

HALTS is an acronym commonly used in substance abuse treatment that can be very usefully applied to stress management. A HALTS approach to managing our stress recommends that we avoid getting too **Hungry Angry Lonely Tired Scared**.

Hungry - Although food comes immediately to mind (when doesn't it?), there are many other things for which we can "hunger." We all need a sense of worth, connection to others and to something bigger than ourselves, appreciation, and many others. Miss out on some of these basic emotional needs for very long and we can end up sad or depressed.

Tip: Angry - I get angry, you get angry, we all get angry. No problem there. The problem comes when anger is our most common emotion and our first response to most situations. Recent research has demonstrated that constant anger is not only unpleasant for you, it can kill you. Pay attention to and deal with the emotions that anger typically grows out of: fear, frustration, hurt.

Lonely - In spite of all the modern ways we have to communicate with each other, we still live in a culture where it is incredibly easy to become isolated. Most people don't know the names of their neighbours on either side or across the street. I know of people who are "just too busy" to spend the time to connect with other people. These folks are way too busy for their own good.

Tip: Lonely - Take the time to connect and stay connected to others. Walk next door and introduce yourself. Call an old friend you have not spoken with in a while. Stay connected.

Tired - Vince Lombardi said "Fatigue makes cowards of us all." It's not that most people don't have the time to rest; it's that most people have actually forgotten how. When it comes to the ultimate form of rest, sleeping, when was the last time you got the recommended 8 - 10 hours? You can stop laughing now. We can push ourselves just so far before the body takes over and forces us to rest. I've worked with clients that have told me that it's actually a badge of honour among their colleagues to have been hospitalized for exhaustion. Go figure.

Tip: Tired - In addition to getting enough sleep, schedule time to rest. Put it in your appointment book, and protect it and keep it like you would any other important appointment.

Scared - In the Tarzan movies I watched as a kid, there were these natives with blowguns who would shoot darts coated with poison that would render a person temporarily paralysed. Fear can do the same thing - paralyse us into inaction. Fear of failure, of rejection, of success, of the future, you name it, we get too scared and we freeze up.

Tip: Scared - Facing your fears and taking action in spite of them can reduce or eliminate your fears. Remember that fear stands for forget everything and run and false evidence appearing real. Courage is not the absence of fear. Courage is being afraid of something and doing it anyway.

For better or worse, we may have too much of one of these on any given day. Consistently having two or more can indicate a situation in need of change. Practice these tips to successfully manage your stress or you might want to get with someone who can coach you on making your stress work for you.

Visit SecretsofGreatRelationships.com for tips and tools for creating and growing a great relationship.

We have literally dozens of books on this subject. Go to www.recoveroz.com.au website and type in Recovery to browse. Here are some starters

[101 Meeting Starters](#) by Mel B

[A Gentle Path through the Twelve Steps](#) by Patrick Carnes the Classic Guide for People in Recovery

[Ad dictionary A Primer of Recovery Terms & Concepts from Abstinence to Withdrawal](#) by Jan and Judith Wilson