

# Nine Steps To Healthy Lifestyle

## Step 7: Dealing with Stress

### What is Stress?

Stress is a part of life and occurs when we tense up in response to pressure. Stress is what happens to us when we allow events or situations to overwhelm our ability to cope with them. Any change, good or bad, big or small, can cause stress.

### What Causes Stress?

Stress can be caused by many events and situations. Getting married, a serious illness, or changing jobs can cause stress. Losing keys, having a birthday, having a flat tire, or needing to get errands done before picking up children can also cause stress.

#### *An Ounce of Prevention . . .*

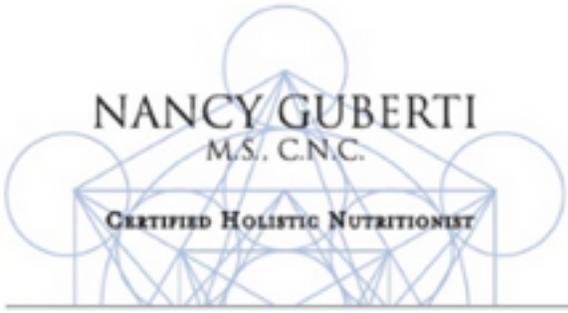
The old saying “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure” is certainly true when it comes to stress. It’s best to avoid stress whenever we can. However, if we cannot avoid stress, there are ways to cope.

#### *Stress and Diabetes*

Why are we talking about stress in this program? Many people react to stress by changing their eating and activity habits. Some people eat and drink too much as a way to deal with stress, and others may stop eating. Some people become very inactive and withdrawn. Changing behavior and asking your family or friends to make changes to help you can create stress.

#### *You Can Manage the Stress!*

Stress can interfere with the work you have done in this program. Using the tools and skills discussed in this step, practice preventing and avoiding stress so you can stay focused on your goals.



## How Do You Feel Stress?

What situations make you feel stressed?

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How do you feel, physically and mentally, when you are stressed?

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What do you do differently when you get stressed?

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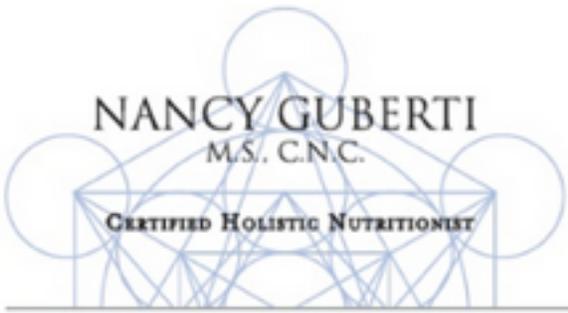
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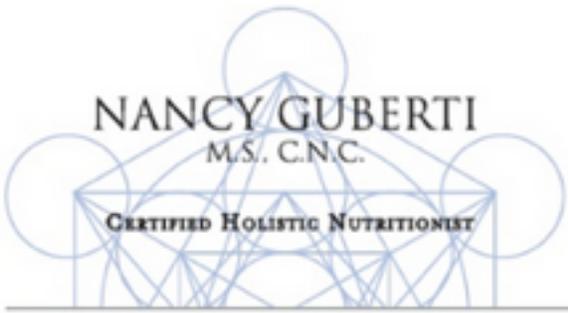
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## Ways to Prevent Stress

Practice these tips to prevent stress:

- Say “No” when asked to do something you do not want to do.
- Try to say “Yes” only to important matters.
  
- Share some of your workload with others.
  
- Set goals you can reach in a realistic time.
  
- Take charge of your time.
  - Make realistic schedules.
  - Get organized.
  
- Use problem solving techniques.
  - Describe the problem in detail.
  - Think of all your options.
  - Pick one option to try.
  - Make an action plan.
  - Try the plan. See how it goes.
- Plan ahead.
  - Think about the kind of situations that are stressful for you.
  - Plan how to handle them or to work around them.
  
- Keep things in perspective. Remember your purpose.
  - Think of all the good things in your life.
  - Remember why you joined this program.
  
- Reach out to people for support.
  
- Be physically active. Physical activity is a great stress reducer.



## When You Cannot Avoid Stress

Despite your best attempts, you cannot always avoid stress. However, several actions can help you cope with the stress.

### When you cannot avoid stress:

Catch the stress early

Learn to be aware of the signs that show you are getting stressed.

My signs of stress:

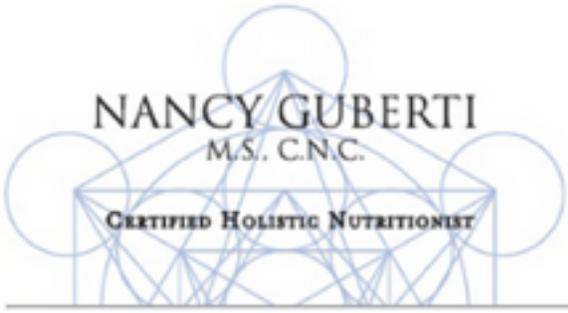
1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Stop yourself as soon as you realize you are stressed. Take a 10-minute time-out.

Move those muscles. Go for a walk, a bike ride, or do another activity you enjoy.

Pamper yourself. Do something you enjoy doing just for yourself.

Breathe. Take a full, deep breath. Count to five. Then let go of your breath slowly. Let the muscles in your face, arms, legs, and body go completely loose.



## Ways to manage stress

Meditate

Yoga Poses

Walk

Exercise

Call a friend or seek help

Take charge of your time. i.e. Make double recipes, and freeze half for later.

Set goals you can reach.

Keep things in perspective.

Remind yourself how important living a healthy lifestyle is to you.

Reach out to people.

Ask your family and friends to support your efforts.

Use the steps for solving problems.

Discuss your feelings and your promise to living healthy lifestyle with someone you can trust.

Practice saying "No."

Turn down invitations that are not important to you.

Reach out to people.

Plan ahead.

Problem solve.

Combine activity with other events you plan to do. (Have a meeting while walking. Go hiking with a friend.)

What stress management technique can you think about implementing in your daily life?

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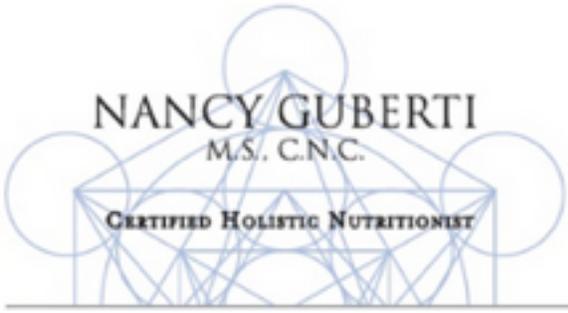
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## Your Plan for Stress

1. What are your major sources of stress?

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2. Choose one source of stress. Make a positive action plan:

I will:

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When?

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I will do this first:

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Roadblocks that might come up:

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I will handle them by:

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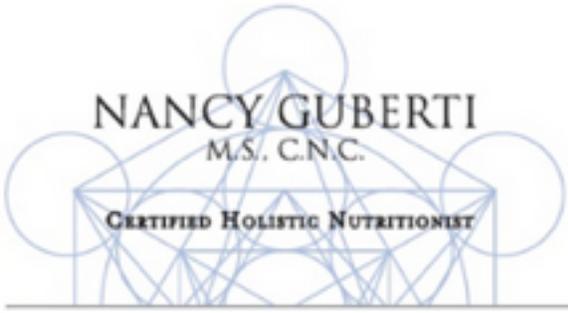
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I will do this to make my success more likely:

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## Daily To-Do List

During the day I will —

Try my action plan for managing stress.

Answer these questions:

Did my action plan work?

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If not, what went wrong?

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What could I do differently next time?

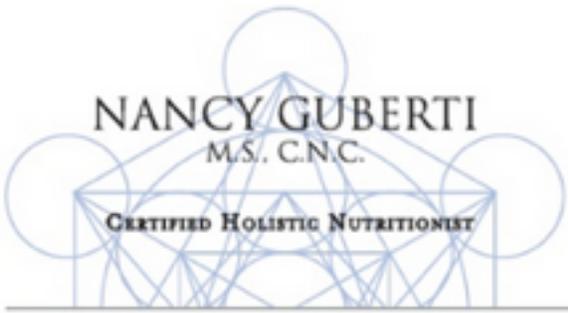
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Your Health is Worth it because YOU are worth it  
and managing your stress in a positive manner  
is Step 7 of the Nine Steps to Healthy Lifestyle Program.

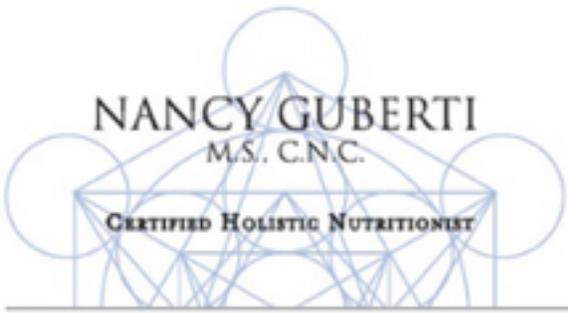


**CONGRATULATIONS for completing Step #7!**

**Next is Step Eight:**

**Buyer Beware, Natural Remedies,  
Personal & Beauty Products**





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