



# Managing Stress

by Nia founders Debbie Rosas & Carlos Rosas *Managing Stress*

## **The Rosas 60 Second Tension Busters**

Would you like to live every day completely free of stress? Who wouldn't! However, it's not only unrealistic, but if you had a stress-free life, you'd be dead. So, our real objective in life is to utilize all of our resources and to help us manage stress-not fear it. Turn unhealthy stress into healthy stress.

There are varying degrees and many different kinds of stress that we experience daily. Whether it is mental, emotional or physical, they all have some kind of impact on us. Sometimes good, sometimes harmful, with the right tools, it is easier to work with stress on a daily basis than to turn our backs on the opportunity to gain awareness and insight into how we can maintain harmony and equilibrium when under stress.

For some of us, stress is the spice of life. For others, it is what has contributed to disease in their bodies. Stress is an attack on the body. The body registers stress as an invasion whether it be a physical or emotional stress. This sudden stress-attack sets off an internal alarm in the body where the nervous system sends out an SOS. Chemical messengers, hormones, are quickly sent into action to prepare the body deal with the emergency. Blood vessels contract, breathing speeds up and changes occur to help us meet the situation. While excitement, which also induces stress, peeps you up and creates a healthy relaxation, anger, fear, and negative tension drains the body of energy and creates relaxation out of exhaustion and fatigue.

Observing your physical and mental reaction to stressful situations is the first step in beginning to reprogram the way you deal with stress. Gaining the tools and knowledge to help you work through stressful situations will help you avoid physical and emotional breakdowns. Below are some helpful tools to help you move smoothly through your days.

## **NIA 10 Mental tips for releasing stress**

1. Listen to your body and your feelings. Acknowledge them, don't judge them. They can tell you when you need some relief.
2. Know your limit. Don't take on too much. Delegate and share responsibilities. Ask for help!
3. Balance work with play. Play will help you go back to your work with a fresh sense of creativity and energy.
4. Do nothing. Take time to be in the quiet-the stillness. As few as five minutes a day of sitting in stillness can help re-energize.
5. Get plenty of sleep and rest. Naps are very therapeutic. A quick 15 minute nap in the middle of your day can revitalize you.
6. Don't hold onto physical tensions and mental worries. Create a place such as a box where you can place your mental tension and worries. You can always go get it if you want to! Warm baths are an effective way to release physical tension.
7. Talk out your frustrations and troubles. You don't have to actually talk to someone to obtain the positive effects of releasing internal stress. Talk into a tape recorder. Write your thoughts and feelings in a letter.
8. Step out of it. When you feel cornered or blocked, step out and get away from it all. Take a walk. Go to a movie. Trust that you'll gain clarity and insight once being away.
9. Accept what you cannot change immediately. Know that some things take time. Be patient and stay focused on how you would like things to be. Over time, all things can change.

10. Be willing to seek professional help. Persistent physical illness, constant mental turmoil around an issue, lack of energy and zest for living may mean you need professional help. Keep in mind that what you need is someone to help you find a better way. You deserve to live fully, feel the best that you can.

## **NIA 60 Second Tension Buster Exercises**

Note: repeat each exercise for 60 seconds or until your body says,

“Thanks, I’ve had enough”.

1. **Foot Works.** During the day take your shoes off and massage your feet. Over a period of time check to see if your feet are becoming more pliable, resilient. You want to have strong yet pliable muscles!
2. **Stretch & Shake.** When you feel physical stress coming down on you, stop what you are doing. Inhale deeply and on the exhale shake out every part of your body as if you were a rag doll. Stretch by reaching to the ceiling and shake out while gently rounding over. This exercise is very useful when performed in a chair.
3. **Gaze.** Whenever possible take out 60 seconds to gaze. If you are in a building, go to a window and gaze at the sky, the trees. Breathe in the natural energy of mother earth’s beauty. If you are walking, stop and gaze at a child, a flower, a tree. If you can’t go to a window or out of doors, find an object that will represent serenity and gaze into it. Gaze and feel the beauty around you.
4. **Mind Massage.** Close your eyes and see your mind being massaged by two warm, nurturing hands. Allow these warm hands to take away any unnecessary tension and replace it with healing energy and love. Let your jaw slightly open and release. Breathe deeply and fully.
5. **Pillow Scream.** Holding a pillow, inhale deeply and then on the exhale, scream away all tensions from your mind and body. Pause and feel the release, the effects of letting out the steam. Each time you repeat the pillow scream, pause to feel the healing effects of the relaxation.
6. **Yawning.** At anytime during your day when you feel yourself holding tension in the head, neck and shoulder area-yawn. This simple exercise will also relax the jaw, eye and forehead. Be sure to let all other body parts respond to the effects of the yawn. This is a great exercise to help concentration.
7. **Loose Cheeks.** Allow your facial muscles and cheeks to completely soften. As if you were shaking something off of your nose, shake your head and feel your cheeks flutter and move. Allow yourself the freedom to make sounds. This is a great exercise to help you with little kids!
8. **Day Dream.** Day Dream for 60 seconds. At times when you feel tired, stop and let your mind wander into the day dreaming world. You’ll be taking out time to play and your mind as well as your body will thank you.
9. **The Hair Washer.** Sitting or standing, with both of your hands, massage your scalp as if you were washing your hair. Increasing the circulation at any of the extremity points increases your energy level and relaxes you.
10. **The roll.** Rolling from side to side or front to back is a great way to massage the spine and stimulate relaxation. On your bed or a carpeted floor, gently roll on your back to relax.
11. **Circle Crawl.** When you feel tense before bed or you wake up in the middle of the night and can’t get back to sleep, try crawling around in a small circle several times to the left and then to the right. Many insomniacs have reported great results from this exercise.

12. Iso-Press. At times when your stress builds up, go to a door frame, inhale deeply and exhale while pressing into the insides of the frame with your hands or forearms. Hold for a few seconds. Pause and feel the release after each time. Exhale away tension as you press into the frame.

Note: For persons with high blood pressure-press gently and only for five seconds while breathing deeply.

13. Listen to healing sounds. Sit in your favorite place and listen to classical music or any kind of music that soothes you.

14. Massage and Airbrush yourself. Massage your own body by squeezing the muscles as if you were squeezing tooth paste from a tube. Start at the top and end at the bottom of each limb. To Airbrush, use your entire hand and feel the palms moving the energy up along the insides of the body and then down along the outsides of the body. Keep the palms of your hands in constant contact with your body as you move the energy. Moving energy increases circulation and relaxes the system.