

Quick fixes for Stress

There are various techniques that can be put into practice immediately to help deal with stress — experiment to find the ones that work best for you.

SLOW, DEEP BREATHING

You can quickly bring down your heart rate and blood pressure by breathing deeply and slowly. Close your eyes and concentrate on breathing in to a count of three and then out for a count of six. The slow out breath is 'nature's tranquiliser'. Repeat for a minute or two.

DON'T BOTTLE IT UP

Talking to family and close friends is a good way to beat stress because it helps us see the problem more clearly — it may not be as bad as we thought, and other people may have different perspectives and solutions we hadn't considered.

WORRIES? WHAT WORRIES?

Worrying about the 'what ifs?' in a situation takes a lot of time and energy, and anxiety can quickly escalate. First, find out the facts about a situation — your worries may turn out to be unfounded. If you're still concerned, plan your strategy, with a friend if necessary, so that you feel more in control of the situation.

GLASS HALF-FULL OR HALF-EMPTY?

Spend more time focusing on the positive things in your life and less time thinking negatively. The more you visualise a positive outcome, the more you'll believe it and the more likely it is to happen.

ENJOY THE PROCESS

Remember, 'good enough' is OK, there's no need to be perfect every time. Learn to enjoy the process rather than worry about the result — setting a time limit on tasks provides a reality check. If you do make a mistake, learn from the experience and move on.

TAKE TIME OUT

Ring-fence time in your day to unwind and reflect — it will help you recharge your batteries and get things into perspective

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