

STRESS - LESS

Live More!



Your Guide to Greater Confidence & Calm for
Greater Health & Wellbeing

WHAT IS STRESS?

STRESS- IT'S A SIMPLE WORD THAT HAS BECOME SO COMMON THAT TO BE "STRESSED" IS WORN AS A BADGE OF HONOR.

But, this 5 letter word, comes with a big impact to your health. If you have been struggling with fatigue, brain fog, weight gain, headaches, aches or pain, I want to share with you how you can improve your health and reduce these symptoms by understanding the stress effect.


Stress is your body's way of responding to any kind of demand or threat. When you sense danger—whether it's real or imagined—the body's defenses kick into high gear in a rapid, automatic process known as the "fight-or-flight" reaction or the "stress response".

THE 3 CATEGORIES OF STRESS

Physical: Physical stress is what occurs to and within your body. This is any microtrauma (a little day after day from repetitive stress movements like sitting at a desk with your head forward) and macro trauma- think car accidents, strains and sprains.

Chemical/ Environmental: This form of stress is constant because it is literally what is in the environments we live, work, eat, breathe and live in everyday. The toxic elements are everywhere... from the synthetic chemicals, dyes and ingredients that are in the food we eat, water we drink, clothes we wear, medications we take, products we use, to the air we breathe and what is emitted from the many electronic devices the chemical stressors are vast. .

Mental/ Emotional: Mental and emotional stress is everything from the neverending to-do list to the worry, lack of frustration, fear, shame and blame cycle that many of us feel. To feel is to be human but it is when you can not turn off the negative inner dialogue, tension or anxiety that things begin to go sideways.

A person is walking away from the camera on a long pier that extends over a body of water. The pier has a railing made of white posts and ropes. The water is calm and blue. The sky is clear and blue. The person is wearing a red top and dark pants.

Is it Good or Bad?

Stress is good and can become bad- it's all in your perception.

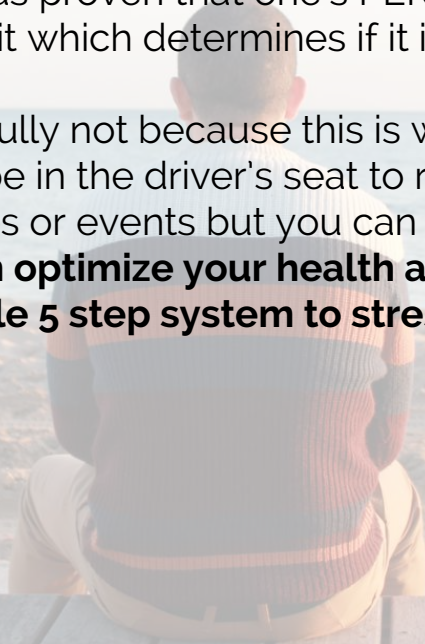
Fundamentally, the stress response is the body's way of protecting you. When working properly, it helps you stay focused, energetic, and alert. In emergency situations, stress can save your life—giving you extra strength to defend yourself, like slamming on the brakes to avoid an accident.

Stress can also help you rise to meet challenges. It's what keeps you on your toes during a presentation at work, sharpens your concentration when you're attempting the game-winning free throw, or drives you to study for an exam when you'd rather be watching TV. But beyond a certain point, stress stops being helpful and starts causing major damage to your health, your mood, your productivity, your relationships, and your quality of life.

In fact, many of the most common diseases today can be linked to chronic stress. In today's modern world, **CHRONIC** stress keeps us awash in a corrosive bath of hormones, namely cortisol. Although stress is a natural response to acute danger, fight or flight, chronic stress means we're unable to turn that response off. After a while, the stress response is **MORE** damaging than the **ACTUAL** stressor.

Why it can be good or bad is because stress is uniquely individual- because what stresses you out may not stress me out but rather could bring me joy. The science of epigenetics has proven that one's PERCEPTION of the event directly impacts the response to it which determines if it is or isn't "good or bad" stress.

Seem confusing? Hopefully not because this is where things get super exciting- this is where you get to be in the driver's seat to realize you can not control the people, places, responses or events but you can control YOUR RESPONSE to it. **This means that you can optimize your health and life when you understand a bit more and our simple 5 step system to stress less and live more.**



What happens to our bodies when we're stressed?

Stress, especially repeated stress, can have a detrimental effect on your body. Remember, it's not so much the fault of the stressor but rather your perception and response to the stressor that will determine how it impacts your body and health. Sometimes, we don't even realize we've triggered the stress response but the cues are there if only you are willing to become aware and NOTICE.

Take worry for example. For many there is this pious idea that to worry is to show someone we love or care about them BUT what does worry do to your health? It turns on the stress response and begins to negatively impact your body. Here are just a few things that begin to happen when we are in states of chronic stress:

- Weight Gain – aka Belly Fat – the most dangerous fat
- Aging – 1 year of chronic stress = 6 years of aging
- Digestive Issues- Leaky Gut
- Loss of Libido and Hormonal Imbalance
- Increased Blood Pressure and Risk of Heart Disease
- Brain Fog and Impaired Memory
- Weakened Immune System

Now imagine...What if instead of worry, you could come from the state and feeling of love?

Research shows that the love is the most powerful chemical modulator in the body and has the most pronounced epigenetic effects. This floods the body with positive hormones, neurotransmitters and chemicals that enhance health, vitality and longevity.

The great news is that the sooner you identify what triggers, when and why- you can begin to choose to stress less through several of our stress busting tools that we share at the end of this guide.



Take a minute to tune in to your stress index. What if anything triggers you?

Life Events

- Marriage
- Personal Injury
- Relationship Challenges
- Divorce
- Death of spouse or family member
- Change in Health
- Pregnancy
- Financial Changes
- Change in Living Conditions or Location
- Child Leaving Home
- Not Happy with Career
- Career Change
- Change in Health of a Family Member
- Change in Friendships
- Too Many Scheduled Activities
- Lack of Work Life Balance

Lifestyle Environmental Toxin Exposure:

- Nicotine
- Alcohol
- Caffeine
- Recreational drugs
- Prescription drugs
- Over-the-counter drugs
- Chemically polluted air and water
- Mold, Fungi, Parasites (old homes, farms, well water)
- Pesticides
- Air pollution
- Electronic Magnetic Radiation (emitted from many electronic devices high levels can lead to cellular damage.)
- Artificial food additives, colorings and preservatives (diet soda's, flavored waters, fat free, sugar free products)
- Meats that contain hormones and antibiotics
- Refined foods and sugars
- Blood Sugar Dysregulation (skipping meals, not eating balanced nutrition)
- Dietary choices (fast foods, fried foods)...
- Did you know that we ingest over **30-50 tons of food in a lifetime? Now that is a toxic load!**

Internal Toxins that Stress the System

- Bacterial, yeast, fungal overgrowth (Fed by Sugar and Artificial Sweeteners)
- Undigested food
- Food Sensitivities (Gluten, Dairy, Corn, Soy)
- Inability to Sleep
- Heavy Metals

Emotional Stressors:

- Tension in your body
- Feelings of upset stomach, agitation or discomfort.
- Comparison trap feeling not as good as another- question yourself and worth.
- Unresolved trauma or abuse (experienced as a child or as an adult)
- Unhappy relationships (with a relative, a spouse, a "significant other," a boss, a co-worker, a neighbor, etc.)
- Feelings of unworthiness, anxiousness, fear.
- Anxiousness, depression, frustration.
- Perfectionism- fear of failing or getting it wrong.

NEXT UP- GOOD STRESS...



The following feelings and emotions all have a powerful impact on your body and health. Begin to notice when you feel these and why. Think of this list as your secret weapon. When you can begin to identify and understand your positive resource states, you can then truly be at choice whenever stress strikes.

Make a list of the many ways that you experience the following positive emotions:

- Curiosity
- Happiness
- Joy
- Serenity
- Hope
- Gratitude
- Confidence
- Kindness
- Playful
- Admiration
- Enthusiasm
- Pride
- Contentment
- Satisfaction
- Euphoria
- Inspiration
- Awe
- Enjoyment
- Amusement
- Cheerfulness
- Love



Now that you have an idea of the things that can be causing negative stress to your system as well as the positive feelings and emotions that can stop stress in it's tracks, lets give you a simple 5 step path back to optimizing YOU.

5 Steps to Reduce Your Stress Burden & Reclaim Your Health

STEP 1

Make a list of Your Stressors as you know them from reading this guide. Don't worry if you don't know them all, just pick the most obvious ones that are troubling you or having the biggest impact on you.

STEP 2

Next, quantify these stressors, what is impacting you every day vs. the ones that are impacting you only once in a while?

STEP 3

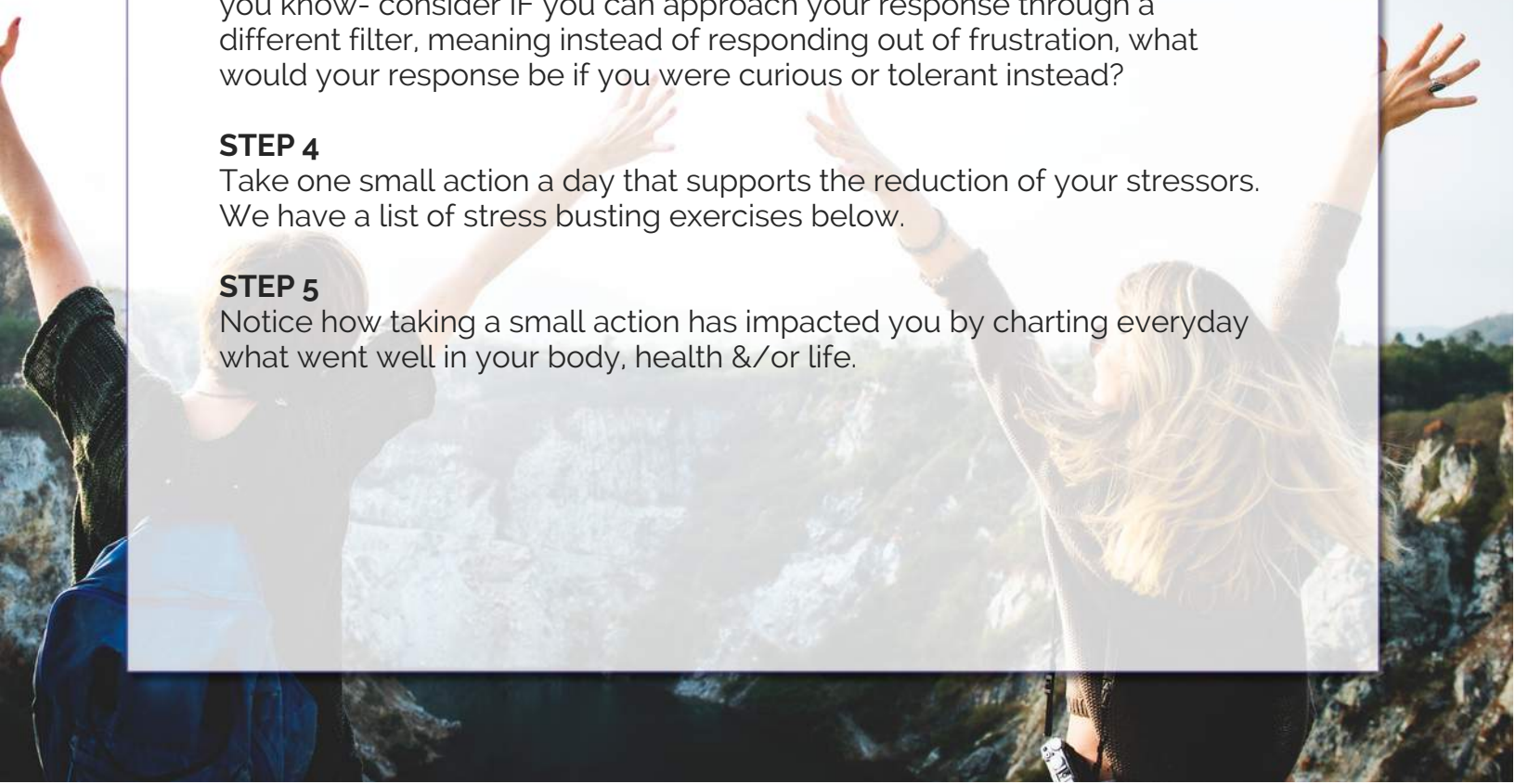
Pick your top stressors and consider how or in what ways you can reframe the negative stress with a positive stress. Remember- it's not the stress- it's our perception to it that triggers our system so be willing to ask yourself WHY an event, person or situation is causing you stress. Once you know- consider IF you can approach your response through a different filter, meaning instead of responding out of frustration, what would your response be if you were curious or tolerant instead?

STEP 4

Take one small action a day that supports the reduction of your stressors. We have a list of stress busting exercises below.

STEP 5

Notice how taking a small action has impacted you by charting everyday what went well in your body, health &/or life.

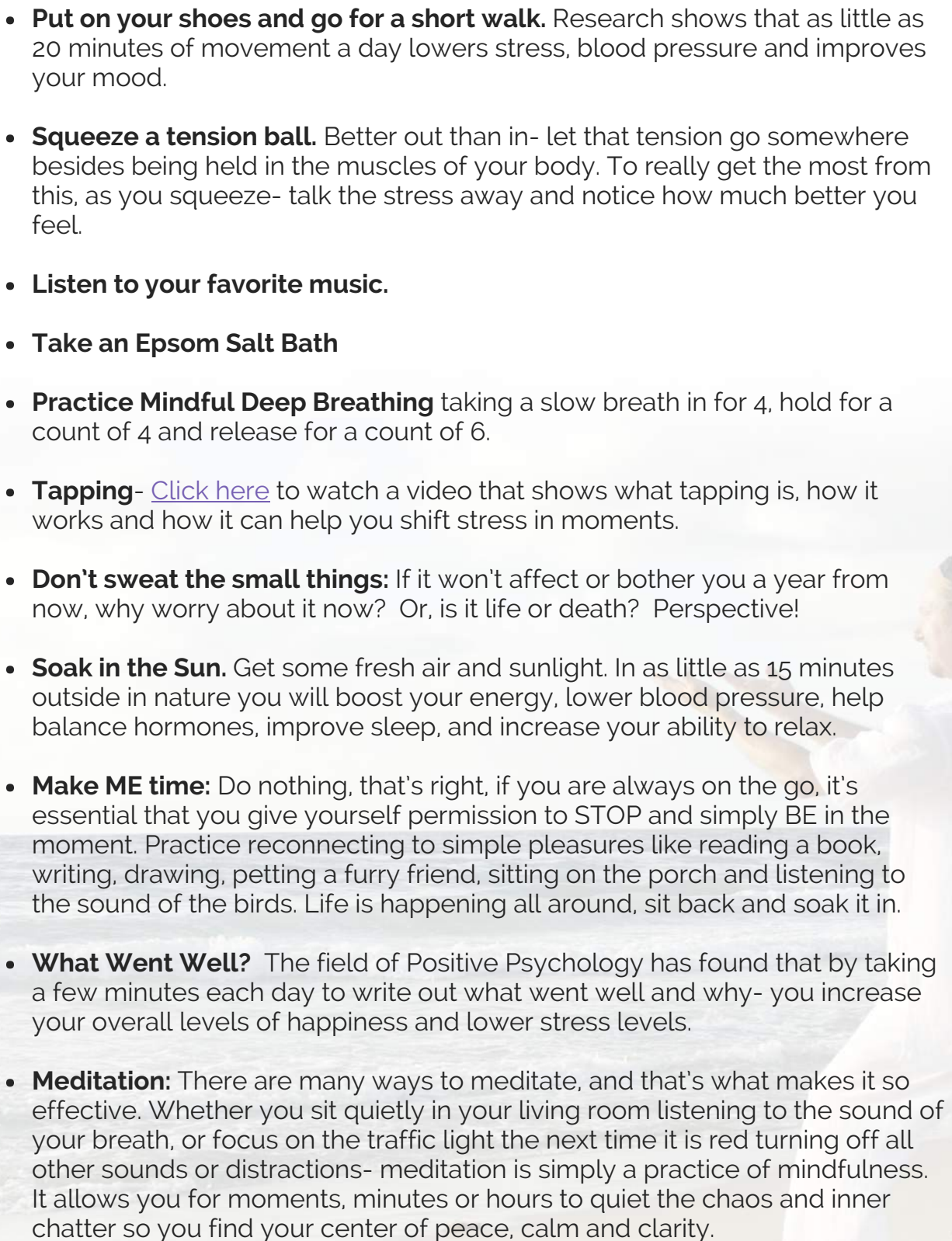


Stress Busting Tips so You Can THRIVE!

What can you do to reduce the impact on your health and begin to STRESS- LESS so you can live more?

Remember, you can't change the stress- only your response to it. Here are some simple things you can do right away to halt the stress response.

- **Change your environment** for the better. First- reduce and remove any harmful or negative stressors. Next replace and revive the environment with the sights, sounds and elements that evoke your resource states of your positive feelings and emotions. Look around and notice the changes you can make like freshening up the paint color on the walls, add in pictures of the people, places and things that make you feel great, how about sound? Play music that you love. Your environment is your first place that you can make the most noticeable impact in reducing your stress and increasing your good feeling vibes.
- **5 Second Stress Buster**- Count backwards from 5 to Reset and Reframe Your Brain. Research shows this to be one of the most powerful stress busting moves you can do to get out of overwhelm and into positive action.
- **Strike a Pose!** The Power Pose in as little as 2 minutes increases testosterone and lowers cortisol levels. [Click here](#) to learn how you can harness this power to lower your stress and change your life in under 2 minutes!
- **Learn to say "no"**. Know your limits, and don't take on projects or commitments you can't handle.
- **Stand at Attention** and take a few deep breaths with your shoulders back, chest open. Your body posture changes your mood and mindset. This is great to do every 60-90 minutes.
- **Laugh - Often:** Laughing and smiling have been proven to be the most effective and cost efficient methods of stress-busting - instantly changes your body's stress response.
- **Breakfast is the most important meal of the day!** Too often a cup of coffee and a bagel is the common go to for many but did you know this actually puts you in a cortisol producing, fat storing stress response state? To optimize your hormone for increased energy, fat burning and mental clarity- start your day off with a nutrient dense breakfast containing at least 12 grams of protein.

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- **Put on your shoes and go for a short walk.** Research shows that as little as 20 minutes of movement a day lowers stress, blood pressure and improves your mood.
 - **Squeeze a tension ball.** Better out than in- let that tension go somewhere besides being held in the muscles of your body. To really get the most from this, as you squeeze- talk the stress away and notice how much better you feel.
 - **Listen to your favorite music.**
 - **Take an Epsom Salt Bath**
 - **Practice Mindful Deep Breathing** taking a slow breath in for 4, hold for a count of 4 and release for a count of 6.
 - **Tapping-** [Click here](#) to watch a video that shows what tapping is, how it works and how it can help you shift stress in moments.
 - **Don't sweat the small things:** If it won't affect or bother you a year from now, why worry about it now? Or, is it life or death? Perspective!
 - **Soak in the Sun.** Get some fresh air and sunlight. In as little as 15 minutes outside in nature you will boost your energy, lower blood pressure, help balance hormones, improve sleep, and increase your ability to relax.
 - **Make ME time:** Do nothing, that's right, if you are always on the go, it's essential that you give yourself permission to STOP and simply BE in the moment. Practice reconnecting to simple pleasures like reading a book, writing, drawing, petting a furry friend, sitting on the porch and listening to the sound of the birds. Life is happening all around, sit back and soak it in.
 - **What Went Well?** The field of Positive Psychology has found that by taking a few minutes each day to write out what went well and why- you increase your overall levels of happiness and lower stress levels.
 - **Meditation:** There are many ways to meditate, and that's what makes it so effective. Whether you sit quietly in your living room listening to the sound of your breath, or focus on the traffic light the next time it is red turning off all other sounds or distractions- meditation is simply a practice of mindfulness. It allows you for moments, minutes or hours to quiet the chaos and inner chatter so you find your center of peace, calm and clarity.

Stress is stress- either good or bad- the choice is up to you.

From sitting in traffic everyday or living in chronic pain- when you first become aware of when and why stress is showing up in your life you then hold the power to choose your response. Take it moment by moment, celebrate all that IS good and all that you are doing to experience the fullness of your health, vitality and life.

We hope the recommendations in this guide have helped you tune into the areas where you may be most affected and how to begin to transform each element- one stress busting step at a time.

Step by step and day by day, your stress will reduce in intensity and severity, helping your body to heal, your energy to improve, your brain to clear, your hormones to balance, your mood to lift, your life to transform and you to THRIVE.

