
Coping with Stress & Anxiety

Self Care ~ Mindfulness

— Emotional Regulation ~ —

Square Breathing Practice

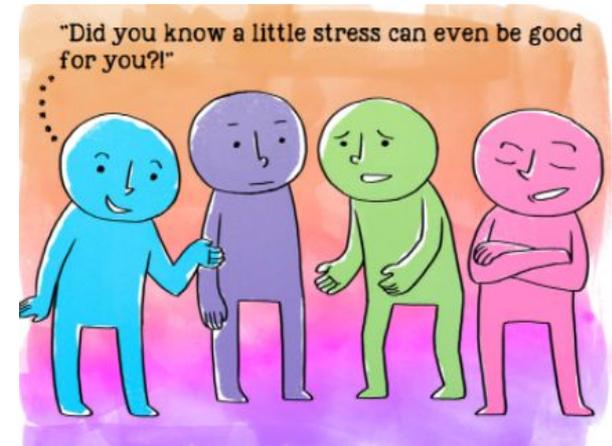
Can stress be helpful?

Fight or flight: Stress is...

- A survival tool: The brain tells the body to prepare for an emergency and helps you move away from danger.
- A tool to keep you alert and focused. It can help you prepare for an important event.

What are the causes of stress?

- *School ~ Friends ~ Family ~ Personal*



When does Stress become too much?

When it interferes with school, work or friendships

When it affects your health: Difficulty breathing, pounding heart, irritability, excessive sleep and nutrition challenges, unexplained medical complaints such as headaches and stomach aches

When it makes you feel **overly** distracted, irritable, forgetful, worried, or produces strong emotions. When your tips and tools no longer seem to help you regroup and refocus

Stress Management Prevention Strategies:

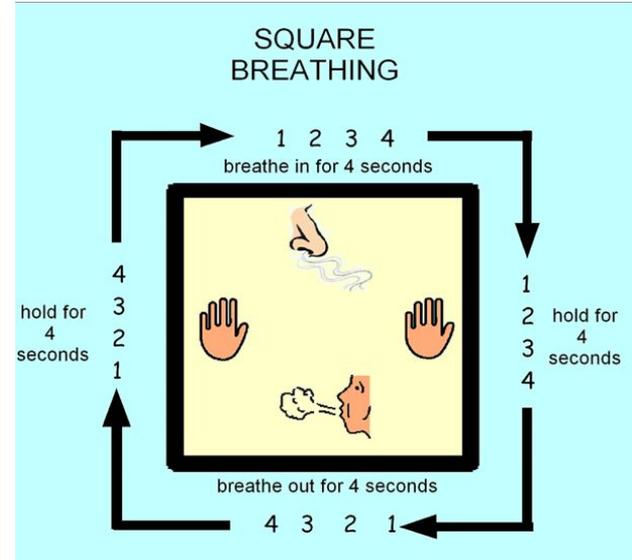
- Exercise: move, dance, yoga
- Enjoy Nature
- Eat well & limit caffeine and sugar
- Sleep hygiene
- Limit screen time before bed
- Cut down on clutter
- Cultivate hobbies & interests
- **Realistic Thinking & Positive Self Talk**
- Talk it out



[Tips for Reducing Stress](#)

Create a Chill Corner Stocked with “Brain Breaks”

- Mindful coloring books, doodling, **fidgets**, short books, journal, poetry
- Play soft music & calming apps
- Paint, clay, photographs, sand tray
- Breathe & relax your body
- Include a yoga mat
- STOP: Pause, Breath, Observe, Proceed



Calm down corner

- Also known as a zen den, regulation station, cool down space
- Not used for timeout
- Have your child help create it
- Role play and practice using the space
- Help them get to the space if needed
- Make a cool down bin/tool box



Mindfulness

- Can help minimize anxiety and increase happiness
- Don't make mindfulness seem like something only to be used in times of trouble — present it as a tool to be used in a variety of situations
- It's never too early to start
- Make it fun! Make it part of your daily routine
- Use props!
- Give your kids some control
- Model model model!!!



Breathing with books

Breathing with Heberman sphere



Words that Work

for Co-Regulation

Instead of saying

That's enough

Calm down

You're okay

Stop yelling

Don't get upset

I can't deal with this/you

I need a break from you

Pull it together

Why are you so upset?

You're overreacting

Stop whining

You need to deal with this



Say this instead

I'm here for you

How can I help?

Are you okay?

What's going on for you

I can see you are sad/mad

I'm here if you need me

Can we take a deep breath together

Which calming strategy would work for you right now?

You seem upset. Do you need to talk about it or take a break?

I can see this is really upsetting

Is there a word that matches how you feel right now

We'll get through this



Helpful things for parents to try

Stop reassuring your child- instead use the FEEL method

Highlight why worrying is normal

Bring your child's worry to life

Teach them to be a thought detective using the 3 C's

Help them go from "what if" to "what is"

Don't avoid everything that causes stress-use laddering

Use a checklist

Huffington Post: [9 things every parent should try when their child displays anxiety](#)

How to handle your own stress during this time

Accept uncertainty

Distinguish between productive and unproductive worries

Avoid fighting with your feelings

Cultivate self compassion

Pay attention to your grief and let yourself feel

Practice flexible thinking

Focus on your family values and find sources of meaning

Source: NY Times Article: [How to handle anxiety over back to school decisions](#)



Additional Resources- to expand and extend...

Finish tonight with: [breathing video](#)

District Website [LAFSD Behavioral & Social Emotional Supports Website](#) (<http://lafsdbehaviorsupports.weebly.com/>)

Link to list from Stanley School Counseling [Tips for reducing stress](#)

Huffington Post: [9 things every parent should try when their child displays anxiety](#)

NY Times Article: [How to handle anxiety over back to school decisions](#)

More Zen Den/Quiet Corner ideas:

[How to Create a Calm Down Spot](#)

[Jared's Cool-Out Space book](#)

[Making a comfort basket](#)

How to teach our child about “flipping your lid” using your hand [video on flipping your lid](#)

Resources continued

New York Times Article [Mindfulness for Children](#)

Article: [13 Causes And 7 Management Tips Of Teen Stress](#) *Causes, signs/symptoms, and techniques.*

Article: [Stress Management and Teens](#)

Activity: [Holmes and Rahe Youth Stress Test](#) *Provides a scale that students can use to quantify the stress in their lives. Includes info on how stress can impact lives and provides some suggestions about managing stress.*

Articles/Activity:

- [Just for Teens: A Personal Plan for Managing Stress](#)
- [My Personal Stress Plan](#) *Ideas: 1) tackling their problem, 2) taking care of their body, dealing with emotions, and 4) making the world better. My Personal Stress Plan is a template that students can use to develop a plan to manage stress with positive strategies.*

Make social thinking stick: Website: [Making Social Thinking Stick](#)