

STRESS RELEASE SECRETS



BY DR. DAN RITCHIE

A man in a white shirt and tie is shown from the chest up, shouting with his mouth wide open and his hands pressed against his temples. He has a look of intense stress or frustration. Surrounding his head are various words related to financial and personal stress, including 'TAX', 'STRESS', 'DEBT', 'PAYMENT', 'FEAR', 'RATE', 'CRISIS', 'MONEY', 'HEALTH', 'DIET', 'LATER', 'WORRY', 'NO SLEEP', 'ANXIETY', 'MUTUAL', 'BILLS', 'WORK', 'FAILURE', 'JOB', 'TIME', 'RECESSION', 'DELAY', 'FINES', 'SADNESS', and 'CRISIS'. The words are in different sizes and orientations, creating a sense of chaotic pressure.

Disclaimer

The exercise and nutritional programs in this book are intended to supplement, not replace, any exercise or dietary regimen prescribed by your health care professional. As with all exercise and dietary programs, you should get your doctor's approval before beginning.

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STRESS

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Stress Release Secrets

Stress can sabotage your health and ruin your life. It can sneak up on you over the years until it unleashes its nasty effects on your health. It can show up in many forms such as weight gain, high blood pressure, depression, mood swings and much more. Plus, interrupt your sleep. That's why I've decided to include Stress Release Secrets with the entire Simple Sleep Protocol to make sure the daily stressors of life can never ruin your bedtime slumber ever again.



Once you learn a particular relaxation technique you will become more and more aware of how your body feels under tension and how it feels when you are relaxed. Once you know what the response of stress feels like you can make a conscious effort to remove this negative energy from your body through the techniques that work best for you.

These techniques are skills that you acquire to help decrease anxious feelings, however as with every skill you need to practice it often to become better at dealing with stress. If one relaxation technique does not work try another as some techniques are more effective than other depending on the preference of the individual. If none of these techniques work for you, I suggest you see a health practitioner who can help you manage your anxiety.

Stress release techniques involve you refocusing your mind on calming thoughts that allow you to increase body awareness. The type of relaxation technique you choose does not matter, what is important is that you keep practicing this

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technique regularly so you may reap the benefits associated with these stress release techniques.

Stress release techniques include:

- Meditation
- Deep breathing
- Hypnosis
- Massage
- Tai chi
- Yoga
- Biofeedback
- Visualization

Stress Release Secret #1: Meditation

Meditation is a handy trick you can use to help bring your body back to normal functioning while experiencing stress. Obsessive thinking limits our creativity and places us in an undesirable state of mind that prevents your body from working effectively. This is also applied to sleep and how our thoughts and obsessive thinking can prevent us from having a good night sleep. By identifying how stress affects your body you are able to eliminate the anxiety through breathing exercises.

Allow yourself the time between work and bedtime to conduct a self-inventory where you place your body in a relaxed state by concentrating on the air following in and out of your lungs. By understanding how your body feels



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in a relaxed state you become better at identifying the stressors in your life and in turn are better equipped in dealing with stress.

Allow thoughts to come in and out of your mind while you mediate, however let these thoughts flow in and out of your mind as easily as the air does in and out your lungs. When a thought causes a certain area of your body to tense, visualize air being breathed into that area and then released out of your body through your next exhalation. You may need to do this a few times on one area however hours of practicing this will better equip you with dealing with new stressors in your life. We are know we cannot remove stress from our lives however this easy trick can now help you manage how that stress affects your sleep and in turn your health.

Stress Release Secret #2: Deep breathing

Deep breathing is the ability to breathe from the bottom of your abdomen filling your lungs with as much fresh air as possible. Shallow breathing prevents adequate oxygen flow to our muscles and prevents our muscles from relaxing. The more oxygen you can get flowing in your body the better, as it relaxes you and reduces anxiety. Below you will find simple instructions on how to breathe deeply.

If you find it difficult to achieve this form of breathing while in the sitting position you can try this technique while lying down. The more you practice this technique the better you will become at relaxing and reducing anxiety to aid for good night's sleep.

- Sit comfortably with your back straight. Put one hand on your chest and the other on your stomach.
- Breathe in through your nose. The hand on your stomach should rise. The hand on your chest should move very little.
- Exhale through your mouth, pushing out as much air as you can while

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contracting your abdominal muscles. The hand on your stomach should move in as you exhale, but your other hand should move very little.

- Continue to breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth. Try to inhale enough so that your lower abdomen rises and falls. Count slowly as you exhale.

Stress Release Secret #3: Hypnosis

Self-hypnosis is an effective technique used to reduce anxiety and stress in individuals. It also opens your mind to new ideas of creativity and prevents obsessive thinking from taking over your mind.

Mental and physical relaxation allows people to ignore their conscious minds and allows the space for positive thoughts and ideas to enter your mind. The creativity you generate while under hypnosis is automatically applied to the conscious mind once awakened from your hypnotic state. This provides a pathway for positive thinking to enter our minds allowing for a relaxed state of mind.

Hypnosis is a powerful tool that needs to be used to promote elation in your life therefore it is important that you are only allowing positive thoughts to take over your mind while in a hypnotic state. The ideas and statements that enter your mind during this state need to be genuine, honest, simple and most importantly positive. Do not overpower yourself with multiple statements instead concentrate on a few at a time to get the best out of this technique.

Stress Release Secret #4: Massage

Regular massage helps improve blood circulation, relieves pain, reduces muscle tension and improves relaxation. There are many self-massage techniques you can use to promote sleepiness before bed time. By taking a few minutes out your day to massage yourself will help you unwind.

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Enhance the experience by using aromatics oils such as lavender to aid sleepiness. Below is a simple technique you can use to self- massage. For shorter sessions try focusing on areas that you feel are most tense like your neck and shoulders.

- Start by kneading the muscles at the back of your neck and shoulders. Make a loose fist and drum swiftly up and down the sides and back of your neck. Next, use your thumbs to work tiny circles around the base of your skull. Slowly massage the rest of your scalp with your fingertips. Then tap your fingers against your scalp, moving from the front to the back and then over the sides.
- Now massage your face. Make a series of tiny circles with your thumbs or fingertips. Pay particular attention to your temples, forehead, and jaw muscles. Use your middle fingers to massage the bridge of your nose and work outward over your eyebrows to your temples.
- Finally, close your eyes. Cup your hands loosely over your face and inhale and exhale easily for a short while.

Stress Release Secret #5: Tai Chi

Tai-chi is a relaxation technique used that involves slow, flowing body movements. Tai-chi focuses on relaxation, concentration and the conscious circulation of energy flow throughout your body. It is practices to calm the mid, condition the body and promotes relaxation allowing us to eliminate the effect stressors have on our body and mind. A lot of focus is put on breathing when conducting tai-chi as it allows you to keep your attention in the present moment.

Tai-chi is a low-impact and safe option for individuals of all ages, even individuals recovering from injuries will reap the benefits of this technique. Once you have learnt the basics of Tai-chi from a professional you can practice alone or with friends tailoring your sessions to you capability and preference.

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Stress Release Secret #6: Yoga

Yoga has been used for centuries for relaxation as it reduces anxiety and stress that we experience in our lives. Yoga also improves strength, balance, flexibility and stamina allowing our bodies to be healthy oiled machines. When practiced regularly it can strengthen the relaxation response you achieve allowing you to have a better grip on stress and anxiety in your life. Yoga sessions will always end with a relaxation



pose however some classes emphasize slow, steady movements that allow for deep breathing and gentle stretching. These sessions are best for stress relief.

- **Satyananda** is a traditional form of yoga. It features gentle poses, deep relaxation, and meditation, making it suitable for beginners as well as anyone primarily looking for stress reduction.
- **Hatha yoga** is also reasonably gentle way to relieve stress and is suitable for beginners. Alternately, look for labels like gentle, for stress relief, or for beginners when selecting a yoga class.
- **Power yoga**, with its intense poses and focus on fitness, is better suited to those looking for stimulation as well as relaxation.

Stress Release Secret #7: Biofeedback

Biofeedback is a new technology used to treat a number of stress related conditions such as anxiety, insomnia and high blood pressure. Researchers do not understand exactly how this technology works however it has been found to be very effective in relieving stress.

Biofeedback sessions involve the placement of electrodes on your skin. These electrodes monitor your heart rate, blood pressure, skin temperature, sweating or

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muscle activity and sends information to a monitor for the therapist to interpret. When you are stressed all these functions change inside your body; your heart begins to race, your blood pressure rises and your palms become sweaty this information is represented by a sound, flash or light informing the interpreter that you are responding negatively to a particular stressor.

By receiving immediate feedback on your body's response to a particular stimulus allows you to identify where in your body you carry that stress so you may be guided by a therapist to overcompensate the negative sensation felt. The therapist teaches you relaxation techniques you can use to control different body functions. These techniques promote



relaxation and provide you with the skills needed to reduce the effect stress and anxiety has on your life and quality of sleep. These sessions are typically done by therapists in their office; however there are programs available that can be used on your computer to self-monitor your biofeedback.

The different relaxation exercises used by biofeedback therapists include;

- **Deep breathing**
- **Progressive muscle relaxation:** tightening and then relaxing different muscle groups.
- **Guided imagery:** concentrating on a specific image (such as the color and texture of an orange) to focus your mind and make you feel more relaxed.
- **Mindfulness meditation:** focusing your thoughts and letting go of negative emotions.

Stress Release Secret #8: Visualization

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Visualization has been found to be an effective technique used in reducing levels of stress and anxiety. Find a quiet and relaxing environment where you won't be easily disturbed.

Switch your phone off and allow yourself the time to work on visualizing your relaxed state of mind. Lie down in a comfortable position with your eyes closed; many beginners fall asleep during their first visualization meditation so at first try this technique in a sitting position. Allow any thoughts to come and go allowing your worries to drift away. Think about a restful place such as a quiet beach, forest or a past holiday where you found you were most relaxed. Let your imagination go wild by picturing everything as vividly as you can. Use all your senses to imagine what you would be seeing, hearing, feeling, smelling and tasting. Visualization works best when you can introduce as many senses as possible.

Use imagery that appeals to you and promotes relaxation such as waves crashing on the shore, birds singing in the trees or the sunlight kissing your skin. Avoid negative imagery or images that promote anxiety or stress. With a lot of practice this technique will become easier to do allowing you to fall into a state of relaxation within minutes. Let your own images come up and work for you. Enjoy the feeling of deep relaxation that takes over your body while you explore your restful place.

Don't be concerned if negative, stressful thoughts enter your mind during this process; just let these thoughts exit your mind as easily as they entered it by releasing the anxious thoughts with every exhalation. Focusing on your breathing allows you to become aware of your body and where and how you hold stress.

Just let your bodies do what its needs; you may find yourself yawning, coughing or feeling stiff and heavy. These are all normal responses that you must take little regard of. Once you are in your relaxed state and you are ready to take on

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the world, gently open your eyes and return to the present; feeling revitalized and relaxed.

Summary

Stress release techniques involve you refocusing your mind on calming thoughts that allow you to increase body awareness. The type of relaxation technique you choose does not matter, what is important is that you keep practicing this technique regularly so you may reap the benefits associated with these stress release techniques. These techniques are skills that you acquire to help decrease anxious feelings, however as with every skill you need to practice it often to become better at dealing with stress. If one relaxation technique does not work try another as some techniques are more effective than others depending on the preference of the individual. If none of these techniques work for you, I suggest you see a health practitioner who can help you manage your anxiety.

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