It’s anything that poses a challenge or a threat to our well-being is a stress. It’s the feeling we have when we under pressure. Some situations which are not negative ones may still be perceived as stressful. Whenever we are overloaded, we wonder whether we really can cope with the pressures placed upon us.
Stress relief activities

Engage one or more of your senses to relieve stress

- Read a good book
- Watch a favourite film
- Engage your visual senses in painting or photography
- Allow yourself to day dream for 10 mins
- Use visualization techniques
- Evolve good memories from looking at memory or story board.
- Sit outside and enjoy the sounds
- Listen to a favourite piece of music
- Listen to some sounds, lapping water
- Listen to a motivational recording
- Play a relaxation cd
- Listen to a radio programme with your eyes closed
- Sing
- Laugh
- Have a chat with someone who listens
- Chew a piece of sugarless gum
- Use deep breathing exercises
- Eat a piece of dark chocolate
- Use deep breathing exercises
- Repeat affirmations out loud
- Exercise
- Squeeze a stress ball
- Stroke a pet - particularly cats, dogs, rabbits
- Wear soft warm clothing
- Bake - enjoy the soothing, repetitive movements
- Play a musical instrument
- Have a massage
- Have a cup of tea or coffee

- Burn some aromatherapy oils
- Enjoy the aroma of scented candles
- Do some baking - the mixture of aromas and soothing movements
- Enjoy outdoor smells from walks in the country or near the sea
- Freshly brewed tea or coffee
Body and Mind:

- Body:
  - headaches
  - frequent infections
  - taut muscles
  - muscular twitches
  - fatigue
  - skin irritations
  - breathlessness

- Mind:
  - worrying
  - muddled thinking
  - impaired judgement
  - nightmares
  - indecisions
  - negativity
  - hasty decisions

Emotions and Behavior:

- Emotions:
  - loss of confidence
  - more fussy
  - irritability
  - depression
  - apathy
  - alienation
  - apprehension
  - smoking more

- Behavior:
  - accident prone
  - loss of appetite
  - loss of sex drive
  - drinking more
  - insomnia
  - restlessness

Reading for as little as 6 minutes can reduce stress by 60%, slow heart beat, ease muscle tension and alter your state of mind.

Reading reduces stress:

- 68% more than:
- 100% more than:
- 300% more than:
- 600% more than:

- Listening to music
- Drinking a cup of tea
- Going for a walk
- Playing a video game

Building Vocabulary:

- **stress**: The body’s response to real or imagined dangers or other life events
- **positive stress**: Stress that can help you reach your goals
- **distress**: Negative stress, is stress that prevents you from doing what you need to do, or stress that causes you discomfort
- **stressor**: Anything that causes stress