Ways to Manage Stress

by

GLENDA P. LINGAD
Master Teacher I/ Pagalanggang National High School

Getting the fact straight, due to unique circumstances, we seem to face increased level of stress. Think about what a teacher must deal with day in and day out… everyday lesson plans, overcrowded classroom, grading tests, grading homework, grading classwork, bunch of report works, meeting with parents, department meetings, faculty meetings, problem pupils, angry parents, and the list goes on!

Without using stress relieving techniques, teacher stress can manifest itself in many ways including headaches, back pain, frequent illness, heartburn, anger, impatience, depression, eating disorders, and insomnia. If not addressed, these manifestations may likely turn into heart disease and hypertension. Stress can even damage memory and cognitive skills.

Fortunately, there are many simple stress relieving techniques that teachers can use that will help improve both their health and their career.

Here are five stress relieving techniques:

1. Get exercise! Do NOT use the excuse that you don't have time. You must make time. Make it part of your routine every day. While it may be tough at first, you'll quickly find yourself with more energy and you'll be much more efficient at work.

2. Learn to say no to the things that may quickly lead to teacher burnout.

3. Join teacher discussion boards/forums where you can not only vent your frustrations, but get real advice from other teachers who have experienced the same problems.

4. Think positive. In fact, don't just think positive thoughts, but actually say them out loud. Say positive things about your job, about your pupils and about your colleagues. You'll be amazed at the impact that saying these things out loud can have on the rest of your day.

5. Cool down and take breaks. Teachers have a tendency to go straight through the day (and night) without taking a break. This is unhealthy and only adds to your stress level. Make sure to NOT work through lunch. Also, at the end of the school day, make a to-do list for the next day and then take ten minutes to relax and cool down with some other stress relieving techniques such as deep breathing exercises, stretching, or visualization.