

ARE YOU HAPPY AT WORK?

Here's to a worry-free workplace!


Week 3: Keeping your week day stress at bay



IN YOUR WEEK 3 PROGRAMME YOU WILL:

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
|  FIND
How workplace stress affects you |  TRY
Managing work pressures |  SPOT
Opportunities for happiness at work |  KEEP
A priority to-do list to manage work tasks |
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How to de-stress in 8 easy steps

WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4	WEEK 5	WEEK 6	WEEK 7	WEEK 8
Starting your Journey	Stress at Home	 Stress at Work	Life-changing Moments	How to Communicate	The 4As	Tots and Teens	Staying Happy

Keeping work-stress at bay – Week 3

Welcome to Week Three of your Stress Management Programme!

But first, a quick recap.

Last week, we looked at the stressors at home and the strategies you can adopt to turn your home into a stress-free zone. This week, we take a look at a form of stress that many of us are familiar with: workplace stress.

If you feel stressed out just thinking about work, you're not alone. 67 percent and 70 percent of workers in Singapore and Malaysia respectively reported that they were seeing more stress-related illness in 2013, based on a finding by Regus, the global workplace provider.

All workplaces have their own stories of pain and gain, so here's how to roll with the punches. This week, we'll show you the cheatsheet to staying on top of your workload, enhancing your work relationships and turning your job into a dream career.

Once you start incorporating these small changes into your working habits, you will see amazing effects to your life both inside and outside the office. So, let's get started!

Start small, live great.

START SMALL TIP #3

Beat stress with exercise



Pump it up

To ease workplace stress at the end of the day, why not exercise after work? Virtually any form of exercise, from walking to running, can act as a stress reliever. That's because it pumps up your endorphins (a feel-good neurotransmitter) and can even increase self-confidence and lower symptoms associated with anxiety.

The Singapore Health Promotion Board recommends 150 minutes per week of moderate exercise – this could be a brisk walk or easy bike ride, as well as swimming, tennis or even aerobics.

Find how workplace stress affects you

Before you downloaded this guide you completed a quiz to find out how you're affected by stress in the workplace. (If you haven't taken it yet, [click here](#) to do it now – it only takes a couple of minutes!)

While some people respond badly to a little work stress, others tend to take it in their stride. Finding out your workplace triggers is the first step to managing it the right way.



Just to refresh, here are the three ways in which you are affected by workplace stress:

The Pressure Cooker

You work hard, but feel constantly under pressure to achieve results. Frequent long hours add to your anxiety. Reduce your stress levels by only taking on what you can deal with. Manage your time and your boundaries by clearly articulating what your comfort levels are, either via email or by speaking to a supervisor. This will help ensure that you can cope with your workload.

The Workplace Communicator

You are concerned about meeting expectations of colleagues and managers, but you don't know how to let them know. To communicate effectively, concentrate on what your colleagues say and give feedback on what was said. If you are unsure, open-ended questions and asking for examples are good ways to seek clarification and avoid misunderstandings.

The Career Idealist

You feel you don't get recognition for all the hard work that you do and have lost your passion for the job. Make sure you keep track of all your accomplishments and achievements at work. Print them out and present these at your next performance review – hard evidence of success is a more compelling reason to promote someone or increase their pay.

Try our workplace coping techniques

Try the techniques below to help you face your workplace stressors. These handy hints will help you gain control, boost your self-esteem about communicating with colleagues and reignite your passion for the job. Here's to the next working week!



Assertiveness For Pressure Cookers

According to the University of California in San Francisco, pressure at work is a leading cause of stress, and this can be exacerbated if you can't say no. If you're stressed out by workplace pressures try:

- **Taking control**
Be assertive and take charge of your own personal development. It will make you less stressed.
Before you start negotiating, internalise your goals mentally and set a clear boundary for yourself. Try it out in low-risk situations first. For example, if you're deciding on a place for lunch, let people know where you want to go.
- **Choosing to be happy at work**
Even on a bad day try looking for the positives in all situations, and look for opportunities in your challenges.
- **Make time for breathers**
Make it a rule to have lunch with your colleagues at least three times a week. Liking the people you work with makes it a happier workplace and less stress for you.



Resolutions For Workplace Communicators

Communication in the office is key. If you find talking about work problems difficult in the short-term, listen to your colleagues first and look at the way they act try:

- **Understanding others' views**
Appreciating differing opinions will help you understand their work challenges too. A good tip is to make sure you hear rather than just listen.
- **Planning ahead**
Thinking about your conversation ahead of time will make it easier to talk. You don't need to have written notes, but a mental plan will help conversations run smoothly.
- **Staying calm**
Take deep breaths and stay calm. This will allow you to focus on your communication and put others at ease too.
- **Reading body language**
Are your colleagues' arms folded, or are they tapping their feet, or not looking directly at you? These can all be signs of frustration.



Recognition For Career Idealists

You have a job – but is it the right one? Colleagues may value your work ethic – but you feel you've lost your passion in the face of little or no recognition. Small changes can sometimes help you look at things in a whole new light. To dial down the work place stress try:

- **Tracking your achievements**
Take responsibility! When it's time for your pay review list your achievements down on paper so that your contributions can be recognised.
- **Do your research**
Understand the industry. It will help you gauge your assets and weaknesses.
- **Making connections**
Getting to know people in your industry will help strengthen your influence in the market.
- **Review your career path**
Ask yourself where you want to be in two years and monitor your progress. If you veer from your goal find out what will get you back on track.

Spot happiness at work

Just because you're busy working, it doesn't mean you have to be unhappy. There are plenty of ways to reduce stress at work. Use the checklist below and tick a box every time you perform a stress-busting action.



Try and tick at least 2-3 different things a day and vary it throughout the week




- ☐ Look away from the computer screen every 45 minutes to relieve eyestrain.
- ☐ Stand up and walk around for a couple of minutes every hour to avoid lower-back pain.
- ☐ Pick a day each week to spend lunch with a good book or have a lunch date with friends.
- ☐ Block off around 5-10 minutes, three-times-a-day to read and answer e-mails.
- ☐ Take the stairs instead of the lift on the way home to give your body an endorphin charge.
- ☐ Schedule a 10-30 minute breather in the break room.
- ☐ Spend a few minutes at the end of the day surfing websites that make you smile.
- ☐ Make a to-do list and strike off tasks as you complete them.
- ☐ Tend to the office plants to take your mind off work for a while.

Keep a priority list

Many of us feel frazzled by the amount of things we have to do in a workday. Instead of thinking about how you can finish all your tasks in a given day, think of how you can prioritise.

Start with those that are high priority and list everything you need to do in order of importance. For example, getting a report out on time will be high but tidying your desk will be low. Then, keep a list of those things that drain your time, from surfing the net to traffic jams – and see where and how you can gain back some valuable minutes.

Look at our example and then try it for yourself – seeing what's really important can help keep pressure at bay!

	EXAMPLE	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
HIGH PRIORITY	FINISH REPORT FILE EXPENSES SCHEDULE PLANNING MEETING BOOK ANNUAL LEAVE					
LOW PRIORITY	TIDY DESK DECIDE WHERE TO GO FOR LUNCH BOOK HOLIDAY FOR NEXT YEAR					
 TIME DRAIN	SOCIAL MEDIA 10 MINUTES ONLINE SHOPPING 30 MINUTES.					



Print this out and use it as your priority to-do list for the next week. Take just 10 minutes the night before or first thing in the morning to think about what you have to do, then prioritise your tasks, from high to low. Then at the end of the day review your time drain and see where the day went!

Managing stress at work is easier when you know how!

Go to [Live Great Reads](#) for more useful articles, features and content.



How to Effectively Manage Stress

Strategies for a happier life



6 Apps to Manage Stress

From calming music to talking to a virtual cat



5 Calming Techniques to Use at Work

Breathe easy at the office



Don't Stress About Money

Successful saving tips



Understanding stress and managing how you deal with it is a key to a happy life.

Next week...



We hope you found the third week useful.

Over the remaining weeks of the eight week programme, you'll continue to find lots of great tips on handling different kinds of stressful situations.

Next week, in Week Four of the Stress Management Programme we will be focusing on how you respond to life-changing moments, and discussing how to cope with bereavement, divorce and retrenchment.

How?

- Find out how you deal with life changing moments
- Spot stress-induced illness
- Keep a track of stress levels



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<https://www.greateasternlife.com/my/en/personal-insurance/live-great/newsletter-subscription.html>

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