



# STRESS BUSTERS

10 SIMPLE AND EASY WAYS TO  
COPE WITH STRESS

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## 10 Simple and Easy Ways to Cope with Stress

Learn how tension affects your health and how to reduce everyday stress.

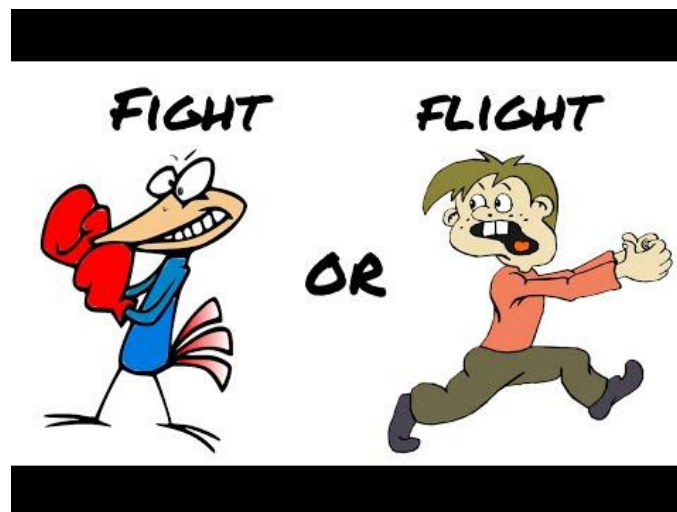
Your car dies, you're facing a deadline at work, or you have to deal with difficult family members or colleagues. How do you respond? How do you feel? Do you feel tension?

Long-term, low-grade or acute stress takes a serious toll on your body and mind, so don't ignore feelings of constant tension. It is important to understand what's happening inside your body and learn simple coping skills to combat the negative impacts of everyday stressors.

### Fight or Flight

Sudden or ongoing stress activates your nervous system and floods your bloodstream with adrenaline and cortisol, two hormones that raise blood pressure, increase heart rate and spike blood sugar. These changes pitch your body into a fight or flight response. That enabled our ancestors to outrun saber-toothed tigers, and it's helpful today for situations like dodging a car accident. But most modern chronic stressors, such as finances or a challenging relationship, keep your body in that heightened state, which hurts your health.

Everyone has different ways of coping with stress and anxiety. As a certified stress counselor and someone who deals with stress and anxiety on the regular, I want to share some of my own tips in this e-book. I use each of these regularly, depending on where I am and what I am going through.



## Effects of Too Much Stress

If constantly under stress, most of us will eventually start to have a decline in our daily functioning.

Multiple studies link chronic stress to a higher risk of heart disease, stroke, depression, weight gain, memory loss and even premature death, so "it's important to recognize the warning signals."

When you hear people say: "I'm so stressed out", it's because they're feeling the effects stress is having on their bodies. Stress can impact just about every part of the body. Adrenaline and cortisol make your heart beat faster, make you breathe faster, and make your muscles tense up.

## How Stress Affects the Body

Stress and anxiety are soul-sucking vampires. They're silent destroyers that slowly creep into your life.

Actually, when this is happening, your body is trying to protect you. It is as if you have a meter inside your body measuring your daily activities. When you're feeling stress and anxiety, your meter is reading, "SYSTEM OVERLOAD!!!"

You're either doing too much and/or you are not dealing with some emotional aspect of your life. Either way, stress and anxiety make us unhappy. It is something that requires tools, tips, and lots of trial and error.

### Stress can lead to:

- Headaches
- Depression
- Heartburn
- Insomnia
- Rapid breathing
- Weakened immune system
- High blood sugar
- High blood pressure
- Stomach problems
- Infertility



Too much stress can also lead to overeating, which can cause health problems like diabetes and obesity. With all the negative ways that stress can affect the body, it's important to find ways to relieve stress and to avoid these conditions.

## Ways to Cope with (Chronic) Stress

"It's key to recognize stressful situations as they occur because it allows you to focus on managing how you react." My motto: "We all need to know when to close our eyes and take a deep breath when we feel tension rising."



### - TALK TO YOUR OQP's (Only Quality People)

This tip is a very important one.

A sure way to cope with stress and anxiety is to know who to talk to when you need to share your thoughts.

Many people with stress and anxiety tend to bottle their feelings up. They do not want others to know what they're feeling, or they feel ashamed to share their problems! Especially if you're a people pleaser and worry about what others think of you, it is very important to have the right people to talk to; it can be a remedy and help you center yourself.

*DO NOT talk to just anyone.* Why? Because there are always people that don't know how to support you. They probably mean well but don't have your best interest at heart. They're more interested in "what's wrong!?" because they're nosy. They will judge the situation and only add to your tension. So, beware of drama seekers.

Also, some people are just "fix it" people and want to just give out advice and tell you what to do! It is important to find people who are ready to listen to your problem and who are genuinely compassionate about your challenges and stressors. So how do you find these supporting people?

Make a list of 3 people that you feel comfortable talking to.

You want people who have your back, people you can trust and who will actually listen to you with compassion and understanding. It might be a spouse, a family member, a friend, or even a counselor/coach or therapist.

Talking face to face with another person releases hormones that reduce stress. Lean on those good listeners in your life.

**Find what works for you!**

## **- Just Breathe**

Breathing is an automatic function of the body that is controlled by the respiratory center of the brain. When we feel stressed, our breathing rate and pattern changes as part of the “fight-or-flight response”. Fortunately, we also have the power to deliberately change our own breathing. Scientific studies have shown that controlling your breath can help to manage stress and stress-related conditions.

The primary role of breathing is to absorb oxygen and to expel carbon dioxide through the movement of the lungs. Muscles that control the movement of the lungs are the diaphragm (a sheet of muscle underneath the lungs) and the muscles between the ribs.

When a person is under stress, their breathing pattern changes. Typically, an anxious person takes small, shallow breaths, using their shoulders rather than their diaphragm to move air in and out of their lungs.

Shallow over-breathing, or hyperventilation, can prolong feelings of anxiety by making the physical symptoms of stress worse. Controlling your breathing can help to improve some of these symptoms.

### **Relaxation response**

When a person is relaxed, they breathe through their nose in a slow, even and gentle way. Deliberately copying a relaxed breathing pattern seems to calm the nervous system that controls the body’s involuntary functions.

Take slow deep breaths. let go of everything happening at the moment and take some quality time to breathe. Inhale, exhale! If you are looking for an instant relief, this will be your life saver. Stress can affect your respiratory and heart rate; the body is conditioned to breathe faster during the stress response. A couple of minutes of deep breathing will ease your body and bring your stress levels down.



## - RAISE YOUR VIBRATIONS

To cope with stress and anxiety, you can also **actively and purposely seek and attract positivity in your life**. If you follow me on social media, you know that I love spreading all the good vibes and positive quotes.

My life has changed in so many ways due to immersing myself in the belief that you are what you read, think and speak out. The truth is, you have a choice when it comes to your feelings and stress-levels. Two people can look at the same situation and see different messages.

The difference is in the choice you make when it comes to perspective. You can choose to:

1. Decide today is a “bad day” because of something bad happening in the morning (for example you got up late and because of this you have to move your schedule around) and of course bad things will just keep happening because you only focus on the bad.
2. Or you can decide that you had a few annoying things happen, but the rest of your day is going to be perfect. You will not let anything “bad” define the way your day will evolve.

Really!!!! It is that simple.

On days when you feel stress and anxiety, this can be a game changer. The more you focus on the positive, the more positivity can trickle into your day, smashing to pieces the stress and anxiety you were feeling.



## - Learn to Tell People No

No is also an answer. Sometimes we try to spread ourselves out too much, saying yes to every request and invitation. Learn to say no and only accept invitations for the events you really want to go to or help out when it's necessary.

"We need to learn to say NO when we don't feel good about the fact that we are going to say YES...."  
There is nothing wrong with an honest answer. Don't commit when you know you will not be able to deliver. We often overpromise and say YES!

When you have too much on your plate, you can feel stressed, and you may start experiencing anxiety and/or depression when you can't deliver on every commitment

If you feel like saying NO is just too harsh, a simple; "I'm sorry but I will not be able to do this right now" is a very nice way to decline a request- Why is it so easy for us to say YES and so hard to say NO? Just think about that for a moment.



## - Have a Good Laugh

Do you remember when you were a child and you used to laugh all the time? It felt pretty good, right? Or when you are with a special friend and something funny happens and you just crack up? Laughing doesn't have to stop just because you're an adult. Laughing can help to reduce stress. It also helps to relax your muscles and makes you feel good.

A good, hearty laugh relieves physical tension and stress, leaving your muscles relaxed for up to 45 minutes after. Laughter boosts the immune system. Laughter decreases stress hormones and increases immune cells and infection-fighting antibodies, thus improving your resistance to disease.

One study of cancer patients found that those who took part in a laughter intervention group had more stress relief than those who weren't in the group.

So how can you laugh your stress away?

- Watch comedy movies/funny memes
- Think about funny things that happened in your life
- Just get a couple of friends together and start the laughing game – who can laugh the most and longest





## - MOVE YOUR BODY

A great way to cope with stress and anxiety is to do a little bit of movement. Exercising can help lower stress. Exercise is believed to be the best way to relieve stress. When you exercise, the stress hormone cortisol is lowered, and the feel-good endorphins are released. Endorphins put you in a better mood and help to relieve pain; they are, in a way, natural painkillers.

Choose an activity you like such as walking, dancing, or whatever else makes you happy. This will increase the odds of you actually doing the activity and enjoying it.

Exercising can help your mind have a mental break from whatever events, people, or thoughts that have been causing stress and anxiety.

It might even help if you work out with a friend or take an exercise class. Personally, I like to dance and walk. But I know many people exercise better alone which keeps them focused and motivated.

Now, I am not saying you NEED to go to the gym. I am not even saying you have to go for a run. Just move your body when you feel stressed.

The key is... find what type of exercise works for you and stick with it!



### - Lower Your Caffeine Intake

Caffeine can give you that morning jolt you need to get going, but too much can also increase anxiety and stress. While some people can have multiple cups of coffee or tea, other people may feel jittery after just one.

Caffeine is not just found in coffee and tea. Chocolate and many energy drinks also have a high amount of caffeine. If you want to feel less stressed, try lowering the amount of caffeine you have every day and see if that helps you feel more relaxed.

## Caffeine exists in...



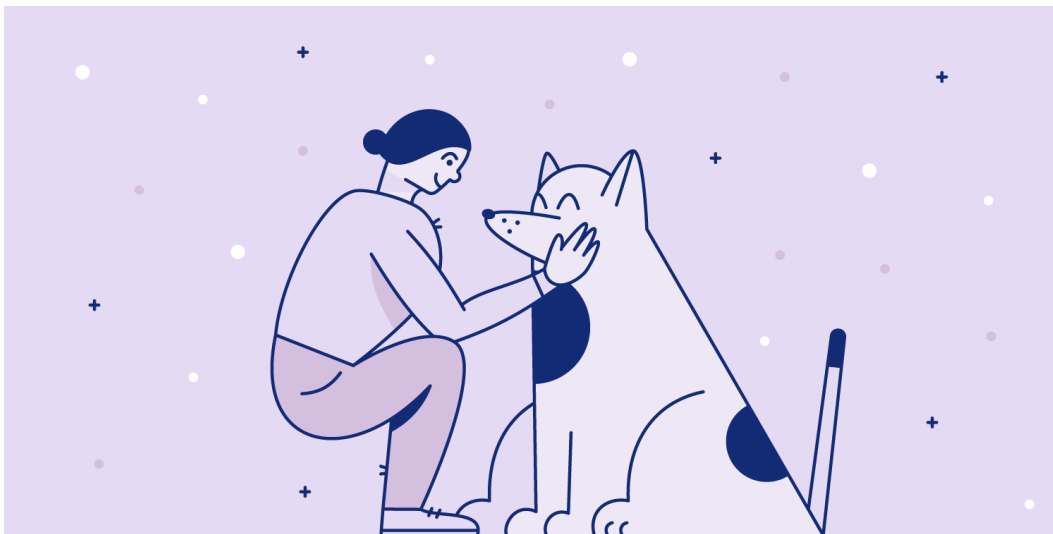
## - SPEND TIME WITH A DOG

On days you are looking for ways to cope with stress and anxiety, your dog can really help you out. There is a reason why there are therapy dogs that go to retirement homes and help people out with PTSD. They are calming, relaxing, and bring instant peace to many people.

Many studies reveal that petting an animal can help lower a person's stress level. It calms the heart and helps people adapt to situations that cause anxiety. Clinical studies show that spending even a short time with a companion animal can cut anxiety levels almost in half.

Petting a dog is like having another human connection. Someone that is there for you when you need them most.

Looking into the eyes of a dog will help bring your stress levels down and allows some happiness to shine into your life!



## - Listen to Relaxing Music

Music can have a profound effect on both the emotions and the body. Faster music can make you feel more alert and concentrate better. Cheerful music can make you feel more optimistic and positive about life. A slower tempo can quiet your mind and relax your muscles, making you feel soothed while releasing the stress of the day. Music is effective for relaxation and stress management.

When you're feeling stressed, turn on music that is slow-paced to help you relax. Sometimes listening to this type of music can bring down blood pressure and cortisol levels. Instrumental sounds and nature music are among the types of music that can have relaxing results.

If you're feeling anxious or stressed, calming music can help to settle your mind. Several studies have shown that when people undergoing surgery hear calming music, they have lower blood pressure and need less pain medication than those who don't listen to soothing music.

According to researchers, listening to music triggers the release of dopamine in your brain. Dopamine is a neurotransmitter that promotes feelings of happiness and excitement. Particularly, listening to new music, rather than the same old playlist, results in the largest production of dopamine and happiness.

So, when you are feeling stressed just play the music you love, close your eyes and relax.



## - **Decluttering your space means decluttering your mind**

### **Decluttering can reduce stress**

Clutter can cause feelings of stress, fatigue, and depression. Stress contributes to poor sleep, poor eating habits and general poor health, so it's a good idea to start decluttering – one step at a time.

How does decluttering reduce stress?

If you're looking for an easy way to reduce stress, decluttering your environment may be a good place to start. **Getting rid of excess stuff** can benefit your mental health by making you feel calmer, happier, and more in control. A tidier space can make for a more relaxed mind.

Get rid of the clutter in your wardrobe/house to clear your mind. Simple act of clearing things out can ease your mind. Throw or give away old stuff. Try to be more organized, have schedules, plan your day ahead and stick to your plan of action. Last minute tension and scrambling can be avoided. It keeps you calm, relaxed and happy.

Laundry to wash, meals to make, meetings to plan...Is there anyone who doesn't feel overwhelmed when faced with the seemingly endless to-do lists of life? Just looking at the sheer amount of stuff in our home or workspace can make us feel tired and anxious before we even get started.

Home organization experts have always recommended decluttering to make the home a safer, more pleasant place to live. But beyond that, scientific research shows that clutter can be bad for your physical and mental health.

Set aside 15 minutes per day to straighten up one place, such as a messy shelf or drawer. This way you'll feel happier and more relaxed at the end of the day, and gradually create more order as you go along.

A decluttered space makes you more relaxed and happier.



**While stress is a normal part of life, too much stress is clearly harmful to your physical and mental well-being.**

**Talk to your doctor about ways to manage stress if you're experiencing any of these symptoms:**

- **Prolonged periods of poor sleep**
- **Regular, severe headaches**
- **Unexplained weight loss or gain**
- **Feelings of isolation, withdrawal or worthlessness**
- **Constant anger and irritability**
- **Loss of interest in activities**
- **Constant worrying or obsessive thinking**
- **Excessive alcohol or drug use**
- **Inability to concentrate**



## Are you looking for more ways to cope with stress and anxiety?

Stress is an adverse reaction we have to excessive pressure or other situations we face in our lives. It can leave us feeling overwhelmed or overloaded by the demands placed upon us.

It may be a response to the feeling that we have more work to do than we can fit into our working day, or it could be related to worries about finances, relationships or a change in our circumstances, such as moving to a new house.

Stress is not always bad. It's a normal human response and can be good at motivating us. But if we are feeling overwhelmed by this stress for a long period of time it can impact on our mental and physical health.

While stress itself is a normal part of life, recurring stress that interferes with your daily activities and overall well-being is *not*. Stress can manifest itself in different ways, including excessive worrying, inability to sleep at night, and body aches.

Fortunately, there are many ways to manage stress.

**A stress- counselor can help you understand why you feel stressed and find strategies that can help you learn how to cope with stress.**

**The F.L.Y. Virtual Stress-Buster Program includes inspiration and research-based tools to help you transform your stress into positive energy.**



**“Talking to a stress-counsellor helps us go back to basics about how we are feeling when we’re stressed, and why. It’s about being listened to and being accepted for who we are,”**

***I hope you have enjoyed reading this e-book as much as I have enjoyed writing it.***



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