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# De-stress Guide

understanding and managing stress

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## What is Stress?

The term “*stress*”, as it is currently used was created by Hans Selye in 1936, who defined it as “the non-specific response of the body to any demand for change”.

He also encouraged people to consider *eustress*, or good stress. For example, winning a basketball game or competition can be just as or more stressful as losing. Kissing someone for the first time and wondering what happens next is stressful but may not be as stressful as having a major surgery.

Stress is common and natural, but prolonged stress if not addressed can have adverse effects on health (heart, digestive system, sleep) and emotional well-being (anxiety, depression). It also can affect work, parenting, and other important areas of life.

There are many definitions of the word stress. It is important to know that stress is common but prolonged stress is unhealthy and requires treatment. STRESS CAN BE MANAGED.

# *Signs of Stress*

*1st step in addressing stress is identifying it and how it is showing up and showing out in your daily life. Circle the ones that most closely describe your type of stress.*

*Forgetting things*

*Negative changes in attitude*

*Low mood*

*Easily irritated or quick to anger*

*Increase in use of sarcasm or profanity*

*Withdrawing or Isolating*

*Avoiding situations or people*

*Frequent arguments or disagreements*

*Hard time making decisions*

*Headaches*

*Poor judgment*

*Problem drinking or drug use*

*Exhaustion*



## *Fight*

When the body goes into a state of stress agitation and aggression towards others may occur. Our bodies naturally go into a state of fight or flight which can be a helpful reaction to danger. In your current life this response can have a negative impact on relationships.



## *Flight*

This natural reaction can be useful for survival, for example if you are in an unsafe situation and are trying to get out. In daily life, like when you are at work or are parenting, leaving may not be the healthiest choice to make. The stressor will often follow you wherever you go until it gets properly addressed.



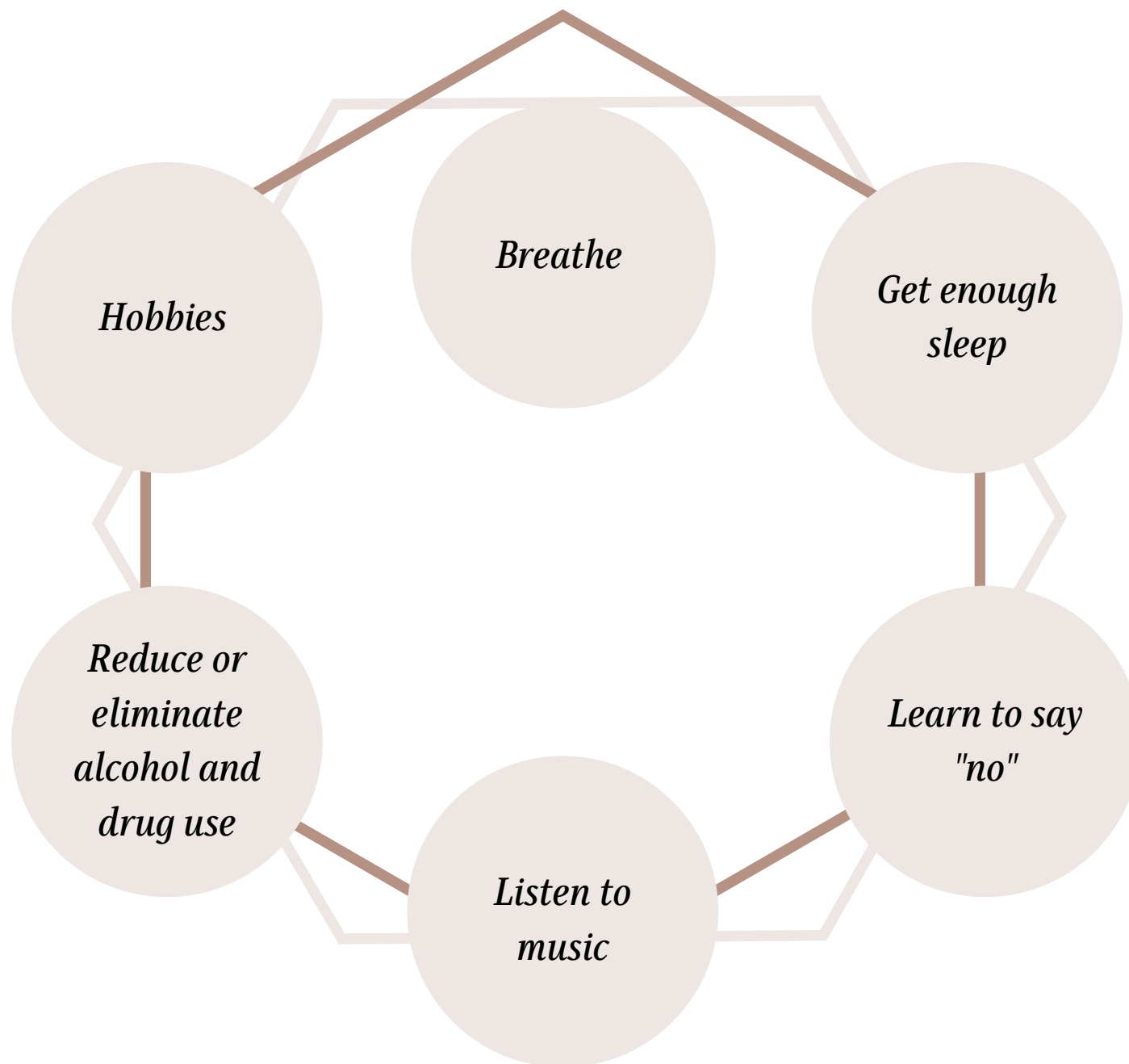
## *Freeze*

Sometimes stress leads to dysregulation and this energy gets locked into the nervous system and people freeze. A sign that freezing has occurred is shallow breathing or holding your breath. A deep breath or sigh is the nervous system regulating itself and catching up on oxygen.



# *Tips for de-stressing*

*Coping with stress is possible. Practice using the tips below to see how each one helps you manage, reduce, or eliminate stress.*



*Hi! I'm Jennifer*

We all experience stress in our daily lives. Long term or chronic stress if not treated affects mental, physical, and emotional well-being. It can even affect a person's ability to complete daily tasks like cleaning, working, or parenting.

Counseling is one of the tools a person can engage in to learn healthy stress management skills. Counseling can be provided short term (a few sessions) or long-term.

LET'S KEEP IN TOUCH



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