

# 7 RULES FOR A STRESS-FREE LIFE

His life may look easy and breezy, but **Matthew McConaughey** has to stuff just as much crap into his 24-hour sack as you do (with paparazzi cameras in his face while he does it). "I have a lot of responsibilities, and I love accomplishing goals and marking things off my bucket list," he says. "But, man, things do get overwhelming." We do not weep for him, however, or for you, because there are right and wrong ways to react to stress. McConaughey has figured out a few key ways to eliminate negatives like anger, impatience, and wasted effort. The results are clear.

## 1. See eye-to-eye with your job

"The situation can never be greater than you are," he says. "If it is, you're never going to be able to engage and give your full talent, because you're not looking at it eye-to-eye." And that cuts the other way, McConaughey says. "You can't look down on it, either. If you go into anything without respect, you're going to miss magic, miss truths."

## 2. Learn the sneaky workout

McConaughey has those days, too: no exercise time. He compensates with active bursts throughout the day. "I'll drop and give myself 20 pushups at intervals throughout the day. 9 a.m., bang out 20. Sitting in a boring meeting at 10:30. Bang out 20. I do that 10 times throughout the day,

I've done 200. Or even mix it up with crunches, squats, whatever. Also, I have a 12-pound medicine ball. I'll just think, *Pick up the medicine ball and don't put it down for 30 minutes*. Try that once. You will have a workout, man."

## 3. Customize your to-do list

"I'll put fun things on my list to give me more things to cross off," he says. "Like, 'surf for an hour.' When you get to one near the bottom and it says, 'Watch *Monday Night Football*,' it's like, yeah!"

## 4. Adopt a simple philosophy and live by it

Some of life's biggest stressors are the remains of self-destructive things you do, McConaughey says. So he boils his decisions down to one sim-

licity. "I don't like to leave crumbs," he says. "I like to do things right, and not cheat to get 'em done. That's what a man does. I don't owe anybody anything. I never go anywhere and worry, 'Oh shit, so-and-so's here.' I don't have crumbs in my past."

## 5. Insulate yourself from natural disasters (that you cause yourself)

McConaughey explains with a metaphor straight out of the Weather Channel: "I like to create my own weather so then I can blow in the wind. When I say that, I mean that whether it's in business or your personal life, if you've got positive, like-minded people around you, then your systems are in place. I don't have to be looking over my shoulder. I can just blow in the wind. I may bounce

off this wall or that wall, but I won't get caught in any tornados."

## 6. Know what you don't know

Fighting to prove you know something when you don't wastes time and sucks energy, McConaughey says, and "I have to continue to learn that. The amount of time you can save just by going, 'I don't know,' is huge. We're brought up to be know-it-alls. 'I don't know,' can be perceived as a weakness, but I see it as a sign of intelligence. Then I can experience something so I do know. How else will you ever learn something new?"

## 7. Never forget to schedule the pleasure, too

"I've always said pleasure is good for you," McConaughey says.

"Well," you reply, "duh." But wait a minute: How much pleasure do you really allow yourself to have every day? "There are some people who are so strict that they become a slave to their healthy lifestyle, a slave to working out, a slave to eating just the right foods. I've seen it happen to other people, and I'm guilty of going overboard

with it. And when you do, man, you're no frickin' fun at all. You have to be more flexible and enjoy having things. I'm not going to a friend's barbecue and say, 'I'm gonna stick to salad.' Who's gonna enjoy that? Lighten up! It's your lifestyle, not your life."

MIKE ZIMMERMAN