



5 Pro Tips for Stress Resilience

Use these 5 pro tips and super simple mini-practices as tools:

- Discover exactly how your body, emotions, and mind currently operate under stress
- Work with stress in a healthy way

How well can you adapt to stress and adversity?

Stress resilience is all about using your understanding of how stress manifests in your life to make positive decisions. People who are empowered with stress resilience are those who know when to amp up their energy to complete a project, how to remain calm in an emergency, they take care of themselves, provide the support needed, and have a clear perspective.

1. Release the Tension in Your Body

From clenched fists, to shoulders that are crunched up to our ears, to an upset stomach, there is almost invariably a physical manifestation to stress. One of the most useful stress resilience skills we will ever know is recognizing the effect that stress has on the body... that way we can take a few moments to soften it!

As we soften the physical tension caused by stress, our nervous system begins a cascade of events to bring about calm and enhances our ability to think clearly. With a calm mind and a body that isn't exhausted from holding tension, we can effectively deal with what is causing the stress.

Try this simple shoulder relieving technique:

Roll your shoulders backwards in slow circles about 5 times, then switch directions. Now, keep your chest lifted and your shoulders relaxed down: exhale to bring your chin down to your chest, then inhale your left ear to hover over your left shoulder, exhale to let your chin come back down to your chest, inhale the right ear to the right shoulder. Go very slowly, rocking your head down and to the sides 5-10 times.



2. Use your Breath as a Tool

Just as we can recognize stress through tension in the body, we can also notice changes in our breath as markers of stress. Holding the breath as a result of anxiety, huffing and puffing in anger are great examples... but what about this: a sigh of relief.

Next time you feel angry, sad, fearful, anxious, or any other stressful emotion - try calming your breath first. Lengthening your breath immediately slows you down, helping to bring you to the present moment. Exhales that are longer than inhales calm the nervous system.

Try this cooling breath technique:

Inhale gently through your nose, exhale gently through pursed lips - as if you are trying to blow the feathery seeds off a dandelion.

3. Choose Where to Focus

It is so common to let stress get the better of us, hijacking our minds, emotions, and often our actions. It can be helpful to acknowledge stress when it is present so that we can move on in a more directed manner.

Take time to acknowledge your stress, to understand why it is there and how it is manifesting. Once you have had your "little moment of acceptance," as I like to call it, you will notice that you aren't as attached to the stress as you were before. Now you can go about your business with your head on straight.

Try this stress-busting mindfulness practice:

Take out a pen and paper and write down everything that is stressing you out. It's okay if some of the stressors seem irrelevant. Once you have your list of stressors, write a potential solution for each.

This exercise is about stopping everything you're doing so that you can shake off that annoying feeling that has been keeping you from acting with ease.



4. Start a Daily Practice

The best preventative medicine out there is a daily Dynamic Mindfulness practice that incorporates movement, breathing, and centering. After all, what happens when you practice something? YOU GET BETTER AT IT.

Even if it's a few minutes a day, a little experience of stress relief and self-awareness leave us more prepared to confront the life's unending trail of stressors.

Combine the three practices above for a complete mini-mindful break.

Release that pent-up physical tension, cool down your breathing, and use your awareness with intention. If making a list of stressors, as tip 3 explains, doesn't seem appropriate, make instead a list of 5 things you are grateful for - this practice will build up your muscle of appreciation, bringing more joy and humility to your day.

5. Join the Conversation

The more activated we are when it comes to matters of feeling good, the better we'll feel (see point 4). Building community through stress resilience means nobody is left behind, and everyone will have the opportunity to succeed.

Bonus tip

Come to the annual Stress Resilience Conference

Wednesday August 3rd
Downtown Oakland, CA

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