

Stress Management Guide

Gentle tools for calming your mind, body & nervous system

Choose what feels manageable right now.

You do not have to do everything. Even a few minutes of intentional calm can be meaningful.

Box Breathing — 4 • 4 • 4

A simple breathing practice you can use almost anywhere.

1. Breathe in Slowly for 4 counts.	2. Hold Gently for 4 counts.	3. Breathe out Slowly for 4 counts.
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Repeat for **3–5 rounds**, without forcing your breath.

A Short Meditation

Get comfortable sitting or lying down. Close your eyes if that feels good. Take a slow breath in... and gently breathe out. Notice where your body is supported. Allow your shoulders to soften. Unclench your jaw. Let your breathing find its natural rhythm.

For the next few moments, you do not have to solve anything.

Just be here. Just breathe.

Create a Calming Environment

Essential Oils Diffuse a scent you find soothing, such as lavender or another favorite aroma.	Soft Music Play gentle instrumental music, nature sounds, jazz, meditation music—or whatever helps you settle.
Hot Epsom Salt Soak Create a quiet bath or foot soak and allow yourself time to simply rest.	Gentle Massage Use light, comfortable pressure as part of a calming self-care ritual.

Mindfulness & Grounding

Bring your attention back to what is happening right now.

5–4–3–2–1 Grounding

5	things I can SEE
4	things I can FEEL
3	things I can HEAR
2	things I can SMELL
1	thing I can TASTE

The goal is not to make every thought disappear. It is simply to bring your attention back to **right now**.

Gratitude in This Moment

What are 3 things I can be grateful for right now? They do not have to be huge—a warm bed, someone who loves me, a good cup of tea, sunlight through the window, or the fact that I made it through today.

Protecting Your Energy

Say No Without Guilt “No” can be an act of self-care. You do not have to overextend yourself to prove that you care.	Set Boundaries You are allowed to decide what you have the capacity for and what you need to protect your peace.
Practice Pacing Break activities into smaller pieces. Rest before you are completely depleted. You do not have to finish everything at once.	Practice Mindfulness Pause. Notice your breath, your body, and this moment without judging yourself for what you feel.

Affirmations

- I give myself permission to rest.
- I do not have to do everything today.
- My needs matter too.
- No is a complete sentence.
- I can protect my peace without guilt.
- I honor what my body needs today.
- I can take life one moment at a time.

My Stress-Relief Plan

When I notice stress building, I can:

Something that helps calm my body:

Something that helps quiet my mind:

A boundary I may need today:

One thing I can let go of today:

My affirmation for today:
