

Relaxation techniques

These are quick relaxation techniques that take just a few minutes. You can use them in many places— for example; taking a few minutes to relax in the middle of an exam if you find yourself getting stressed and not thinking clearly.

- **Deep breathing** - breathe in through your nose and let the air fill the bottom of your lungs first, breathe right down to your stomach, then breathe out slowly, concentrating on letting the muscles of your body relax.
- **Focus breathing** - breathe in through the nose and as you breathe out say a positive statement to yourself like relax or calm down.
- **Stretching** - stretch out muscles, reach the arms above the head and stretch or just stretch whatever part of the body you feel needs it.
- **Visualisation** - this is where you picture a pleasant place and use slow breathing through the nose - you can make the place anywhere you want to and you can change anything in the picture to see, feel, sound or smell just as you wish.

Information for this leaflet taken from:

www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress/Pages/Introduction.aspx
(Due for review March 2020)

An experienced counsellor.



Free

Confidential

Friendly

Confidentiality

The Zone provides a confidential service.

Feedback

We value your feedback as this helps us to continue to monitor and develop our services.

Whether your feedback is about the service you received, our leaflets or our website please let us know what you think using the contact details below.

Complaints

At The Zone, we are committed to providing a wide range of services; as a busy organisation we are aware that things can sometimes go wrong.

If you feel this has happened to you, a friend or a family member you can talk to a member of staff, or if you'd prefer, you can write to us stating your complaint, at the address below.

Address

14-16 Union Street
Derry's Cross
Plymouth
PL1 2SR

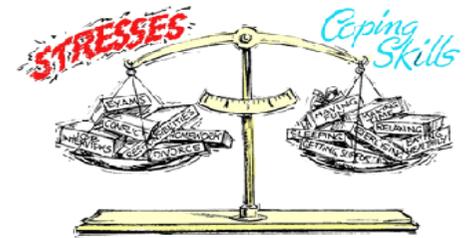
Contact us

Tel: 01752 206626
enquiries@thezoneplymouth.co.uk
www.thezoneplymouth.co.uk



STRESS

SELF HELP GUIDE



This leaflet explains what stress is.
It will help you to see whether stress
is a problem for you.

It offers simple & effective ideas
about how to overcome stress.

Our Opening Times

Monday-Friday: 12pm-5pm
(telephone lines open 10am -5pm)

Saturday: 10.30am-4pm

What is stress?

Imagine standing under a tree and suddenly hearing a crrraack! from above. Looking up you realise that a large branch right above your head is about to drop. Your response is made up of **thought** (danger! I'm about to be flattened), **physical responses** (heart beats faster, breathing is quicker, blood rushes through your body) and a **reaction** (I'm outta here).

If the branch falling didn't stress you at all, you wouldn't bother to move out of the way. (Splat!) A certain amount of stress gets you going and motivates you to do things.

Too much stress

So stress can be useful, we need a certain amount of stress to motivate us.

Usually when people talk about being stressed it means that there are too many things in their life that need reacting to (or whatever is stressing them is going on for a long time).

We are all different and how we are able to cope with stress varies; this is called our coping capacity. When stress outweighs our coping capacity, we get stressed or stressed out and we can become ill.

Recognising signs of stress

High stress levels feel different for everyone. Some people get a sore neck and back, headaches and can't sleep. Other people feel moody, anxious, have butterflies in their stomach and can't think clearly.

It's important to acknowledge the first signs of stress for yourself and deal with it. If you don't you can become ill.

What are the signs for you that you're stressed?

Some of the physical signs or feelings in your body might be:

- Headaches
- Feeling sick
- Sore muscles
- Diarrhoea or constipation
- Indigestion
- Can't sleep
- Can't concentrate
- Heart beats faster.

Some of the feeling signs could be:

- Nervousness
- Anxiety
- Sadness
- Aggression and anger
- Tiredness
- Irritability

Be realistic about what you can achieve. Make a list of what you want to do and prioritise; decide if there are things you can cross off your list

Eat a balanced diet. Eat slowly and sit down, allowing at least half an hour for each meal.

Action plans – try to write down the problems in your life that may be causing stress, and as many possible solutions as you can. Make a plan to deal with each problem.

Time management – plan your time, doing one thing at a time and building in breaks. Don't make too many changes at once in your life.

Set priorities – if you could only do one thing, what would it be?

Talk things over with a friend or family member or someone else you can trust and share your feelings with.

Relaxation or leisure time each day is important. Try new ways to relax such as aromatherapy, reflexology or yoga.

Exercise regularly – at least 20 minutes two or three times a week. This is excellent for stress control. Walking is good – appreciate your surroundings.

Say no and don't feel guilty.

Seek professional help if you have tried these things and find it a problem.

If you would like to talk to someone about stress please contact:

Your GP

Mind: www.mind.org.uk

NHS Choices: www.nhs.uk

Samaritans: www.samaritans.org