

Digital Resilience Cheat Sheet

9 Quick Ways to Stay Calm Under Pressure

1. Put Your Hand on Your Heart

Simply place your hand over your heart, feel its beat, and breathe deeply. Aim for at least 20 seconds. This will release oxytocin, which helps regulate and calm your fight-flight-freeze system.



2. Hug Your Best Friend

A good, long hug (or even steady eye contact) with a calm person you trust can work wonders for your stress levels. Again, aim for at least 20 seconds. Like putting your hand over your heart, this will release oxytocin to balance out stress-related cortisol.

3. Remember a Time When You Felt Safe

If you aren't near a loved one for a hug, imagine a time when you felt safe and loved. You might close your eyes for a moment and imagine them giving you that big bear hug. Keeping your eyes closed, pay attention to how your body responds. Focusing on this image can release oxytocin and start to calm your body.



4. Write It Down

When you begin to feel upset, take a pause to write it down. By writing down (left brain) an experience that bothers you (right brain), you are strengthening connections between these two parts of the brain. This also gives you time to more fully process the event before responding, which better ensures that your rational side is involved in the response.



5. Repeat a Helpful Slogan

Slogans are meant to remind you of a larger teaching. So pick a few slogans that will help you to think before reacting and post them in place where you'll get that needed reminder at strategic times. This could mean having a message reappear every half an hour on your computer screen or posting the slogans on your bathroom mirror.



6. Name the Emotion

When emotions feel overwhelming, take a moment to name those emotions. This gives your left, rational brain a chance to kick in, and it gives you some emotional distance from the problem. So the next time a coworker gets you angry, don't just act out the anger - name it.



7. Reframe Your Red Lights

Next time you're stuck at a red light, make the most of that pause in your day with a quick body scan. Starting at the top of your head, take inventory of each part of your body down to your toes. How does it feel? Are there parts that are relaxed? Are there parts that are tight?

If anything is tense, breathe into that tension to loosen it. If something is uncomfortable or painful, try to stretch or relax that part of your body.

You could also take the time to concentrate on your breaths in and out. Feel the breath as it comes through your nose and expands your lungs, then slowly leaves through your mouth. Allow your thoughts and plans for the day to temporarily float out away from your consciousness.

In this way, a red light or any other break in the day can become a great tool for lowering your stress.



8. Take in the Good

Once a week, write down three things that you are grateful for. But don't stop there – be sure to explain why you are grateful for each of those things. This simple practice can decrease depression and increase overall happiness.

9. Take a Self-Compassion Break

When you find your thoughts are getting self-critical or judgmental, then it's time for a self-compassion break. Try repeating one or all of these phrases to yourself so you can get back to center: "this, too, is suffering," "suffering is part of life," and "may I be kind to myself and give myself the compassion I need."

If any of these phrases feels awkward, rephrase them so they're closer to how you would normally speak. Repeat them as many times as you need, then pause and see what comes to mind.

You can also try a traditional self-compassion meditation by simply repeating: "May I be happy. May I be healthy. May I live my life with ease. May I be safe and free."