

Reducing Stress, Anxiety and Depression

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Stress, Anxiety and Depression

Stress is a feeling of emotion and physical tension. Anxiety is a feeling of fear, worry, or unease.

Depression is a mood disorder causing feelings of sadness and a loss of interest. When we are stressed, anxious or depressed, we release a set of chemicals in our body which are very different from those released when we are happy. These chemicals can create damage if continuously released for the long-term.

Symptoms of Stress, Anxiety, and Depression

- Fatigue
- Lethargy
- Poor concentration
- Shallow breathing
- Shortness of breath
- Disorientation
- Sleeping too much
- Unable to sleep
- Shaking
- Racing heart
- Numbness in hands and feet
- Isolation from others
- Withdrawing from friends and activities
- Overeating or binge eating
- Not eating
- Drinking too much
- Using recreational or prescription drugs
- Constantly busy to avoid facing problems
- Angry outbursts
- Violence
- Zoning out with the TV, Computer or books

Causes of Stress, Anxiety and Depression

The list of causes is endless, some are created by forces outside of ourselves and others by our own thoughts, beliefs and behaviors. Causes for stress can be from experiences outside of ourselves, e.g. losing a job, the death of a loved one, or by our fears of what could happen, from within ourselves. How we deal with any cause can create more or less stress, anxiety and depression.

- Losing a job
- Work and family responsibilities

- Personal illness
- Death of a loved one
- Fear for your personal safety
- Fear of the safety of loved ones
- Free-floating fear of the future
- Unable to pay your bills
- Living beyond your means
- Procrastination
- Loneliness
- Sense of powerlessness

Managing Stress, Anxiety and Depression

There are many different types of exercises and techniques for managing stress, anxiety and depression.

For serious levels of stress, anxiety and depression, an individual should seek medical help from a qualified practitioner. However, there are many things we can do for ourselves to help alleviate these feelings.

The following are some suggestions which truly work.

Deep Breathing Exercises

When an individual is stressed, anxious or depressed, their breathing is shallow and quick with the result of a lack of oxygen throughout the body. You can immediately relax yourself by slowing down your breathing.

Stand up or sit in a comfortable position with your feet on the floor. Breathe in deeply through your nose to the count of six, hold that breath to a count of six, and exhale the breath through your mouth to a count of six, and rest to a count of six. Repeat this exercise at least 6 times, and 10 times if you can. Do this deep breathing exercise as often as you need to in any given day. It will increase the flow of oxygen and you will relax when this happens.

Just breathing as slowly as you can with attention for five minutes will help you relax.

If you have difficulty falling asleep, with your mind racing in circles, do this deep breathing exercise while lying in bed. It will help you fall asleep.

Physical Exercise, Just Get Moving

Physical exercise is a major stress buster. We release a certain set of hormones when we exercise physically, and these make us feel better. Physical exercise can include walking, running, working out at the gym, dancing, cycling, or any physically-based activity. But it involves getting up and moving.

If you enjoy sports, join a soccer team, play tennis, hockey, join a running or walking group, get involved in the sport you enjoy.

About any form of exercise can help relieve stress, anxiety and depression. It can help you move away from anger, tension and frustration. Exercise releases endorphins, the good hormones, these make you feel good and increase your feeling of self-esteem.

[Practice Walking with Attention](#)

If you are feeling frazzled, worn out, disheartened, going outside for a walk will change how you feel.

Walk slowly, just to enjoy the walk. Stop and look to see what is around you, the flowers, the birds singing, the sun, the clouds, feel the breeze.

If you can find a place to walk with trees then you will receive even greater benefits. Touch the trees, their bark, hold a few leaves, the energy of trees is very powerful. If you can, stand with your back touching the trunk of a tree, it will transfer healing energy into your auras and physical body.

[Music Painting, and All Artistic Endeavors](#)

Music has been used for centuries as a power for healing. There are music therapists who travel the world giving energy treatment with music. Certain composers have created music specifically with healing intentions. If you play a piano or any musical instrument, just play.

Choose whatever music you need, if you need soothing to quiet a troubled mind then choose music that soothes you. If you are feeling down and depressed, choose music that puts a smile on your face and a tap to your feet. If you have happy memories associated with certain pieces of music, play them. If you play a musical instrument, dust it off, and just play. A musician needs to play music.

[Painting and All Artistic Activities](#)

If you are an artist you must do your art whatever that is. Paint if you are a painter, make pottery if you make pottery, sculpt, write, and do whatever it is you do as an artist. If you are an artist, doing art gives comfort, it helps to fulfill you as a person, it helps you relax and feel more fulfilled in life. It is a special way to release stress and anxiety.

So often people who are stressed forget to tap into the special talents and stop doing the very things that are music to their soul, the very essence of their being.

[Everyday Little Ways to Relax](#)

You can do so many small things that are easily available to you. Take a long bath, use your favorite salts or bubbles, and enjoy a good cup of coffee or tea. Go out and sit in a café and enjoy the coffee and people watching, just going out will help your mood to change. Go and see a movie, go to a local concert. Just get moving.

[Meditation](#)

Just find a quiet place where you can be quiet with yourself. The purpose of meditation is to slow down your breathing, to quiet the noises in your mind, and to help you relax physically and emotionally.

A simple meditation is to just do the breathing exercise I described above, inhaling through your nose and exhaling through your mouth, taking breaths from deep in your diaphragm. When doing this you need to focus simply on your breathing, forgetting everything else.

Another simple meditation is to count from 100 down to 1, visualizing each number in your mind. This will slow down your breathing and change your mental focus.

There are many other more complex methods of meditating, you can read hundreds of books for these.

I have an article on my website titled Meditating with Compassion. It will guide you through a very relaxing meditation.

[A Visualization of a Happy Time, Place, or Experience](#)

Stress, anxiety and depression are focused on negative thinking. You need to shift your thinking to happy memories of things you experienced, saw. It can be as simple as remembering playing with a child, your pet, swimming in a lake, walking in a forest. It can be anything

Just close your eyes, sit comfortably and remember. Remember the details, how you felt, and how happy you were.

Heading for that “happy time, place, or experience” will shift your mood, your thoughts, and your feelings away from the negative into the positive.

[Develop Mindfulness and Attention](#)

Sit quietly and focus your attention on one thing. It can be something in the room or in your home, your breathing, or something positive and special to you. When your mind wanders away from this one thing, bring it back and concentrate on it again. As you persevere, your concentration will improve and strengthen. If you feel sleepy sit up straight, and if you become restless, relax your posture.

I have many articles on various aspects of energy on my website at www.mkprojects.com and I hope you will visit my website to read them under “Free Articles”. I can be reached by email at mary@mkprojects.com.

With Love and Caring,

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