

Practical Self-Care Tools to Avoid Chronic Stress and Burnout

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1/26/22



MEETING MY GOALS LIKE...





David Slaters/Caters News

SELF-CARE ≠



The self-care solution in a nutshell

- ✓ Calm down your dang nervous system
- ✓ Choose better thoughts and ask better questions.



What
percentage
of people
feel stress at
work?

The American Institute for Stress reports that...

- 🤔 83 percent of people feel stress at work
- 😞 Americans aged 30-49 are the most stressed age group, at 65%
- 😳 66 percent of people have trouble sleeping because of stress

Common Symptoms of Stress



Muscle tension



Fatigue



Anxiety



Insomnia



Appetite changes



Stomach problems

Anxiety → persistent, excessive worries even in the absence of a particular external source of stress.

Stress → usually linked to a specific trigger

Stress and health conditions...



High blood pressure



Formation of plaque in arteries



Diabetes



Addiction





Calm your Nervous System

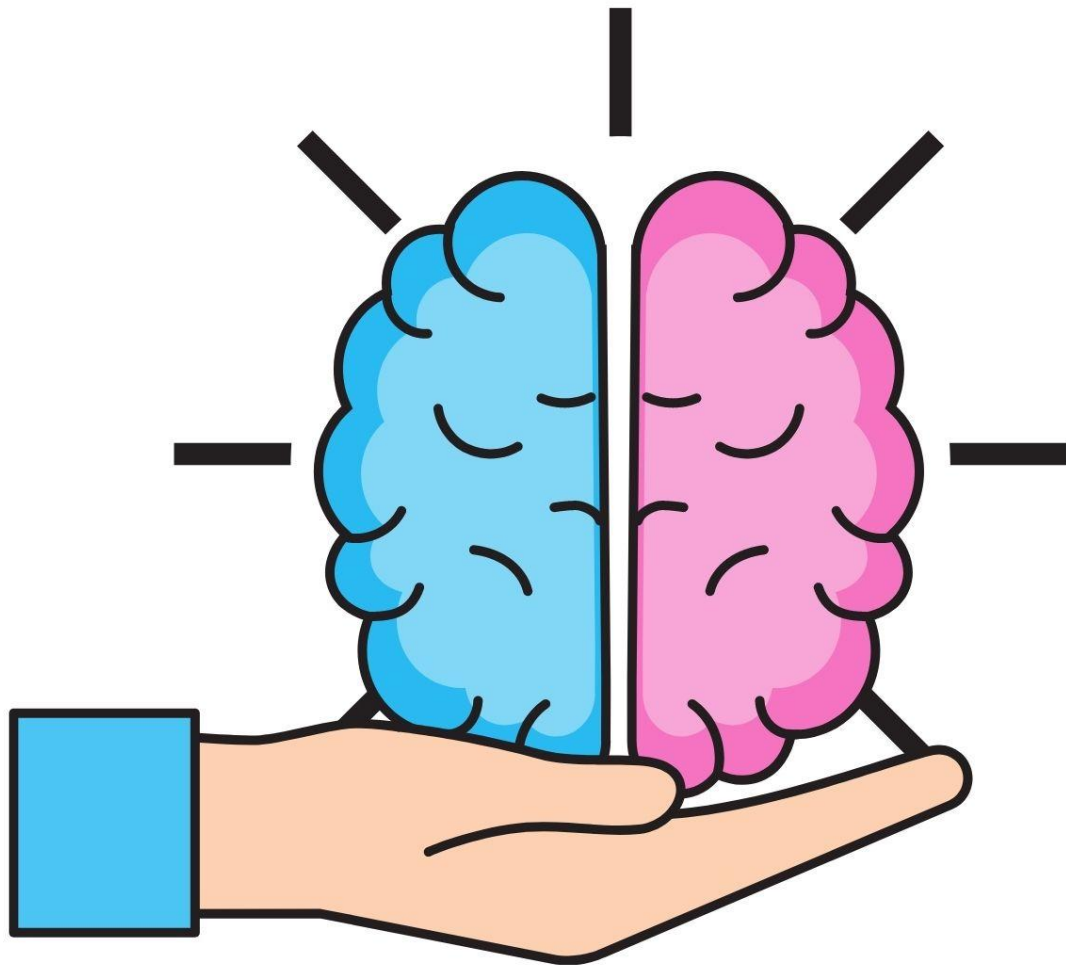


Stress Reduction Hacks

1. Bilateral stimulation
2. Box breathing
3. “Yoga” Body

Bilateral Stimulation





Box Breathing



Tips for Box Breathing

- When you are breathing in and out, breathe through your nose.
- When you breathe in, breathe deeply enough that you notice your stomach moving out. You can put your hand on your stomach to help you feel that, if it helps.
- Hold your breath with a light touch, not intensely.
- When you're breathing out, feel your stomach relaxing.
- Again in and out breaths are both through the nose.

Yoga Body







Yoga Body



Very effective



Use any time, anywhere



No one knows

The Anti-anxiety Toolkit

Rapid Techniques to Rewire the Brain

Melissa Tiers



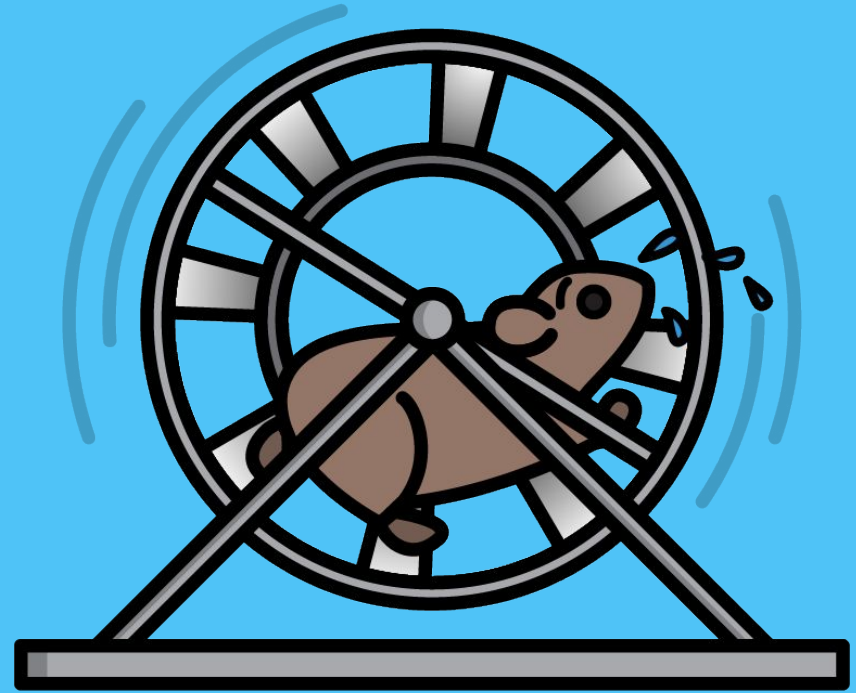
More stress relief tools to explore...

- Vagus nerve activation techniques
- EFT (Emotional Freedom Technique) — also known as “tapping”

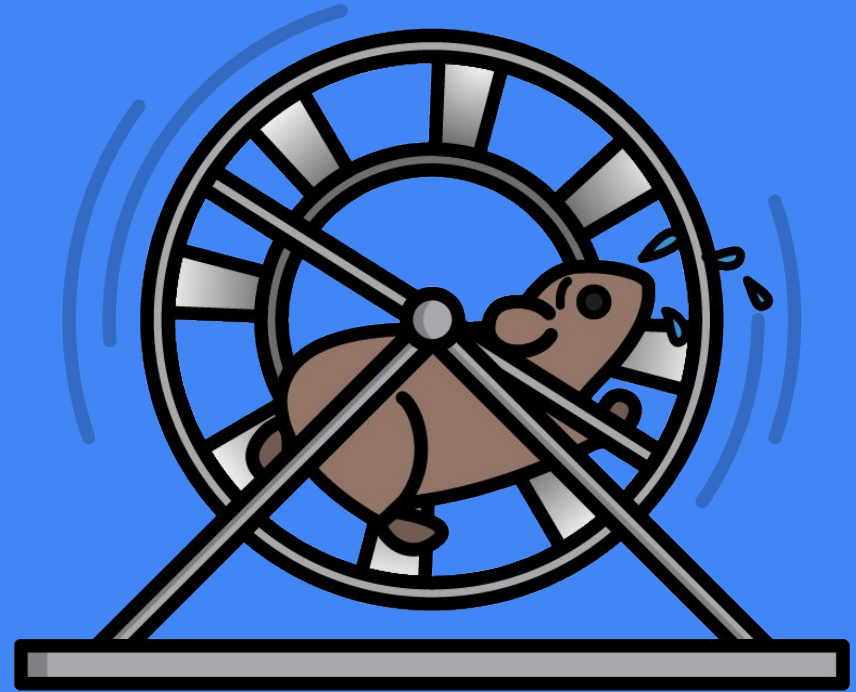


**Choose Better Thoughts
and Ask Better Questions**

- I have too much to do
- I should be more fit
- I'm such a failure
- Why is he such a jerk?
- I don't have enough time.
- Why am I so weird?







- My partner shouldn't argue with me
- WHY did I SAY that?
- Why is she is doing better than me?
- Work should be less stressful
- I never get enough sleep
- The weather sucks





Negativity Bias

As humans, we tend to:

-  Remember traumatic experiences better than positive ones.
-  Recall insults better than praise.
-  React more strongly to negative stimuli.
-  Think about negative things more frequently than positive ones.

— **VeryWellMind.com**

“On a biological level, negative thinking is associated with increased stress. In fact, repetitive negative thinking is seen as a behavioural marker of chronic stress by causing elevated blood pressure and higher levels of the stress hormone cortisol.”

Dr. Natalie Marchant
Faculty of Brain Sciences
University College London

There's not enough...

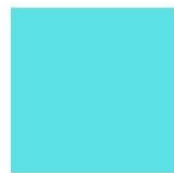


I'm not enough

- Brilliant
- Appreciated
- Successful
- Patient
- Kind
- Talented
- Etc.



People who feel
insufficient



Other people who feel
insufficient



The rest of the people
who feel insufficient

How to break the negative thought loops?





Choosing Better Thoughts: Part 1

Gratitude

If you practice gratitude daily — and literally do nothing else — your stress will begin to decrease.



"GRATITUDE IS NOT ONLY THE GREATEST OF
VIRTUES, BUT THE PARENT OF ALL OTHERS."

MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO

— From *Pro Planico*



©yowangdu.com

Anger could lead you to lose your job.

Frustration can harm your health.

Jealousy can hurt your relationships.

Fear can stop you from going after your dreams.

Love and **compassion** brings you closer connections with others.

Self-confidence motivates you to take action toward your dreams.

Enthusiasm makes you attractive to others and moves you forward.

Gratitude has been linked to...

- Less stress
- Lower inflammation
- Less depression
- Lower blood pressure
- Reduced physical pain
- Stronger social relationships
- Greater life satisfaction
- Better sleep

FEATURE | Posted Nov. 25, 2015

Gratitude is good medicine

Practicing gratitude boosts emotional and physical well being

A growing body of research is confirming that an ounce of gratitude is worth a pound of cure.

"The practice of gratitude can have dramatic and lasting effects in a person's life," said [Robert A. Emmons](#), professor of psychology at UC Davis and a leading scientific expert on the science of gratitude.

"It can lower blood pressure, improve immune function and facilitate more efficient sleep. Gratitude reduces lifetime risk for depression, anxiety and substance abuse disorders, and is a key resiliency factor in the prevention of suicide," he said.

Practicing gratitude also affects behavior. Studies have shown that grateful people engage in more exercise, have better dietary behaviors, are less likely to smoke and abuse alcohol, and have higher rates of medication adherence – factors that translate into a healthier and happier life.



Starting a gratitude practice can be as easy as listing what you're grateful for at the beginning or end of each day.

How do you practice gratitude, exactly?

Easy! Start taking one “miracle minute” every day to say what you’re grateful for.





What are you grateful for?!

- I'm grateful that we are healthy!
- I'm grateful that it's raining!
- I'm grateful that we have good food to eat!!
- I'm grateful that we have nice friends!



Compare that to “normal” thoughts...

- Crap, I didn't call mom yesterday
- It looks really crappy and cold out there
- I have too much to do!!
- I suck at my business and I'll never be able to retire from UCSF
- I wish I didn't have to go in to work today.
- I didn't sleep that well last night.

BIG things to be grateful for...



A roof over my head



The beauty of the night sky



Basic mental health



Clean, running water

Places to be grateful for...



Yosemite



Viks Indian Chaat



Tibet



Starbucks

Education or training to be grateful for...



Headspace meditation app



My masters degree training



HH the Dalai Lama's teachings



My life coaching teachers

Sensations to be grateful for...



The smell of jasmine



Fall leaves



A hot shower



The smell of coffee

Another way to practice gratitude....

Write a gratitude letter

Ideas for your letter of gratitude...



I've been meaning to let you know that...



I admire how you are...



I'm grateful that you...



I remember that nice episode when you ...

What are you grateful for?

#1 Each person say one thing that you're grateful for and keep going, in rounds, until you've all said 3 gratitudes. 🥰

#2 Say something you are grateful for about another person in the group. Go in rounds until each person has said and received a gratitude for (and from each other person.) 🥰

Choosing Better Thoughts: Part 2

Fair is Fair



Cycle on negative thoughts and questions

+

Constantly seek evidence for them with
more negative thoughts and questions

=



❌ Crappy Thought: I don't have enough time

Evidence:



There are only two weeks left for the grant



I have 5000 meetings



I'm already behind on the other thing



My Precious

Give equal air time
to better thoughts...



Better Thoughts



I can figure this out. I've dealt with deadlines before



I'm totally capable of reasoning out a way to get the most important things done.



I may be able to postpone some of the meetings

And ask better
questions...



Examples of better questions

- ✓ How could I make this more pleasant and meaningful for myself?
- ✓ What if I choose 2 of the most important things and maybe see if the other 8 things don't matter as much as I think?
- ✓ How can I balance work and rest during this?



More good questions...

- ✓ What if I have just enough time to do everything that is actually important to do?
- ✓ What if this isn't anyone's fault and there's nothing wrong?
- ✓ Why would I actually *want* to make time for this?

DON'T WORRY BE HAPPY



This is **not about gaslighting yourself** and trying to believe that you have a ton of time when your nervous system is all jacked up believing the exact opposite.

This is about practicing **NOTICING** and **TELLING THE TRUTH** about the rest of reality that is easy to ignore when your brain is hyper-focused on “not enough.”

— Simone Seol

When you choose better thoughts,
and ask better questions, your brain
becomes your ally in finding solutions
instead of being your enemy.

Better Thoughts and Questions Practice

Come up with **3** better thoughts and **3** better questions related to this unuseful thought:

“Everything is so hard right now”

Better Thoughts

- Actually...
- I already have...
- I'm choosing to ...
- I have a TON of options for...
- I'm smart, so I can...

Better Questions

- What if...?
- Where can I find...?
- How can I...?

Breakout Session Instructions

Start with crappy thought:
“Everything is so hard right now”

Come up with **3** better thoughts
and **3** better questions.

Tip: Act like you’re a lawyer who
needs to prove that “Everything is
so hard right now” is *not the whole
truth*.

Save your answers to share in the
chat and pick one person to read
them.

Starters for Better Thoughts:

- Actually...
- I already have..
- I’m choosing...
- I have a TON of options for
- I’m smart, so I can...

... for Better Questions

- What if...?
- Where can I find...?
- How can I...?

Examples of Better Thoughts

- Actually, a lot of things are easy right now, like...
- I already have a lot of love and support to help me get through this
- I'm choosing to do this project because the results are results that I want.
- I have a TON of options for dealing with all of this.
- I'm smart, so I can figure out ways to make it all easier

Examples of Better Questions

- What is actually easy for me right now?
- Where are the opportunities in this situation?
- How can I make it easier for me and everyone?
- What if there are million things about my life that are great? What are those?

The background of the slide is a photograph of a vast mountain range. The sky is filled with soft, wispy clouds in shades of blue, yellow, and orange, suggesting a sunrise or sunset. The mountains in the distance are layered and hazy, creating a sense of depth. In the foreground, a dark, rocky mountain ridge is visible, and a small figure of a hiker can be seen standing on a peak on the right side.

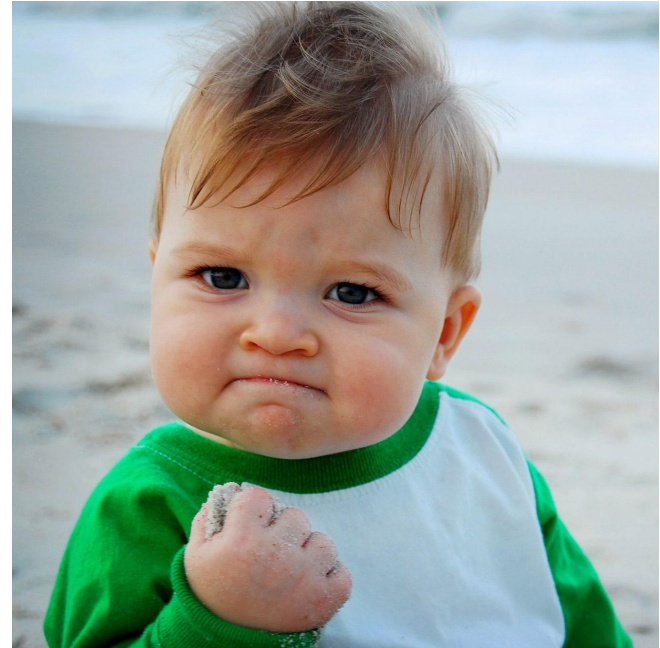
Choosing Better Thoughts: Part 3

3 Good Things




3 Good Things About the Day



Any random good thing that happens



Any success or accomplishment

1.  Sunset was amazing
2.  Good orange at lunch
3.  Finished first part of the thing

1.  Kept my mouth
shut

2.  Got good sleep

3.  Called the bank

**Naming 3 good things
about today so far...**

Today's Self-Care Techniques

Body-based stress hacks

- Bilateral stimulation
- Box breathing
- “Yoga Body”

Gratitudes

Fair is Fair

(Choosing better thoughts and questions.)

3 Good Things



Just as we teach physical hygiene to stay physically fit, we need to cultivate emotional hygiene, learning to tackle our destructive emotions, so as to better achieve peace of mind.

The Dalai Lama

Thank you!

yolandaobannon.com

