

unplug

24 TECHNIQUES TO BEAT STRESS



Powerful tips for a calmer, saner life.

STRESS & YOUR HEALTH



Stress is sneaky.

Sometimes you do not even know that you are feeling it until you turn your head and your neck hurts, or you feel a tension headache coming on.

The truth is, some stress is normal (and even good)... but chronic stress can cause a lot of damage to your body.

It can wreak havoc on your hormones, making you gain weight (especially unhealthy belly fat).

And it can take a major toll on your health, paving the way for illness and disease.

Scientists are learning more all the time about how stress can impact your health.

It has never been a big secret that stress can cause illness, but until recently it was never clear HOW it played a role.

STRESS AND INFLAMMATION

But now it seems pretty clear that chronic psychological stress can affect your body's ability to regulate its inflammatory response. That is because one of your body's key stress hormones, cortisol, also plays a role in controlling inflammation.

As you likely know, inflammation is associated with practically every disease process affecting our bodies!

Inflammation has been tied to impaired immunity, heart disease, diabetes, cancer and more.

IS STRESS MAKING YOU SICK?

Over time, having too many stress hormones in your system is linked with increased inflammation, and all the problems associated with it!

What can you do about it?

Most of us have never learned how to use the powers within our own bodies to cope with stress.

In fact, many of us were taught to walk it off and ignore it, in the hope that it would just magically go away.

Pushing through is often the very WORST thing you can do to get through a tough period, since it can keep your stress hormones elevated.

If you are not careful, feeling stressed can even become your new normal, so you do not feel like yourself unless you are feeling the press.



Unfortunately, this is the case for way to many of us!

The good news is, you can take back control by learning some easy techniques that will calm our body, ease your mind and lift your mood.

This ebook outlines 24 techniques and tips to help you feel less stressed.

I hope it help you lower your stress levels and find more balance in your life.

Andy





STRESS ANTIDOTE

BREATHE AWAY STRESS

Your breath is an incredibly powerful tool to combat stress.

It is so important that it is worth taking several short breathing breaks a day.

Why?

Deep breathing helps reset your autonomic nervous system, the system that controls your automatic functions like your heart beat, blood pressure, swallowing, etc into a calmer space.

It only takes 4-5 minutes to feel more relaxed and less stressed!

I have included three techniques to help you get started with your breathing practice. One for deep breathing, one for relaxation and another for energy.

BELLY BREATHING



Shallow breathing and stress go together like wine and cheese.

Retraining your body to take deeper breaths will help you feel more relaxed and it can even help strengthen your deep core muscles.

Make time for belly (diaphragmatic) breathing sessions every week. You can do this lying down or seated.

This one can make you feel sleepy until you get used to it, so if you choose to recline be prepared to take a nap!

- Sit comfortably in a chair, your knees bent and your shoulders, head and neck relaxed. Place one hand on your belly just below your rib cage, and the other on your upper chest.
- Breathe in slowly through your nose, feeling your stomach move out against your hand. The hand against your chest should not move.
- Next, draw your stomach in as you exhale through your mouth. Again, the hand on your upper chest should remain still.
- Repeat for 3-5 minutes.

BOX BREATHING

This calming technique has been used by everyone from NAVY seals and first responders to nurses and teachers.

It involves controlling both parts of your breath (breathing in and out) as well as holding your breath.



It is called box breathing because you do each part of the breath for an equal amount of time (4 counts), as if you are breathing around the sides of a square.

- To start, sit up straight in a chair, feet flat on the floor.
- Next, slowly exhale through your mouth as much air as you possibly can, for a total of 4 counts.
- Now, hold your breath for 4 counts.
- Then, gently and slowly breath in through your nose for 4 counts.
- And then hold your breath for 4 counts.
- For a full session of box breathing, you simply repeat the cycle for a total of 4 times through.

ENERGETIC BREATHING

This powerful breath technique was popularized by daredevil adventurer and breathwork guru Wim Hoff.

It will simultaneously leave you feeling energized and relaxed.

(Note: it may also make you feel light headed or tingly when you do it, which Hoff says is normal)

- Sit comfortably and take 30 quick, deep breaths, like you are blowing up a balloon but in reverse, inhaling through your nose and exhaling through your nose.
- Next, take a slow, deep breath in and then exhale, holding until you need to breathe in.
- Inhale again, as deep as you can, hold it for 10 seconds.
- Repeat as Hoff recommends for 3 to 6 rounds.



TAKE CARE OF YOUR BODY

GO FOR A WALK DURING LUNCH

Studies show that being in nature has a calming effect on your mind.

Whenever possible, get outside and enjoy some quiet time during the day.

STAY CLEAR

Avoid numbing out stress with alcohol, food or compulsive behaviours. That only causes more stress in the long run.

MOVE

In addition to regular exercise, try a relaxing movement like tai chi, walking meditation or yoga to help combat stress

UNPLUG

Make time every day to be away from technology. Turn off your phone, power down your laptop and get outdoors and enjoy some downtime.



HEAL YOUR BODY

A healthy body is a resilient body, which means you are better able to ward off the negative effects of stress.

- Getting regular exercise will boost your feel good hormones and your immune system.
- Eating a healthy, whole foods diet will help you keep your blood sugar levels more stable, which is crucial since stress hormones can wreak havoc on them.
- Be sure to get 7 to 8 hours of sleep each night to help your body recover and restore for the coming day.
- **Quick tip:** Set a timer on your phone at regular intervals to get up and move around, and work off excess energy during the day.



CALM YOUR MIND

Overtime, stress can become such a habit that it starts to feel normal.

How do you know if stress has become a way of life?

- Listen to the voice in your head and be aware of what it is telling you. Is it repeating stressful thoughts or phrases throughout the day? That is one big clue!
- Every once in a while, do a quick body scan: is your jaw clenched? Your shoulders tight? Are you holding your breath?
- You often feel full of dread, sadness or anger, and wonder why no one else is getting with your program.

If these sound familiar, it is time to start making some mindset shifts.

REDISCOVER YOUR FOCUS

FIND YOUR WHY

Having a larger purpose in your life can help put stress in perspective.

You might find you have more than one why. It could be family, your health or a goal.

STAY CLEAR

Turn your negative thoughts into positive ones.

For example.

Instead of thinking today is the worst, I am never going to get everything done. Tell yourself, I can handle this if I take it one step at a time.

ORGANIZE YOUR TIME

Learn to manage your time more effectively.

Try not to overcommit.

Break down big problems into smaller parts. Take one step at a time, instead of trying to tackle everything at once.

POSITIVE VIBES ONLY

CREATE A PRACTICE

Set a regular positivity practice. Read uplifting books, pray, meditate, or watch inspirational videos on a daily basis.

HAVE FUN

Make time for hobbies, interests, and relaxation. You will come away feeling recharged and ready to tackle nagging problems.

FRIENDS AND FAMILY

Seek out social support. Spend enough time with those you enjoy.

TUNE OUT

Stream some chill music or an inspirational podcast to give you a mental time out when dealing with road rage or other stressful events.



SOOTHE YOUR SPIRIT

Taking care of your spirit means taking care of those things that are in your own best interest.

- It involves setting clear boundaries, both for yourself and others, and making time for the people you love. Playing with your dog, hugging a loved one, or the simple act of helping someone will all help to reduce your stress levels.
- Keep a positive attitude, but also accept that there are things beyond your control.
- Surround yourself with things that lift you up, and say no to things that you know will create stress.