

it's about staying healthy ●●●



stress less

female friendships make us happier, reduce stress levels

A recent study confirms 33 percent of women rank their stress rate as 'extreme.' It's been proven that female friendships make us healthier, happier, less stressed and actually live longer. The book "The Tending Instinct," by psychologist Shelley E. Taylor, explores how and why women need female friendships.

The book points out that social trends like divorce and living far away from family have reduced the number of important social ties we maintain. Friendship is the bond most likely to fill these voids.

Here are six ways women can reduce stress, with their girlfriends:

Volunteer with a friend. If you are active in your Woman's Life chapter, you know this is true! But, no matter how you do it, volunteering together makes it more fun. In addition to doing something helpful for others, you and your girlfriend will have the wonderful experience of being thankful for all the blessings in your life.

Phone a friend. A few minutes on the phone together can totally erase the worries of the day. Plan a phone date at a time that's good for both of you.

Start a girlfriend group, and don't make it a one-time thing. Make a plan to get together with several girlfriends on a regular basis. It will give you something fun to look forward to. Starting a Woman's Life chapter composed of your best friends will also allow you to help others while you help yourselves!

Be creative. Enjoy time together and forget about the stress in your lives by getting creative. Take a knitting class, plan a day to scrapbook, make cards, bead or try a new craft together.

Pamper thy self. This could mean shoe shopping or a new haircut, a massage or a cup of fancy organic tea. Allow yourself some time together to take care of your inner girlie girl.

Get healthy – together. Weight gain or unhealthy eating often accompanies stress. Find an approach that works for both of you to be healthier – be it a diet or exercise plan, or perhaps by joining Weight Watchers or a boot camp class. Encourage each other and celebrate your successes. Stress diminishes when you're healthy, happy and beautiful!

"Some truths don't need to come from research – we just know them," said Debba Hauptert, founder of Girlfriendology.com. "Our girlfriends mean the world to us. We love them for their friendship, support and the lessons we learn from them. We thrive in their company. We are our true selves with them and let down any fronts or barriers, and reconnect with our true self."

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