



# stresscontrol

Face your fears; be more active; watch what you drink

## Step 10

### Controlling your future

You have now learned a lot about stress and a lot about how to fight it. Now you are at a cross-road. One road leads to control over your stress. The other leads back to square one. Step 10 will help you find the right road.

Don't forget what you have learned. You now have to work hard at putting it into action. If you do this, you will head down the first road. If you don't, you will end up back where you started.

## **These ideas will help you go down the right road:**

### **Dealing with set-backs**

- Don't expect progress to be easy or smooth. Set-backs are common. You should aim to slowly increase the number of good days and decrease the number of bad days.
- Try to predict when a set-back is more likely - if there are problems in the house, stress at work, after drinking too much, etc. Work out ways to prevent it.
- Don't panic if you have a set-back. Accept what is going-on. Stand back and work out why you are having the set-back. Then work out what you can do about it.
- Don't see a set-back as putting you back at square one. If you have taken five steps forward and a set-back puts you back one step, you are still four steps up on the deal.

### **Let others help you**

- Express your feelings to them and get things off your chest. Choose people you can trust to help you. Be comforted by their concern. Listen to their advice. If the advice is sound, act on it.

### **Learn to pat yourself on the back**

- If you have reached any of the goals you have set. If you faced and then solved a problem. If you fought back worry then you deserve praise - give yourself some straight away.

## **Build up supports**

- Stress can build up when you lack a range of supports in your life. If you have problems in one area of your life, you can lean on other supports until you sort out the problem. The moral is: don't put all your eggs in one basket.

Make sure you keep relationships strong. Build up new interests, new hobbies. Work on your social life. Make sure you have a structure to your day or week.

## **Watch for problems creeping up**

- Watch that old bad habits don't creep in to your life. These could be to do with avoiding, cutting yourself off from others, drinking to control stress. Jump in and stop these dead.

## **Look into the future**

- Face problems that lie in the future. Don't just worry about the problems - work out how you are going to deal with them. Never just wait to see what happens. You must take control.
- Don't leave things to chance - think and plan ahead. Use the 'Controlling your future' form on the next page. Most of all:

## **Believe in yourself**

## Well-being

Well-being isn't just about getting control over stress. It is about living life to your full potential. Here are five great ways to go about it.



# Connect



# Be active



# Take notice



# Keep learning



# Give



## Connect

.....with the people around you. Your family, friends, neighbours, workmates. Work hard to make and then keep these relationships strong.



## Be active

Go for a walk or a run. Head outside. Cycle. Do the garden. Dance. Exercising can make you feel good. Find something you enjoy doing. A brisk 30 minute walk each day can work wonders for you.



## Take notice

Be curious. Notice the world around you – the views, the sounds, the smells. Notice the changing seasons. Savour the moment whether you are on the bus, eating meal or talking to friends. Be aware of the world around you and what you are feeling. Reflect on your experiences.



## Keep learning

Try something new. Pick up an old interest. Sign up for a course. Take on a new responsibility at work. Fix something. Learn to cook something new. Give yourself a challenge. Learning new things builds confidence. And it can be good fun.



## Give

Do something nice for a friend or a stranger. Thank someone. Smile. Volunteer your time. Join a community group. Look out, as well as in. Seeing yourself, and your happiness, linked to the wider community, can be very rewarding and it helps build connections with the people around you.

## Controlling your future

Now that you have learned a lot about stress, the hard work must begin. It is like passing your driving test - you know what to do but you have to practise hard before you will become a good driver. Over the next few weeks and months, you should keep an eye on your progress using this form.

**End of the first week:**

**End of the first month:**

**End of the second month:**

**End of the third month:**