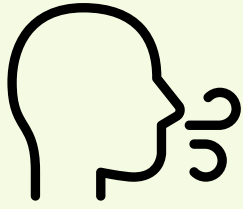


HOW TO COMPLETE THE STRESS CYCLE

Physical Activity

This is the number one way to tell your brain that your body is safe. This burns off the adrenaline and cortisol and releases endorphins.



Deep Breathing

Controlled breathing calms the fight or flight response, and calms the nervous system, allowing the body to return to baseline. Box breathing: 4 count inhale-4 count hold-4 count exhale

Crying

Crying releases a lot of tension, pressure and stress. It also causes your brain to flood the body with coping chemicals; dopamine and serotonin, your "feel good" chemicals.



Laughing

Laughing releases oxytocin, and it just feels good to do it! Laughing alerts your brain that it and your body are safe because true laughter cannot happen when in fight or flight mode.

Physical Touch

Physical touch releases oxytocin and pulls the brain out of fight or flight. It helps the brain feel grounded and safe through connection. A 20 second hug is physiologically akin to jogging several miles



Social Connection

When connected with those you trust and feel safe with, the brain relaxes its hypervigilance and allows the body to rest

Being Creative

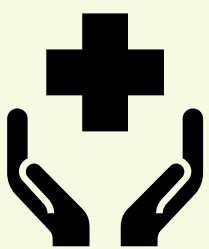
Your brain cannot be in both fight or flight and be creative. Connecting to your creative side tells your brain it is safe and allows your creative side to take over releasing your feel-good chemicals.



Gratitude

There is a phenomenon called Gratitude Disruption. Our brains process gratitude in a different part than fight or flight. They cannot coexist so thinking about things you are grateful for, will distract your stressed brain.

Longer Term Help For Chronic Stress



Service Work

Helping others, when it doesn't cause further harm to you, is a mutually beneficial method of completing the stress cycle. Your brain not only feels safe, but it feels good to give. There is nothing wrong with feeling good when helping others!

Therapy/Coaching

Talking with an objective outsider allows you to be seen and heard in a different way, without the stress of putting up the strong front that has become standard operating procedure. You are finally not expected to have all the answers.



Mindfulness/Meditation

The focus of both areas are staying in the present moment and connecting to your body. When focused on the present, the brain cannot ruminate on the past or worry about the future. Meditation allows us to trust and feel safe in our own bodies. Trusting our bodies is key to healing them.