



Seeking Less Stress In Your Space

If you're seeking less stress in your life, your environment is a good place to start. Look around and you'll likely find sources of your everyday stress in your everyday space.

Sounds

Too much background noise—from ringing phones to whirring machines and workplace chatter—can contribute to the stress and tension of the workday. If the sounds of your work or home environment are causing you stress, don't just sit and stew.

- **Begin by turning down your own sounds and noises like cell phones, chatter and radios, and kindly ask others to do the same.**

Sights

Poor lighting can cause eye strain and increase fatigue. Better lighting can be an instant mood booster.

- **Be sure your work environment has adequate lighting, and try to get a little daily exposure to the sun.**
- **Experiment with full spectrum bulbs at your desk or work area or try working by a window, if possible.**

Surroundings

A little organization goes a long way when it comes to creating a low stress environment. A cluttered, messy or disorganized environment can be stressful and distracting.

- **Take time to develop a system that works for you or get help from an organized friend.**
- **Try to create a relaxing, inviting and pleasant vibe in your workspace.**

Systems

Systems and technology often make life easier, but the tradeoff is continuous interruptions, information overload and 24/7 accessibility.

- **Give yourself a technology break on a regular basis.**
- **Log off and disconnect whenever possible.**
- **Set limits on your tether to technology, and devise a system or schedule for reading e-mail, responding to text messages, blogging on social networks and checking voicemail.**

Space

Look for a space—at home, work or in between—where you can relax and unwind, even if only for a few minutes.

- **Explore your workplace and find a place where you can breathe deeply, meditate, visualize or practice other stress management techniques.**
- **Spending time in nature (even looking at nature pictures) has been shown to reduce stress levels.**