

# Shake off the stress

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## Tips to help control your response to stress.

It is important to recognize the symptoms of stress and burnout include:

- Exhaustion
- Muscle tension or headaches
- Irritability
- Digestion issues
- Unintentional weight gain/weight loss

## Three are three ways to change your response to stress:

1. Acknowledge your feelings
2. Be in the present
3. Move your body-endorphin release

### #1: Acknowledge how you feel.

- Life can be hard, and we often stress over issues that are out of our control.
- Stress can have paralyzing effects on our energy, lifestyle, relationships and goals.
- Do you allow stress to consume you?
- Does your physical health pay the price?
- Have you justified stress by saying "It is what it is"?

### #2: Be in the present.

Our brains have been trained to multitask throughout the day, so thinking or focusing on just one thing can seem daunting.

Start by counting to five as you breathe in and count to five as you breathe out. That is the only task you need to be responsible for in that

Moment. It seems simple for sure, but little by little we strengthen our ability to control our thoughts which brings us to the present. Being in the present takes practice.

### #3: Move your body, it pumps up your endorphins

Physical activity helps bump up the production of your brain's feel-good neurotransmitters, called endorphins. Often referred to as a runner's high, any aerobic activity, such as a game of tennis or a nature hike, can contribute to this same feeling. The more you move, the more your body produces happy hormones.

Exercise can also reduce the negative effects of stress. Exercise provides stress relief for your body while imitating effects of stress, such as the flight or fight response. It helps your body and its systems practice working together through those effects. This can also lead to positive effects on your cardiovascular, digestive and immune systems which can help protect your body from harmful effects of stress.

### The mind-body connection

When you connect physical activity to at least one other benefit you will be twice as adept to making the effort a part of your lifestyle. For example:

- Social - Time to connect with friends
- Spiritual - Connect with your higher power, universe, or nature
- Intellectual - Listen to audiobooks, learn new languages

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