

5 simple tools to cope with stress

1. Deep Breathing

These are a quick and simple way to calm your nervous system and reduce stress. Try the following technique:

- Find a quiet, comfortable place to sit or lie down.
- Close your eyes and take a slow, deep breath in through your nose, counting to five.
- Hold your breath for a count of five.
- Exhale slowly through your mouth for a count of five.
- Repeat this cycle several times. Focus on your breath and let go of distracting thoughts.

2. Mindfulness Meditation

This involves staying fully present in the moment and observing your thoughts and feelings without judgment. Regular practice can help reduce stress and increase emotional resilience. Start with short sessions and gradually extend the duration as you become more comfortable.

3. Physical Activity

Engaging in regular physical activity releases endorphins, which are natural mood lifters. You don't need an intense workout—simple activities like walking, cycling, or yoga can be effective in reducing stress.

4. Progressive Muscle Relaxation

This technique involves systematically tensing and relaxing different muscle groups in your body to release physical tension. It can help you become more aware of the physical sensations associated with stress and teach you how to relax. There are many guided progressive muscle relaxation recordings available online to follow along with.

5. Connect with Supportive People

Social support is crucial for managing stress. Talk to friends, family members, or a therapist about what's causing you stress and how you feel. Sometimes, just sharing your thoughts and feelings with someone you trust can provide relief and perspective.