How to Combat Stress:
A Day at a Time

1. EXERCISE CAN HELP IMPROVE YOUR MOOD. By helping you to relax, increasing
Your stamina, releasing natural “tranquilizers” (endorphins), and improving your sleep.
Start with five to ten minutes of exercise daily and work up to twenty to thirty minutes
Of aerobic walking, biking, running or swimming at least three times a week----
Something to get your heart-beating & body sweating. Check with your doctor if
You have any medical conditions that could be exacerbated.

2. GOOD NUTRITION WILL FORTIFY YOUR BODY. While over-eating, skipping
meals or eating “junk “food may deplete your body of essential nutrients that keep you
healthy. Be sure to eat only when you are hungry, don’t skip a meal, and select wholesome
fruits and vegetables as a treat. Consider consulting with a nutria

3. AVOID HARMFUL SUBSTANCES Such as alcohol, nicotine, caffeine (found in coffee
and soda), and other drugs. While they can sometimes appear to cause a very brief break from
your symptoms, they will then immediately make them worse. Many are also addictive.
These substances only create problems you cannot afford.

4. RELAX WITH PLEASUREABLE ACTIVITIES. Spending time with people you enjoy
or doing things you like to do will raise your spirits. Try at least one favorite activity a day, or
talk with the person who makes you feel special.

5. ARGUE AGAINST NEGATIVE THOUGHTS. When you have negative or unhelpful
thoughts ( and they always precede negative moods ), note the thoughts (ideally in writing),
evaluate them(as they are almost always irrational or at least unhelpful), and then respond to
them with more rational or helpful thoughts. Consider viewing difficulties as challenges
instead of defeats. Better moods will follow.

6. COMFORT YOURSELF WITH COMPANIONSHIP. Family and friends are “good
medicine”. They can remind you of your strengths and better times. Seek out positive people
who will listen without judging or giving advice.

7. USE RELAXATION EXERCISES. Try ten minutes of slow, deep breathing. You can
also use guided imagery, “progressive muscle relaxation “or some other relaxing activities of
your choice. Tapes and CDs with relaxation exercises are available on the marketplace.

8. MEDITATION AND/OR PRAYER CAN LIFT THE SPIRITS. Engage in activities
which renew or inspire you heart and mind. Spend time in nature and seek out beauty. Look
for meaning in your life or own spiritual path. Find ways to accept yourself or forgive your
mistakes in life.

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9. SLEEP. Your body will appreciate at least eight hours of sleep in order to finish all R.E.M cycles. If you are getting too little (or too much), this can increase stress and/or sadness.

10. TIME MANAGEMENT. Rushing around and/or not getting tasks done increases stress and can bring you down. Create lists of tasks and organize your time with a scheduling book. Prioritize. Have fun checking off items as you get them done. Also, make sure you do not take on too much; consider saying “no” to people who ask for more than you want or need.

11. COMMUNICATION SKILLS. Not getting along with others increases stress and/or sadness. One way to improve your communication skills is to really listen to the other person, imagine what they are feeling, and express understanding. Similarly, make sure that’s others know how you are feeling. Do not be passive not aggressive. Be assertive.

12. LAUGH. Humor is a wonderful stress reliever and mood enhancer. Watch funny movies or TV shows. Talk to people who make you laugh. Look for lighter side of life.

13. GET HELP. Talk to a therapist or doctor about your level of stress. They can help you assess your situation and find proper treatment. If you have not had a physical exam recently, do so. IF FEELING SUICIDAL, seek immediate help. Call 1-800-564-2120 to speak with a counselor immediately.