



Personal Tips: Coping with Stress

Keeping healthy and functioning well!

Working for yourself can be lonely, stressful, and physically and mentally tough. To remain positive and keep yourself motivated, it is important to look after yourself and take time out to recharge your batteries! Mind, body and soul all need a bit of looking after to stay healthy. Mental stress can cause physical illness and if you get into a pattern of worrying, not sleeping, being really tired, not being able to function properly then you're on a downward spiral.

- Try to take at least an hour a week for 'me-time', or a chance to think and chat things through with someone who doesn't have an agenda or ulterior motives.
- Watch your own health, not just that of your family!
- Don't 'keep going' when you know you shouldn't; you'll only make yourself worse.
- See a doctor or nurse if you need to; don't put off appointments because you 'haven't got time'.
- Don't skip meals and make up with junk food and coffee when you're on the go somewhere. Eat properly!
- Take that holiday, the orders will have to wait.

Developing your own routines

How do you de-stress and take that all-important 'me-time' whenever you can?

- Go for a walk; go for a swim; go to the gym; take the dog out; do some gardening; meditate; go to a dance class; play with your kids; bake a cake; watch the waves; have a mental secret garden that you go to.
- Work out what works for you and make space for it in your life.
- Don't say I haven't got time: you have to make time for yourself, you have to make time to allow yourself to think creatively too.
- Use those things that you have to do everyday as opportunities: taking a shower, having a bath, walking the kids to school, travelling. Make sure you use the time as constructively as you can. That doesn't mean doing mental high jumps about your business all the time, it might mean just enjoying yourself, relaxing, lateral thinking about a problem, being positive, breathing deeply, being calm, taking stock, smelling the flowers.
- Don't feel guilty about taking time out, you must to be successful.



- Experiment and just take 15 minutes out of your busy schedule and do something for you tonight! Perhaps it's you that is holding yourself back; others around you don't notice if the kitchen floor needs cleaning or dinner is quite as you would like it.

Get used to it! If you're running your own business you won't have time to do everything and you certainly won't have the mental space to worry about the some of the 'nice to have' details in your life.