

Money Matter\$ - 7 September 2023

By Standard Chartered Bank

Title: Inexpensive ways to release stress

With commitments at work and at home, life's responsibilities can often take a toll on you and be a little stressful at times. For many of us, ways of de-stressing include going to the spa or the gym, or that thing we like to call retail therapy.

As we aim to be on a better financial path, it's important to realise that you can eliminate stress and feel better without the need to whip out your wallet and overspend. While spending money can make you feel better in the short term, you may suffer from the repercussions in the long run as your spending habits wither away your pay cheque. Moreover, the guilt of over-spending might leave you feeling worse. There are many alternate and inexpensive ways to eliminate stress; it just takes a little creativity. Here are a few things you could try out.

Talk to someone you love

This could be a long time friend, a family member or your spouse. Whoever the person may be, heart to heart conversations can sometimes be the best way to relieve your stress. Talking to someone you love and trust about your worries or problems will help take some of the weight off your shoulders as they are sure to provide you with the support and comfort that you need. The best part is that a meaningful conversation comes at no cost, ensuring that you can distress without breaking bank.

Exercise

Exercising is a great outlet for relieving stress as it allows you to release your tension by focusing your mind on the workout. If you are the kind of person who relieves stress by having your daily workout at the gym, then you would know that gym memberships can be quite expensive. But you don't need to make a daily trip to the gym to eliminate stress. Be thrifty and call on a few friends for a game of football or basketball. Alternatively, you could combine exercise with nature and opt for a bicycle ride in your neighbourhood or enjoy a jog in a community park.

Get creative

Explore creative outlets and make something. Whether it's painting, sewing, pottery or cooking, creating something allows you to take your mind off your troubles and concentrate on the task at hand. So the next time you see a great recipe on a cooking show, give it a shot. When you have finished, you will feel a great sense of accomplishment.

Cleaning and decluttering

In times of trouble, cleaning and decluttering can do wonders at helping you feel better. A cluttered surrounding will often leave your mind feeling cluttered too. The physical act of cleaning or decluttering will get you on the move but it will also allow your mind to relax. Much like the act of creating something, once it's all done, you will feel the satisfaction from a job well done.

Be charitable

A charitable act or helping others is a great way to move your focus beyond your own problems. As a selfless act, it will not only relieve your stress but make you feel good. However, the misconception is that being charitable means to give money. This is not always the case. While donating money is a wonderful act and most welcome, if you are trying to save up, there are many other ways you can help. You could donate second hand items of decent condition to less advantaged families. If you have done your decluttering,

this is the perfect next step as you must have surely collected some item such as clothes, toys, or books that you can give away. Another thing you could donate is your time. Whether you choose to spend time reading to the elderly at an old folks home, or teaching children at a centre how to bake a cake, time spent with those in need would be greatly appreciated.

Pamper yourself

If you enjoy having “me” time to help you de-stress, you don’t necessarily need to shell out hundreds of dollars to pamper yourself at a spa. Sure, it feels a lot more luxurious but if you’re counting the dollars you could do the same with DIY manicures, pedicures, spa treatments and aroma-therapy baths all in the comfort of your own home.

Laugh

Laughter is the best medicine and more importantly, it’s free. We’ve heard that many times and it’s so true. Now and then, we all need a good laugh. Be it through hanging out with people who make you happy, reading a funny book or watching a good comedy – laughter can help you to ease away your worries.

So the next time you’re feeling a little stressed out, resist the urge to spend to ease your troubles and save your money for when you really need it. As the saying goes, the best things in life come for free and this saying could not be any more true at this point.

This article is for general information purposes only and whilst the information in it is believed to be reliable, it has not been independently verified by us. You are advised to exercise your own independent judgment with the contents in this article.