

7 WAYS TO COMPLETE THE STRESS CYCLE

01.

Physical Activity



Engage your body in movement. Running, walking, dancing, yoga, and gardening are a few examples. Physical activity allows the body to release tension and reduce stress hormones like adrenaline and cortisol. It also produces the “feel-good” hormone called endorphins which improves your overall mood.

02.

Social Connection



When we engage in positive social interactions and receive emotional support, our body signals to our brain that we’re in a low-threat place which resets our nervous system. Examples include spending time with a friend, connecting with a colleague, volunteering, and group activities.



Breathing Exercises

03.

Breathwork activates our parasympathetic nervous system, which sends a message to our body that we can relax. There are a variety of techniques that can be utilized depending on your situation. Examples include box breathing, alternate nostril breathing, 4-7-8 breathing, and diaphragmatic breathing. Practice any technique that feels most comfortable for you!

Creative Expression

04.

Creative outlets can support emotional processing and self-expression, while counteracting the effects of stress. Painting, writing, knitting, cooking, crafting, and playing an instrument are a few of the many avenues for you to explore your creative side.



05.

Laughter

There’s nothing quite like the joy we experience during a deep belly laugh. Laughter that engages the diaphragm will stimulate the vagus nerve and activate the parasympathetic nervous system, ultimately relaxing the body. Laughter additionally lifts your mood and boosts your immune system.



06. A Good Cry

Crying is one of our body’s natural mechanisms to release stress. Do you ever wonder why you feel like taking a nap after a good cry? The body releases hormones like oxytocin and endorphins that transition us to a calming state. It’s important to note that it’s best to pay gentle attention to the physical sensations in the body while crying, versus focusing on the stressor that led to the tears.



Affection

07.

Affection is a great way to release the “love hormone”, otherwise called oxytocin. This hormone sends a signal to our body that we are safe and secure. Examples of engaging in affection include cuddling a pet or hugging a loved one for 20 seconds, ensuring both parties are maintaining their own centre of balance.

