

Six Practical Tools To Manage Your Stress Response-Cheat Sheet

Stress Response Management Tool #1:

The physiologic SIGH. Take a deep breath or two in and then exhale slowly. Repeat. This will slow your heart rate. Good for short term stress. Hard to do silently.

Stress Response Management Tool #2:

4 Part Breathing. This tool is helpful when you are about to enter a stressful situation and want to get ahead of the stress response. Inhale to a count of 4, then hold to a count of 4. Exhale slowly to a count of 4, then hold to a count of 4. Good for short term stress. Can do silently.

Stress Response Management Tool #3:

Medium-Term Stress: Raising Your Threshold

1. A brief brisk walk can dissipate stress hormones epinephrine (adrenaline) and cortisol. Do as often as possible until the stressor abates. Yes, you DO have time for this.
2. Cold exposure. A cold shower activates your body and frees up adrenaline. Think calming thoughts while exposed to cold. Can reverse the stress response.

Stress Response Management Tool #4:

Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR) Start with your head or toes. Tense that body part hard and hold for as long as you can. Then release. Move to the next body part. Do your whole body. Repeat as needed. Good for insomnia.

Stress Response Management Tool #5:

Long term stress --Talk It Through. Do not keep stress inside. Trusted friend, colleague or therapist are essential. Therapy can be done on zoom. Just talking about it has a therapeutic effect on stress.

Stress Response Management Tool #6:

Long term stress—Be Involved In Community. Find at least one in which you participate regularly. Show up. Share what's going on or just socialize. Good health and stress relief is associated by connection to other people.