



- Stomach pain
- Irritable bowel
- Difficulty focusing or concentrating
- Irritable mood or snapping at people
- Stonewalling
- Depression

What can YOU do?

Regulating your body is the key to feeling more in control and relaxed and keeping you from experiencing the adverse effects of your stress.

Here are some techniques to help you achieve this:

Diaphragmatic Breathing: Place your fingers together and put them behind your head. Lean back in a chair or laydown while resting your head on your hands. This focuses diaphragmatic breathing. Take 10 slow, deep breathes and exhale slowly and rhythmically.

Grounding: Before starting this exercise, focus in on your breathing. Make sure you are taking slow, deep, long breaths can help you maintain a sense of calm or help you return to a calmer, more regulated state. Once you find your breath, go through the following steps to help ground yourself:

- 5:** Acknowledge FIVE things you see around you. It could be a pen, a spot on the ceiling, anything in your surroundings.
- 4:** Acknowledge FOUR things you can touch around you. It could be your hair, a pillow, or the ground under your feet.
- 3:** Acknowledge THREE things you hear. This could be any external sound. If you can hear your belly rumbling that counts! Focus on things you can hear outside of your body.
- 2:** Acknowledge TWO things you can smell. Maybe you are in your office and smell pencil, or maybe you are in your bedroom and smell a pillow. If you need to take a brief walk to find a scent you could smell soap in your bathroom, or nature outside.
- 1:** Acknowledge ONE thing you can taste. What does the inside of your mouth taste like—gum, coffee, or the sandwich from lunch?

Body Scanning: This technique should be done multiple times a day to assess your body for the physiological symptoms of stress. Imagine a little plane flying around. See the plane starting at the top of your head. Notice if your forehead is tense. Your jaw. If it is, tighten the muscle and release. Next, imagine the plane flying downwards towards your toes. As it passes each part of your body, assess for tension. Tense and release each muscle. Continue doing this until the plane has reached your toes.

Guided Imagery: For this technique, you think of soothing scenes, places, or experiences in your mind to help you relax and focus. Guided imagery can not only help you to reinforce a positive vision of yourself, but it can also be helpful for getting rid of those intrusive or negative thoughts.

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When our body activates too much fight or flight response and we do not get enough rest to balance it out... nervous system dysregulation occurs.

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