

## **Coach's Corner** **Me stres-s-s-sed?**

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It's a multi-tasking, fast-paced, tense, stress-filled world. It's a multi-tasking, fast-paced, tense, stress-filled world. As a kidney patient, you need to actively reduce stress because you already have the stress of kidney disease. The payoff is that reducing stress will improve your

health, your happiness, and your productivity. The secret to effective stress-reduction is to start small and keep at it.

### **Coaching Question:**

What will you do to manage the stress in your life?

### **Coaching Tip:**

Start by making a list of 10 small things you can. (Don't start big.)

For example, when I feel stressed, I sing. You wouldn't ask me to sing in your choir but that doesn't matter...I sing. Deep breathing also helps me a lot. My biggest improvement came when I decided to plan ahead and leave for activities earlier. Think of the difference, stress-wise, of arriving at the airport late or early. I like controlling what I can.

Some other things you can do, starting small and working up:

- Take a book or a book on tape with you when you go to the doctor's office.
- Brainstorm ideas on managing stress.
- Feel your feelings and acknowledge your stress. A good cry can help—or maybe not. You decide what works for you.
- Make good life choices around eating, exercise, smoking, drinking, sleeping.
- Cognitive techniques can be useful: positive self-talk, progressive muscle relaxation, guided imagery, and

visualization.

- Add fun to your life.

**Homework:**

Make a list of personal stress reducers. For the next two weeks, whenever you feel stress building, use one of your personal stress reducers. Afterwards, evaluate how well your stress reducer worked and then try other stress reducer methods.

**Quotes:**

*"If you are distressed by anything external, the pain is not due to the thing itself but to your own estimate of it: and this you have the power to revoke at any moment."* Marcus Aurelius Antonius

*"There is more to life than increasing its speed."* Mahatma Gandhi

**Resources:**

*The Relaxation & Stress Reduction Workbook, Fifth Edition*  
by Martha Davis, Matthew, Ph.D. McKay, Elizabeth Robbins  
Eshelman, New Harbinger Publications, Inc., Oakland, California.  
Sept. 2000 [[www.newharbinger.com](http://www.newharbinger.com)]

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