



CULTURE OF WELLNESS FEATURE

Stress: The Universal Language

We all get stressed. Whether good or bad stress, it is inevitable that things will come up that will cause us to stress out and we may be at a loss to know how to deal with it properly. Stress is a universal language that we can all understand and empathize with, but have you ever thought about the way you handle stress? Or about the ways that other people or cultures deal with stress? Here are some tips from around the world how different cultures handle stress:



Russia: Most people there go to the *banya*, which is a hot sauna, to relax not only their body but their minds as well. You can do this on your own by sitting in your bathroom and turning on a hot shower to produce steam, sit and relax.

Thailand: In Thai culture, massages are very frequent and applied with large amounts of pressure to relieve tension and stress. Kneading around the nape of your neck can release some pressure and really help to ease your body and mind.

Argentina: Friends and family pass around a small hot tea called *maté* as a sort of peace pipe to associate and talk. Social support is key for good mental health. Whether you are grabbing a coffee with a friend or going out to dinner in a group, this can help you connect with your social support system, reducing worry.

China: All over China you will see people in parks doing slow and steady martial arts movements called *T'ai chi ch'uan* or more commonly known as Tai Chi. This practice is a beautiful combination of exercise and a mental break. Recently, Tai Chi has become quite common in western culture. Search for a tai Chi class at your local gym to help relieve stress.

I hope next time you feel stressed or need a rest, you break out of your comfort zone give one of these cultural stress reduction techniques a try.

Source: <http://www.health.com/>

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