

5 Minute Stress Relief Strategies

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MINDFUL
MONDAY

Stress comes from many areas of life, and stress relief comes in many forms. While some people like using one favorite tool for stress relief, many experts feel that the most efficient approach to stress relief is one that attacks stress from several different directions, utilizing an overall plan of attack for stress relief.

An important first step in this stress relief plan is to have one or two quick stress relief strategies that can help you **relax** your physiology or **de-stress** your mind, to **reverse** your body's [stress response](#) so that you can think clearly and avoid the negative effects of [chronic stress](#).

The following are some quick and effective stress relief strategies that can help you do just that: these stress relief activities, once mastered, should enable you to de-stress in under 5 minutes so that you can move on to the next steps in your stress relief strategy or immediately face the stressors at hand.



Here are several strategies to try

Breathing Exercises

Stress relief breathing is one of the most popular ways of calming down quickly for good reason: [breathing exercises](#) can be done by anyone, at any time, with little training, and at no expense! Breathing exercises can also be combined with other [stress relief techniques](#) (such as guided imagery or meditation) for added benefits and ease of use.



PMR

[Progressive Muscle Relaxation](#), or PMR, is a technique you can learn that, with practice, enables you to completely relax all of the muscles in your body quickly, thereby [releasing tension](#) from stress. As each of the techniques that are mentioned in this article, PMR helps you to reverse your body's stress response quickly. It can also be done at virtually any time or place, once you've learned the technique and practiced it. (It's especially useful for when you're trying to [get to sleep](#).)



Mini-Meditation

[Meditation](#) is gaining status as a stress management mainstay because it brings so many wonderful benefits, including (after consistent practice) resilience against future stressors! Many people shy away from learning

meditation because they think they don't have the ability to learn the technique or the time to practice regularly. Actually, meditation can be very simple to learn, and even 5 minutes of meditation can make a difference.



Aromatherapy

As far as ease of use goes, aromatherapy is about as easy as they come! Studies show that certain types of aromatherapy can be effective for [stress relief](#), and once you have the aromatherapy going, it's passive stress relief—you don't have to do anything except go about your regular activities as you normally would! (Combining techniques can provide added stress relief, but isn't necessary.)



Quick Burst of Exercise

Exercise is an excellent [stress relief technique](#) because it's great for your whole body and brings physical benefits other than those experienced because of a reversed stress response. Exercise can provide a distraction, endorphins and an outlet for frustration. Unfortunately, it's not always practical as a 'quick' stress reliever, as the full benefits of exercise are often not achieved until sustained exercise has occurred, and that can leave

you sweaty; therefore, you may not use it in a class or at the office, or when you're meeting with clients and under stress. However, in situations where it can work, even a quick burst of exercise (like a quick run up several flights of stairs, or several sets of push-ups) can be useful for stress relief. (Always check with your doctor before starting any exercise program, of course.)

Have a Good Laugh

Maintaining a sense of humor can relieve [stress in several ways](#).

First, there are specific [benefits that you get from laughter](#) that can help you relieve stress and even stay healthier in your life. Also, laughter connects people,

and [social support](#) is good for stress relief.

More, it's hard to stay stressed when you're laughing. And maintaining a sense of humor reminds us that our stressors may not be as menacing as they seem, and probably have solutions, too.

For these reasons, laughing in the face of stress can help you feel better in a matter of minutes.

