



Remember, Take Care of Yourself

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Get away from your desk and take brief breaks. Look outside to see that the sun is shining and life continues.

Try deep breathing. The Eastern Connecticut Health Network recommends that you "take a long, slow, deep breath to the count of five, then exhale slowly to the count of five. Imagine breathing out excess tension and breathing in relaxation."

Talk to a person that you trust about how you're feeling during these times. It can be an editor, a peer or spouse, but you must trust that the listener will not pass judgment on you. Perhaps it is someone who has faced a similar experience.

Exercise. Twenty minutes of walking or other forms of exercise can be a great stress reducer.

Listen to music. Do your favorite hobby. Go to church. Laugh. Do something that relaxes you or provides you with relief from the pressures.

Eat right -- most difficult for any journalist. Foods high in protein or vitamins A, B or C can help reduce stress. And, yes, the experts say the coffee and doughnuts that we've been chugging down really don't help. (However, they're great in the morning, if you didn't get enough sleep. Oh, that could be another tip: If you can, get enough sleep.)

As Oklahoma City counselor Charlotte Lankard, who provided counseling to The Oklahoman's newsroom after the 1995 bombing and 1999 tornadoes, advises: "Write about it. Talk about it. Cry about it." However, if your problems become overwhelming, seek counseling from a professional.

REMEMBER, take care of yourself