

# HOW TO MANAGE STRESS

## STRESS JOURNAL



You may not know what is causing your stress, exactly how your body responds to stress, or how you cope with stress. To find out, keep a record to track the times you feel stressed. Write down what may have triggered the stress, how you felt and behaved in response to the stressful situation, and what you did to cope with the stressful situation.

## GUIDED MEDITATION



Meditation is a simple technique that, if practiced for as few as 10 minutes each day, can help you control stress, decrease anxiety, improve cardiovascular health, and achieve a greater capacity for relaxation.

## RADICAL ACCEPTANCE



Radical acceptance takes lots of practice, and understandably, it might feel strange and hard. But remember that radical acceptance is about acknowledging reality - not liking it or contesting it. Once you acknowledge what's really happening, you can change it or start to heal. Radical acceptance has nothing to do with being passive or giving up. It's about channeling your energy into moving on.

## EMERGENCY BOX



When we are very distressed, it is difficult to think rationally and to decide how to help ourselves. It can be useful to keep an 'Emergency' or 'Soothe' bag or box, in a prominent and handy place, so that when you feel overwhelmingly distressed, you can go to your box and find something that will help you cope and/or feel better. Include items that will help soothe your senses.

## THE BACKPACK ANALOGY



It seems that we all carry our own backpacks on life's journey. In our backpack we carry our life's experiences and expectations, and these influence the way we are, what we do, and what we make of our life and how we go about it. Our backpack - and what we carry in it - affects the way we think, feel and act: towards ourselves, towards others, and towards life in general. If we think about our problems as backpacks, we can take the problem/s outside of us, which makes it easier to change things in a positive way.

## MUSCLE RELAXATION



One of the body's reactions to fear and anxiety is muscle tension. This can result in feeling "tense", or can lead to muscle aches and pains, as well as leaving some people feeling exhausted. In progressive muscle relaxation exercises, you tense up particular muscles and then relax them, and then you practice this technique consistently.