



7 Ways to Reduce Stress in Your Home

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Does this picture describe your happy home? The baby's crying while you hurriedly put the fast food on the table, the dog is throwing up on the floor, the hubby's got the TV on full-blast, and your teenager just angrily slammed the door on his way out.

Unfortunately, it's a typical scene for many of us. However, the good news is that it doesn't have to be this way. There are, in fact, things you can do to ease this stress and create a more harmonious environment so that you and your family can look forward to coming home!

Although some degree of stress is inherent as you deal with the varying phases of your family members, ***if you strive to uphold a core set of values and go with the flow, you can maintain a happy and healthy home.***

Here are some specific ways you can reduce the stress at home:

- 1. Get organized.** Life can quickly become chaotic when you don't maintain organization. ***An organized home runs smoothly,*** while an unorganized home leads to stress and lost time.
 - A good tip is to start small with your organization efforts. Start with one room or even a portion of a room. The idea is to think of it as a series of small projects instead of one overwhelmingly huge one.
- 2. Communicate.** Your family will certainly benefit from actively working on communication skills. When you fail to communicate effectively, you may not get what you want and can even cause upsetting misunderstandings. ***Working on communication will allow all family members to feel loved and appreciated*** and help the household run efficiently.

3. **Eat dinner together.** Everyone in your family likely has a busy life of their own. It's easy to suddenly realize that you have no idea what's going on with your spouse or child. When you make it a point to eat dinner together every night, you make time to connect with your family. ***You'll learn how to work as one even with busy lifestyles.***
4. **Have fun together.** It's important to schedule time to have fun together as a family, even if these times can't be as often as you'd like. Schedule family nights in advance and allow each family member a chance to pick that evening's activity.
5. **Show unconditional love.** Be sure to practice the art of unconditional love with your family. This leads to secure attachments and will ultimately keep everyone in your family happy and stress-free.
 - Children and parents alike need to know that, when they make mistakes, they ***have a loving family that will back them up and forgive them.***
6. **Give support.** Go out of your way for your family members. It might not be an ideal Friday night to go to your daughter's art show, but just think of how they'll feel when they see that they have your love and support. ***Actively express your support by really being there for your family - no matter what.*** Just thinking about how much you love them is not enough!
7. **Family rules.** Having a set of family rules will help with organization and allow everyone to know what's expected of them.
 - Schedule a family meeting to establish the house rules. Make sure everyone has a chance to participate and share his or her concerns. You'll likely find a compromise that allows everyone to be happy.

A happy and stress free home is one built on love. Don't be too hard on yourself and others, and you'll have the basis for creating an excellent home life.