

CALM IS YOUR SUPERPOWER

A GUIDE TO THRIVING DURING
TIMES OF STRESS

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Calm Is Your Superpower

*A simple guide to thriving
(not just surviving)
during times of high stress*





YOUR HEART IS BEATING OUT OF YOUR CHEST.

It feels like you can't breathe.

The all-too-familiar anxiety cycle has your head spinning and your body buzzing with panic.

Are you feeling the weight of a high-stress situation? Totally paralyzed with overwhelm, fearful, and uncertainty? Desperate for a way to get un-stuck and move forward?

I know exactly how you feel. And I want to help.

There's no question that we will all face difficult moments in life ~ moments of change and transition, moments of doubting ourselves, moments of loss. Work, relationships, life changes, sometimes even the mundane daily tasks: they can be very stressful. The human experience is a wild ride, one that sometimes feels impossible to navigate.

My goal with this e-book is to offer you some helpful tools to support you with what you're going through right now. To give you some new ideas to help you shift the way you're thinking about your current stress. To offer simple ways to bring your body out of the stress response, ground your energy, and give you harmony and hope during this period of growth.

You have the power you need to get through this. To not only survive it, but to thrive within the challenges you're facing.

Keep trusting.

With love,
Rachel

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CALM WITHIN THE CHAOS

SIMPLE WAYS TO BRING YOUR BODY & MIND BACK TO BALANCE

Notice your body.

What physical sensations do you feel? Identify them clearly. Where do you notice tension? Where do you notice heat? What feels most obvious to you, physically? Take a moment simply to notice.

Five deep belly breaths.

Place both hands over your belly. Keeping your eyes OPEN, breathe all the way down into your belly. See if you can feel your hands move as you're breathing. Your breath is full and deep, and you're using as much of your lung capacity as you can. Take five of these deep breaths, focusing entirely on what's happening with your breathing, and the sensation of your hands over your belly.

Count the breath.

Breathe in to a count of four. Breathe out to a count of five. This is going to help slow down your breath and take your nervous system out of the stress response.

Feel your feet on the ground.

Become aware of your legs and feet. If possible, kick your shoes off and feel your feet touching the ground. Picture sending all your energy down through your legs, out through the soles of your feet. Bring a simple thought into your mind: "I am grounded."

Calm your inner voice.

Notice the story going on in your mind. How does that voice sound? Frustrated and angry? Sad and desperate? Defensive, persistent, distraught? Try talking to yourself with a logical, calm tone and injecting a little bit of positivity. If you find yourself thinking, "I can't do this" or "I'm so upset right now," tell yourself, "I am OK. I am going to calm down now. I can breathe through this."

Visualize.

Take a five minute break from your day. Visualize yourself experiencing a calm, relaxed version of the situation that's bothering you. Visualize the best possible outcome. Visualize your heart being open, your mind at peace, your body centered, grounded, strong and vibrant with energy.

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REMINDERS:

{IN CASE YOU NEED THEM}

- This will pass.
- On every difficult day, you are building your sense of compassion—your ability to cultivate love and support for those who are suffering.
- You can let go.
- You are in control of your breath.
- Your resilience is incredible.
- It is when we are quiet that we begin to see everything with love.

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RE-FRAMING STRESS

What happens if we start to think of stress as a *good* thing?

Stress can actually benefit us. It has the power to help us transform worry into bravery, isolation into connection, and challenge into significance. In and of itself, it indicates that we care. Just think about that - you only tend to stress about something if it *matters* to you.

Take a moment to honor how right now, although you may be feeling overwhelmed, you are having an experience of deeply caring about what's going on for you. You are experiencing significance and purpose in your life, and that is a profound thing. And you have the power to frame how you want to think about your situation.

Consider these two ways of framing stress*:

Mindset #1: Stress is Harmful

Experiencing stress **depletes** my health and vitality, debilitates my performance and productivity, and inhibits my learning and growth. The effects of stress are negative and should be avoided.

Mindset #2: Stress is Enhancing

Experiencing stress **enhances** my performance and productivity, improves my health and vitality, and facilitates my learning and growth. The effects of stress are positive and should be utilized.

*For more about the stress mindset, consider reading *The Upside of Stress* by psychologist Kelly McGonigal, or watching her TED talk.



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RE-FRAMING STRESS

Which mindset around stress do you choose? In this next exercise, explore how you think of stress and how you can begin to shift your beliefs around it. How can stress help you with what you're going through right now?

WHAT IS MY CURRENT BELIEF AROUND STRESS?

WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF I RE-FRAMED THIS BELIEF? WHAT WOULD HELP ME SEE THIS SITUATION DIFFERENTLY?

WHAT IS MOST STRESSFUL RIGHT NOW?

HOW AM I GOING TO USE SOME OF MY CURRENT STRESS TO HELP ME? HOW IS THIS STRESSFUL SITUATION *ENHANCING*?





FINDING WHAT FEELS GOOD

MAKE A LIST OF ALL THE THINGS THAT HELP YOU THE MOST

When you're stressed, what helps you feel better?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Identify which of these things you can do right now, or at some point in your day *today*.

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THE ART OF SURRENDER

IDENTIFYING WHAT IS AND ISN'T IN YOUR CONTROL

What are you most stressed about right now? Next to each item, identify whether or not you have control of this stressor.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

For each item that is out of your control, take a deep breath and imagine yourself completely releasing your attachment to this situation, person, thought, or feeling. You are aware of the fact that you can't control this. Now is the time to shift your focus.

What are you in control of?

Notice your breath. Practice breath awareness and control for 2-5 minutes. Breathe into your low belly, focusing on filling up your entire torso with breath on the inhale, and on the exhale, emptying out all of your breath. Become aware of how your physical body feels. Surrender to this moment and this breath, and the feeling of your own body, which you are in control of.

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CLEAR, CALM ENERGY

GETTING GROUNDED

Try these practices to help move stuck energy, release negativity, and bring in clarity and calm.

- **Stomp your feet.** Say out loud, "I am here. I am present. I release all negativity."
- **Brush off** your arms, torso and legs. Take one hand to your opposite shoulder and brush downward, the length of your arm. Then do the other side. Brush off your chest, sides, hips, and then down the length of both legs. Picture dusting off any old, stuck, dark, heavy energy. "I release it." Say this to yourself as you're doing the dry brushing.
- Take a hot **epsom salt bath** or sit in the sauna. As you sweat, picture stuck energy leaving your body.
- Get a **massage**.
- **Burn sage or palo santo.**
- Take a **yoga** class.
- Do an **energy healing** session, Reiki treatment, or meditation class.
- Stand in **star pose** - legs firmly planted at hips width or a little wider, arms overhead, reaching up. Notice your legs and feet grounding down. Notice your chest feeling open, your shoulders relaxed, arms and fingertips actively reaching up. Bring in the phrase: "I am open to this moment and what's happening now. I am bright, vibrant, energized and clear."
- **Meditate.** Envision the energy within your body, and the field of energy surrounding you. Visualize yourself feeling calm and clear.



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BREATHE.



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COMPASSION

ON LOVING YOURSELF EVEN WHILE YOU ARE STRESSED

Are you feeling down on yourself? It can be easy to get caught in a negative loop of critical and harsh self-talk.

Here are a few thoughts to help you interrupt the pattern.

- I can do this.
- I'm not giving up.
- I am free to be myself.
- I am powerful.
- I have vibrant, radiant health.
- I have nothing to feel bad about.
- I'm kicking ass no matter what my old story tells me.
- What I've been doing is exactly good enough.
- I deserve to feel good.
- I trust myself.
- I'm important.
- I love who I am.



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STRESS HACKS

10 IDEAS FOR REDUCING STRESS

Try these small changes— they can make a big difference.

1. Do one thing at a time. See how it feels to eliminate multi-tasking.
2. Notice your fear response. Question it. Is this a valid fear? Where is it coming from? Doubt your doubts.
3. Smile at people. Especially the ones who are bothering you ;)
4. Take a quick stroll. Move around. Shake it off.
5. Take three deep breaths.
6. Say no to the things that don't light you up inside.
7. Incorporate one change today that helps you feel nourished. Eat a healthy meal. Drink an extra glass of water. Get an extra hour of sleep.
8. Talk to someone who loves you and has your back. Ask for encouragement.
9. Plan quiet time into your day.
10. Slow down. Enjoy small moments, enjoy the people around you, enjoy your meals and activities. Do what you can to eliminate rushing and learn to take things slowly.



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REMINDERS:

{BECAUSE WE ALL NEED THEM}

- You were made to be real, not perfect.
- Keep showing up. You're worth it.
- Every chance you have, look within. Meditate.
- You control you.
- There is nothing wrong with you. You're allowed to feel exactly how you feel right now.
- It is possible to experience both stress and gratitude at the same time.

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YOGA POSES

FOR CALM ENERGY



Try this series of poses to help calm your nerves, connect with your breathing, and let go of what's bothering you. Throughout each pose, focus on sending your energy downward, noticing subtle sensation in your body, and tracing your breath in and out through your nose. Move slowly between the poses, without rushing.



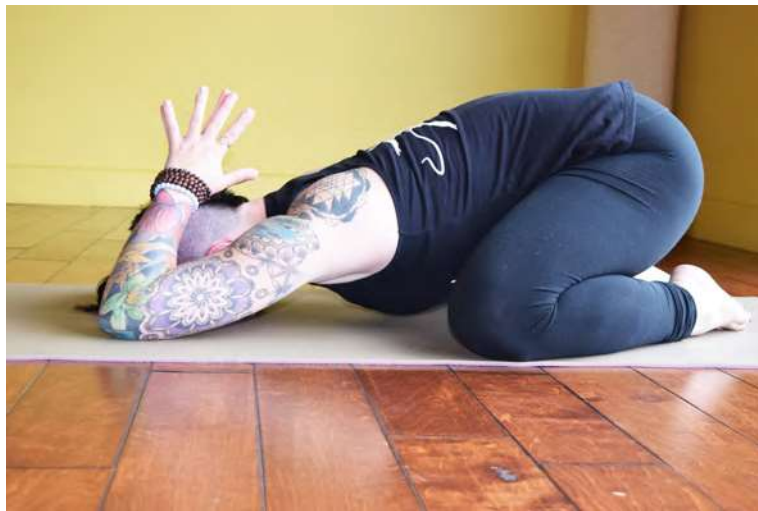
YOGA POSES

FOR CALM ENERGY



- **Seated meditation.** Sit comfortably and close your eyes. Spend 3 minutes focusing on your breath. Nothing to do, nothing to change. Just breathe and notice.
- **Reclined twist.** Lay on the floor and bring your knees into your chest, or one knee at a time. Move your knees to one side, letting them come all the way down to the mat. Let your shoulders and hips relax. Breathe deeply. When you're ready, switch sides.





- **Reclined butterfly.** Draw your knees into your chest, then bring your feet down to the floor, soles of your feet together with your knees open. Place one hand over your heart and one over your belly. Relax. Breathe.
- **Child's pose.** From kneeling on your mat, bring your knees a bit wider than your hips, and your big toes to touch. Sink your hips back, walk your hands forward, bringing your chest down toward the mat. You can have your arms outstretched, bend at the elbows with your palms behind your head, or bring your palms near your feet. Allow your hips to sink toward your heels, and your chest toward the mat. Breathe into your low belly.



YOGA POSES

FOR CALM ENERGY



- **Legs up the wall.** Sit near a wall and then lie down and bring your legs up the wall. Allow the weight of gravity. Notice where your body is touching the floor and the wall, relaxing fully into those areas. Allow your body to feel supported as you bring your attention to your breath.
- **Deep rest.** Lay comfortably on your back, legs and arms outstretched. Allow the natural rhythm of your breath. Scan your body from head to toe, noticing any areas with tension. Consciously bring relaxation to those areas. Stay here for 3-5 minutes, noticing your breath, taking rest.



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CHOOSE IT NOW.

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and you will get through this.

I'm here if you need support.

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