
2. Bend your knees and close your eyes.
3. Push your stomach up 2–3 inches and hold for five seconds, then exhale. Repeat several times. Each time you exhale, say “I am relaxed.” Avoid lifting your chest.



COMING SOON!

All Work and No Play... Is Not the Healthy Way

This **activity** will help you **reduce workplace stress** and learn effective ways to **manage stress**.

DO YOU WANT TO HAVE LESS STRESS?

Bring your lunch and join your co-workers for a show full of laughter every _____.

NOTHING TO LOSE...BUT YOUR STRESS

Mark your calendars

Show	Date	Time	Location
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Don't be left out! Join the FUN!

For more information about **All Work and No Play**, contact the activity coordinator
_____ at _____

This activity is presented by your Worksite Wellness Committee

North Carolina
HEALTH
Smart

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