

# **Simple Natural Stress Relief Guide**

What is stress? It seems everyone is "suffering" from stress nowadays. If you can understand what it is, then you have a much better chance of relating it to your life and dealing with it.

We have positive and negative stress in our lives.

## **Positive stress**

An example of positive stress is exercise. Exercise stresses the physiology of the body and it reacts by making the tissues stronger.

## **Negative stress**

Causes harmful effects on the body. Without negative stress there would be no illness, no disease and no death. But I can hear you already, how can stress be the cause of death. Well I shall explain.

Stress can occur from weather, bacteria, viruses, pollution, bad food, bad water, not enough food, too much food, not enough water, too much water, not enough sleep, too much sleep, worry, arguments, aging, prescription medication and the list goes on.

These factors alone are not enough to make us ill, unless they are really extreme or for long periods of time. It is the health and balance of the body that either tips us to health or sickness when stress is applied.

You may have heard the saying "living on your nerves". It means your emotional stress bucket is almost full all the time. Lurching from one drama to the next, over reacting, not dealing with or over indulging in each stressful situation. It won't take a lot to tip the bucket, causing an overflow, breakdown or run away from the problem.



Our stress responses are known as the five F's.

1. Fight
2. Flight
3. Freeze
4. Faint
5. Fun

Which response to do best relate to? You could have a one or mixture of all five. It's your body's way of dealing with the perceived threat. We're primal creatures and we haven't evolved from our basic instinct of when we were cavemen, fighting or taking flight from the sabre toothed tiger chasing us. Just today's stress is a little more sophisticated and harder to recognise. Of course you will be stressed when your life is in danger, but here's the rub. Your mind doesn't know what is "real" life threatening stress and would is "fake" life threatening. Our body reacts and releases the same massive amounts of hormones, that it would if an animal was trying to kill us. So we have to learn techniques to calm our mind and body.

Having a big argument with your partner, could result in the same damaging effects on the body. Now I'm not saying never disagree with anyone. What I am saying is acknowledge your anger and frustration, know where you feel it and learn techniques to let it go. We can control how we feel, crazy huh?

There are key ways our body shows us it's stressed. The levels of defence our body displays stress are:

1. Skin/Mucous membranes
2. Muscles, Ligaments, Joints
3. Internal organs
4. Heart
5. Brain

If we suppress our stress by ignoring the symptom or by taking prescription drugs to "control" it, it then goes to the next level, then the next. By suppressing it, we're ignoring the great wisdom of our body.

As children we may have eczema, which goes away, but then later in life when there's stress, it reappears. This can be because the original stress was never fully addressed. A negative situation from our past, probably around the time you originally had eczema, occurs again, quite common there was conflict, divorce, worry, shame, sadness or pain. The old memory triggers the same stress defence. A doctor can then treat it with creams and steroids, but this doesn't address the problem.

The body then gives up on that indicator. It moves onto pain in the joints, arthritis, fibromyalgia. This can then be "controlled" with more drugs. Still the original stress isn't addressed. And so on and so forth.

The poor unfortunate souls in the Psychiatric wards, have gone to their last line of defence, the brain. The body hasn't enough strength to generate symptoms on the other levels, so they can live on cigarettes, eat terrible food and never even get a head cold.

So what can you do to get rid of stress from your life? In truth, you can't. Sorry about that. There's not a magic remedy or spell you can sprinkle on your life to rid it of stress, you can have stressful situations right up until you lay on your death bed.

What you can do is **CHANGE** how you perceive the stress.

By addressing three main areas of your life, you can naturally manage your stress

## **1. Letting go of old negative memories and emotions**

## **2. A Healthy cleaner diet**

## **3. Have a daily routine**

Here's some tips on how to do this.

## **1. Letting go of old negative memories and emotions**

This is actually so simple. A lot of stress is caused by reliving old memories and patterns. It's ok to remember past events, but reliving them causes excessive stress to your body.

Remember earlier when I said the mind cannot differentiate between real life threatening danger and fake danger? Well it doesn't know the difference from feeling stress from a current or old event either. Bringing up events from years ago, that are painful and negative, has a detrimental effect on your health and wellbeing. Have you ever thought of when you've had a car accident, or a time when someone shouted or hurt you in some way, then noticed your body has had the same response, eg getting hot, sweating, feeling pain or even hearing the noises or feeling the sensations again. We're the only species that can do this, we can relive the stress of a past incident and have the same body response. A gazelle for example can be chased by a lion and then 15 minutes later, all their body levels are back to normal and they don't react again until there's fresh danger, they wouldn't remember the old danger and get all riled up again. They live in the moment.

Have you ever noticed how you can react with strong anger or sadness, when logically the current situation isn't too stressful. Our mind can link back to a similar past event, which is our original reference, so our mind and body quickly recognises a threat (by threat I mean stress where the body isn't completely peaceful). For example, your child not doing what you've asked. Your mind can link back to your childhood or the many previous times you've had to repeat yourself, you can feel your temper quick to rise, the many reactions in your body. Or it could be something quite different, as each experience and your reaction is unique to you.

Here's a technique called the Quick Tap. It's a Faster EFT method of releasing stress from the body.

Just think of something that causes you stress. A specific event, something someone has done or said. Then follow these simple instructions. To tap, use your index and middle finger and apply light pressure to the points shown below. On the wrist hold, think of a happy memory and let your body rest there, before you check in on how you feel, and begin tapping the other points again.

*Be aware of what is bothering you.  
How do you know?  
Where do you feel it?  
What is the feeling?  
Is it moving?  
Is there any pressure?  
Is there any sound?  
What does it look like?  
Does it remind you of something?*

*Rate the feeling 1 - 10  
Start tapping  
KEEP tapping till the feeling is GONE*



Keep on going until the feeling is almost gone. Make sure you stay on the original memory, as our mind has a habit to wonder to other references to when we felt the same way. Clear one at a time. If there's still a little left after doing this process a few times. Know what number out of 10 it is, know how you know it's that number, for example 4, then release and let go of that number 4 and all that it means, thank it for keeping you safe from harm, but you don't need it anymore and imagine it being tied to a big colourful balloon and watch it drift away from you.

Notice how you begin to feel relaxed, enjoy that feeling.

Go and clear another memory if you want to, or stay with your happy relaxed self.

## **2. A Healthy cleaner diet**

Processed food including pizza, sugar, white bread, white rice and pasta, soda, sugary drinks, diet or reduced fat products, all put your body under tremendous stress. Look on the back of the packets in your cupboard and read the long list of unnatural ingredients. Your body does not recognise or know what to do with them. Ever wonder why you don't seem to eat very much, but you still can't lose weight? It's because your body stores and protects around the cells. Also, your full indicator is over ran by processed sugar and flour, because the dopamine that's being released from say eating some chocolate, tricks your mind into wanting more and more, as the levels spike and drop. Removing sugar and flour from your diet, gives the body chance to regulate and make sensible choices.

We need 91 minerals for a healthy balanced system. It can be as simple as substituting table salt for Himalayan rock salt in cooking. This gives you 86 essential minerals your body needs for good health. Getting a test from a Naturopath, to see if you are mineral or vitamin deficient, can be a great way to keep your body in balance.



### 10 foods to always have in your fridge and cupboards

1. Fresh vegetables - choose farmers markets and local fruit and veg stalls. Feel good about the food you buy. Talk to the grower about what has been used to get the food to the stall. Positive feeling towards food has amazing benefits to how your body absorbs it.
  2. Nuts and seeds - offer an array of fibre, minerals, healthy fats and protein.
  3. Fresh fruit - good for smoothies and a healthy snack.
  4. Fermented food - packed with probiotics and promotes healthy gut bacteria examples are yoghurt, sauerkraut and miso.
  5. Cold pressed Olive oil - for good heart health, rich source of antioxidants and monounsaturated fatty acids. Perfect for cooking or drizzling over a salad
  6. Leafy green vegetables - alkalising food including broccoli and cabbage. The American journal of Clinical Nutrition suggests having 5 serving per day to prevent obesity and chronic deceases
  7. Eggs - great source of protein, vitamins and nutrients. Choose organic or pasture raised to avoid antibiotics, growth hormones and additives
  8. Avocados - monounsaturated fats that have compounds to protect against inflammation and cancer. Avocado oil is great for cooking with or over salads
  9. Green super food powders - wheatgrass is great in green smoothies to promote an alkaline diet
  10. Fresh herbs - naturally flavours food, can be grown in pots in your garden or in your window ledge for a fresh supply.
- (This list was edited from [www.thehealthychef.com](http://www.thehealthychef.com))

Recipes are all over the internet, great advice is always available for promoting good health.

Drink plenty of clean and good **water** to flush out your lymphatic system and keep you fully hydrated.

## **3. Have a daily routine**

Creating a positive start to your day, can and will improve how you deal with the events that occur throughout your waking hours. Remember, all you can **change** is you and how you feel about things. As you change the world within you, your outer world changes too.



Take time to work out a routine that is realistic for you. One that you can do. It doesn't have to take long. It's about creating a sustainable change. Bad routines form habits, that become very hard to get out of. Good routines, when done everyday, also become a habit, but instead of bringing negativity to your life, brings a feel good factor.

## **Morning affirmations**

Your thoughts as soon as you wake are very important. If your first thoughts were, oh I'm so tired, today's going to be rubbish, I can't wait for it to be over. How do you think your body will respond?

As you open your eyes, be grateful for a new day, be grateful for the sunshine or the rain out of the window. Wake up every day and set your mind to intend to have a good day. Say "today's the day. Today is going to be a great day".

Then say in your head, or out loud

“why has my body had all the rest and sleep it needs?”

” why am I going to achieve all that I need to today?”

“Why am I so happy with my life and myself?”

“Today is the day good things are going to happen”

Then when you look in the mirror, no matter what you look like (bed head and furry teeth and all) say “Why am I young and beautiful at every age?”

We do this so your mind and body will respond positively and grant you all those things

## **Exercise everyday**



Richard Branson attributes his success and relaxed, easy going attitude to his daily exercise routine. No matter how busy he is, he makes time to exercise.

Booking time in your diary is the best way to ensure you first of all take the stress out finding time, and secondly actually do it. Many find exercise first thing on a morning puts them in a positive frame of mind all day.

Choose the exercise that suits you best. If walking is where your fitness level is at, mix it up so you don't get bored. Change the area you walk, vary the pace. But most of all enjoy it. Changing our attitudes to exercise is part of the psychology of whether or not you do it, creating a positive attitude, releases more endorphins and makes you feel even better. Embrace your sense of achievement.

Some people enjoy group training sessions. Having a connection with other people, gives us a great sense of belonging. Forming a relationship with fellow exercisers strengthens our bond to positive change. Creating longer lasting results.

## **Invest time in yourself**

Every day spend time with yourself. Ask yourself, how do I feel today?. Have I been kind to myself?. Have I given myself all I need to feel good, well and loved? What can I do to make a positive change? Move forward without judgement. If you have eaten a donut, don't judge. be mindful of how you speak to yourself, because your body can hear everything you say. A lot of people get good value from a daily meditation practice. You could spend just 5 minutes meditating on the bus, a special area in the house or at a place in nature. Or go to a yoga class or whatever helps you to focus.

## **Set your intention for tomorrow**

Living your life in the **NOW** is the best way to feel relaxed. Before you go to bed, set positive intention for tomorrow, let go of what was yesterday and today and mindfully say "tomorrow is going to be great"

Be thankful for yesterday and all the lessons it brought you.  
Be grateful for your life today and all you have within it.  
Be mindful of tomorrow and know your life is great.

Then repeat this daily --- Do it everyday, even if you have difficult times -  
Observe how the life you have created is changing --- Then you will have an **AWESOME** life

*Karen :)*