



January Health Newsletter

Nurse Katie M. Fisher-Walz's Stress Reduction Tips:

As we enter into the New Year of 2016, many of us start to feel the "winter blues," setting in. Bills from our holiday shopping excursions, increased heating/electric bills, and just the "blah's" from the end of all the holiday celebrations, sometimes leave us feeling more stressed than normal. Here are some "stress-buster" tips to help make 2016 get off on the right foot!



**Stress Reduction
Tips for the New
Year**

**Healthy "Family-
Friendly" New
Year's Recipes**

**Ways to Boost
Self-Esteem in
your Children in
the New Year**

**Winter Snow
Exercise
Activities**

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1. Get up fifteen minutes earlier in the morning. The inevitable morning mishaps will be less stressful. Prepare for the morning the evening before. Set the breakfast table, make lunches, put out the clothes you plan to wear, etc.
2. Don't rely on your memory. Write down appointment times, when to pick up the laundry, when library books are due, etc.
3. Be prepared to wait. An enjoyable paperback book can make a wait in a post office line almost pleasant! Contact me if you need a list of good authors to try in the New Year! 😊
4. Plan ahead. Don't let the gas tank get below one-quarter full. Keep a well-stocked emergency shelf of home food staples so you don't have to worry about rushing to the store to make a last-minute meal.
5. Don't put up with something that doesn't work right. If your alarm clock, wallet, shoe laces, windshield wipers, whatever are a constant aggravation, get them fixed or get new ones.
6. Eliminate (or restrict) the amount of caffeine in your diet; a good rule of thumb is 1-2 cups of coffee a day or 1 caffeinated soda beverage (12 ounces).
7. Pollyanna-Power! For every one thing that goes wrong, there are probably 10 or 50 or 100 blessings. Count your blessings daily; it'll make life seem much sunnier!
8. Say "No!" Saying "no" to extra projects, social activities, and invitations you know you don't have the time or energy for takes practice, self-respect, and a belief that everyone, needs quiet time to relax and be alone.
9. Get up and stretch periodically if your job requires that you sit for extended periods. Taking those few minutes to stretch helps to relieve tension that may have been building up.
10. Organize your home and workspace so that you always know exactly where things are. Put things away where they belong and you won't have to go through the stress of losing things. If you need tips on how to organize/clean your office or house, again, let me know, as organization/cleaning is one of my passions! 😊
11. When feeling stressed, most people tend to breathe in short, shallow breaths. When you breathe like this, stale air is not expelled, oxidation of the tissues is incomplete and muscle tension frequently results. Check your breathing throughout the day and before, during and after high pressure situations. If you find your stomach muscles are knotted and your breathing is shallow, relax all your muscles and take several deep, slow breaths. Note how, when you're relaxed, both your abdomen and chest expand when you breathe.
12. Writing your thoughts and feelings down (in a journal, or a paper to be thrown away) can help you clarify things and can give you a renewed perspective. Choose a journal with a design that means something to you. This will help make it feel more "personal" and will inspire you to want to write in it more often.

13. Try the following yoga technique whenever you feel the need to relax. Inhale deeply through your nose to the count of eight. Then with lips puckered, exhale very slowly through your mouth to the count of 15 or for as long as you can. Concentrate on the long sighing sound and feel the tension dissolve. Repeat 10 times.

14. Take a hot bath or shower (or a cool one in the summertime) to relieve tension; use Epsom salts or therapeutic oils to help ease tension. Adding lavender oil to a bath helps to ease tension, and helps to promote sleep, as well.

15. Do one thing at a time. When you are with someone, be with that person and with no one or anything else. When you are busy with a project, concentrate on doing that project and forget about everything else you have to do.

Snowy-Weather Winter Exercise Activities: for Children of all Ages and Adults:

1. **Sledding**- Now with so many sledding options, the whole family will have a blast whooshing down snow-covered hills. In fact, kids and parents can ride together on big saucers made for families (can purchase at Menards, Walmart, or your local hardware store typically!) Be sure to produce thunderous applause and crowd-pleasing cheers during your sledding adventures to fully engage your children! ☺
2. **Play Snowball Tag**-Don't just have a snowball fight...play tag with snowballs! Throw snowballs to tag players out. When you get hit with a snowball, then it is your turn to be "it." Note: Be sure that snowballs are soft, though, and not packed with ice for safety-purposes.
3. **Go on a Winter Scavenger Hunt**-Are you good at finding things? Gather up your children, write down a list of things that you might see outside; such as a pinecone, a squirrel, 5

"Ways to Boost Your Child's Self-Esteem"

1. Use open-communication techniques- be warm, nurturing, supportive, & have appropriate expectations for your children. Take the time to listen to your children daily.
2. Encourage your child to be active-productivity can be an attributor of positive self-esteem. Encourage your child to join a club, team, or organization that they enjoy.
3. Foster a positive body image-work with your child to accept their body for its own unique size & shape. Do not compare your child's size with another child's body shape. We are all unique & different.
4. Be a positive role model-do your own "self-esteem check-up" daily. Remember you are your child's biggest influence.

acorns, a robin bird, and a bird-feeder. Then race to see who can find all the things on the list first. Split up into teams, if you wish, and work together to find the items on the list. Running or walking fast is great exercise for you and your children. Make it more “challenging” by having a “healthy” prize at the end for the person who finds all the items first; such as a new jump rope or bouncy ball, or a gift certificate to their favorite frozen yogurt shop!

4. Be a Shoveling “Terminator” or “Luke Skywalker!”-Encourage your children to be big helpers for you, as parents, or neighbors by shoveling driveways or sidewalks, depending on their age/skill levels. Make it more “rewarding” for them by offering a special treat at the end for their hard-work; such as a new board game to play during the winter months, or a cup of “Snowy White Hot Cocoa” (combine 1 ½ tbsp. of low-fat white chocolate instant pudding mix and 1 cup skim or 1% milk in a microwavable mug; heat for 60 seconds in the microwave. Top with low-fat whipped cream and, if desired, half of a crushed candy cane!) You can also make it more “challenging,” by making the task of shoveling into a game. Have your children race to see who can shovel paths across the driveway first, or who can make the best zigzag pattern or circle in the snow! Make sure your child is using a small shovel, though, as most adult shovels can carry too much snow, thus putting too much strain on their joints.
5. Make a Team of Snow Angels-Making a snow angel is like doing a jumping jack while you lay down in the snow; it is a very similar type of exercise. Have your child flap out their arms and kick their legs against the snow. To make it more “exciting” and to increase their work-out time. Have them see how many snow angel jumping jacks they can do in a row. Have them move from spot to spot in the yard making their team of snow angels! To personalize their snow angels, let them use spray bottles filled with colored water (add food coloring to water in bottles) to spray their team of angels. When the water freezes on the snow it will make their snow angels shiny (just like the halos on angels!)



Family-Friendly New Year's Recipes:

Chicken Nacho Dip with Homemade Pita Chips:

Ingredients-

1 (14 ounce) can diced tomatoes with green Chile peppers (Rotel); drained

1 (1 pound) processed cheese (Velveeta); cubed

2 large cooked boneless, skinless chicken breast halves; shredded

1/3 cup low-fat sour cream

1/4 cup diced green onions

1 1/2 tablespoons taco seasoning

2 tablespoons minced jalapeno peppers (optional)

1 cup black beans; rinsed and drained

Directions-Place the diced tomatoes, processed cheese, chicken meat, sour cream, green onions, taco seasoning, and jalapeno peppers into a slow-cooker. Cook on High, stirring occasionally until the cheese has melted and the dip is hot, typically for 1 to 2 hours. Stir in the black beans, and cook an additional 15 minutes to heat.

Homemade Pita Chips:

Ingredients-

1 package whole wheat pita bread (4 whole pitas)

2 Tbsp. olive or canola oil

Fresh-ground salt & pepper; season to taste

Basil and oregano spices & parmesan cheese; season to taste

Directions- Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Slice pitas in half, gently pull apart the two sides. Slice or tear the bread into bite-size pieces. Spread pita pieces out on baking sheets. Measure 2 Tbsp. oil and brush onto pita pieces using a pastry brush. Grind salt & pepper, and add other spices to create a seasoning mix. Spread over pita chips and bake for 10 minutes.