

Ten Ways to Destress Quickly

Stress can be sneaky and creep up on you when you least expect it – at work, at home, or when you are out and about. Sometimes an event, or some other unforeseen news may trigger the stress. It's sometimes hard to know what to do when it strikes, so here are some tools you can try when you need a break.

Try to incorporate some of these tips every day and you may see some huge results, or use them when you need some immediate relief.

1. Breathe

This one sounds almost too simple. We breathe all day and every day! But our breathing can become shallow and shorter when we are stressed. So STOP and breathe long and steady – in through the nose and out through your mouth.

Do a set of ten to start. That extra boost of oxygen can help reduce tension and relieve stress.

2. Move

Any form of exercise or movement is good for destressing. Walk, swim, run, ride or an exercise class. Even some simple stretches like head rolls, shoulder shrugs or cat curls can get your blood pumping and help the brain release feel-good chemicals, all without leaving your desk.



3. Get outside

Fresh air really does work wonders. A quick walk around the block can help clear your head and get your mind back on track. Spending time in nature is great – eat your lunch in the

park during your lunchbreak instead of at your desk. You'll come back to work refreshed and recharged!



4. Tune in

Tune into your body. A quick ten second scan of your body can help you spot the sections of your body that feel stiff and tight. You can do this standing, sitting or lying down. Start at your head and work your way down to your toes. Then work at contracting and releasing each section of your body.

Concentrate on muscles groups. Tighten the muscles and then relax them and feel the tension lessen.

5. Laugh

Fire up YouTube and check out your favourite comedian, or take advantage of the millions of funny viral videos online. Cute puppies or kittens, or children saying the darndest things.

Whatever makes you laugh, go for it.

6. Sing

Music and other online apps can help you relax, but having a sing – a - long can also help. This works well in the privacy of your own home, but maybe not at your workplace.

7. Ditch the screens

Simply putting your phone down or getting away from your computer screen can calm you down. Over stimulation can fray your nerves, so make sure you take breaks if you work at your computer all day, and get offline at least an hour before you go to bed, to ensure a good night's sleep.

8. Make a cup of tea

If your stressed make yourself a cup of herbal tea, like chamomile or peppermint, (avoid caffeine which could make you more stressed). The simple ritual of boiling the kettle and preparing tea can help keep you in the present moment, and help nurture yourself.



9. Get 'appy'

Using your phone isn't always a bad thing. Download a meditation app and take some time out. Apps like **Headspace** have guided **meditation** series, and even

three-minute SOS sessions for whatever challenge you're facing.

10. Connect

Whether it's your partner, pet or pal, a physical connection with other living beings can help you de-stress almost instantly. So, smooch your spouse, play with your pet or give a loved one a happy hug.

Even picking up the phone and calling a loved one for a chat can be beneficial.



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