



# *Work Smart Live Smart*

## **Stress Busters – 5 Quick Tips To Regain Your Rhythm**

**By  
Beverly Beuermann-King,  
CSP, Stress and Wellness Specialist**

Cavemen and cavewomen had it, but most of us today don't. What have most of us lost? ... Our rhythm. Have you heard yourself or your co-workers say 'I was so busy today that I didn't even have time to go to the bathroom'? That is a loss of rhythm. Stressful or draining periods were to be followed by relaxing and energy restoring phases.

In today's busy world many of us have forgotten the simple techniques that we can use to restore our body's natural rhythm and decrease the negative effects that stress can have on us. The 5 Quick Tips below are just that. They are fast, simple and for the most part, not new. Sometimes we just need to remind our self to use them.

### **Breathing**

Air is the primary 'food' of our body. Rapid, shallow breathing is a common involuntary reaction to stress and is part of our innate stress response. This shallow breathing causes us to feel tired and foggy-headed.

Deep breathing interrupts this stress response and can be a powerful means of recharging yourself and regaining a more natural rhythm. It can relieve headaches, relax shoulders, stop racing thoughts, increase energy and turn restlessness into calmness. Frequently throughout the day, take note and try to increase your oxygen intake and slow your breathing rate.

### **Deskercises**

Tense muscles cause blood to be squeezed out of the body tissue resulting in oxygen and nutrient depletion. This can cause pain and even a lack of concentration. Deskercises or stretching exercise can be helpful in releasing tension and restoring the flow of blood. Deskercises can relax neck and shoulder muscles, increase focus for problem solving, and can revitalize energy. Some quick examples: Neck rolls, shoulder shrugs, stomach squeezes, hip twisters, wrist curls, quarter squats, and yawning.

Deskercises can be used after a stressful situation or as a general technique to promote overall health. Focus on particularly tense muscles or create a whole body stretching routine. Set up regular times throughout the day to perform these stretches and stick to it.

### **Self-massage**

A soothing massage can counteract the effects of stress and help regain a healthy rhythm. Stress causes vasoconstriction, which reduces our circulation. Massage not only increases the circulation of blood throughout our body, but it loosens contracted and shortened muscles.

One effective use of self-massage is when we find that our hands are cold. Often we fail to recognize that this is a symptom of stress. The stress may be from an illness, sitting under the air conditioning fan, prolonged sitting, not drinking enough or eating properly, or from being outside.

Self-hand massage is a technique where by the individual fingers, wrist and palm of the hand are gently rubbed in a circular motion. Start at the wrist, then up and down each finger and thumb, move into the palm and then back down the wrist. You can also add an aromatherapy hand cream to enhance the relaxation effects. Soon you will find that your hands are warm and that the break has given you renewed focus.

### **Nutrition, water, light**

During high stress times we often compromise or completely forget about eating, drinking and getting outside. Taking lunch, drinking a glass of water, or going outside for a stretch break are simple and necessary techniques that provide essential energy and can restore rhythm.

### **Safe Space – beauty, sound, aroma**

The space in which we work can have a profound effect on our mood, energy and comfort. It is to our benefit to create a space that feels, sounds and smells great. Personalize your space with pictures and motivating posters. Invest in a sound therapy machine, radio, CD's or even screensavers that can give you a time out, away from the challenges that you are facing. Promote relaxation or motivation with aromatherapy. Find smells that trigger pleasant and relaxing thoughts or some that can be used to give you a lift in the middle of the afternoon.

Stress Busters are quick and effective ways to give your body a moment away from the barrage of stressors that it has been facing. The only trick is to set yourself up to use them. Connect them with specific tasks – stretch before you go to a meeting or just after or practise your deep breathing while listening to your email messages. Much of the stress that we face today we cannot get rid of. One thing that we do have control over is our rhythm of life. Go and find your rhythm.

Stress and wellness specialist, **Beverly Beuermann-King** translates current research and best practices information into a realistic, accessible and practical approach through her dynamic stress and wellness workshops, on-line articles, e-newsletters and media interviews and through a collaboration called *Awakening The Workplace*. Visit [www.WorkSmartLiveSmart.com](http://www.WorkSmartLiveSmart.com) for more on Beverly and her wellness work.

©Articles available for reprint – please include source  
as Beverly Beuermann-King, [www.WorkSmartLiveSmart.com](http://www.WorkSmartLiveSmart.com)

**Bring one of these related workshops to your team -  
From Job Stress To Job Smart or  
Harnessing Your Energy – Bust Your Stress**

Call Beverly at 705-786-0437 or  
Visit **Presentations & Keynotes** at [www.WorkSmartLiveSmart.com](http://www.WorkSmartLiveSmart.com)  
for presentation descriptions and outlines.