

Releasing the pressure

looking after distress



Releasing the Pressure – looking after distress

We will all be experiencing different levels of worry and anxiety at the moment. For some of us, the stress and worry might feel like pressure building up inside our body and mind. We all need activities that help us release the pressure valve at these times so we can stay in control of our behaviours and look after our distress. This is especially important when we face times when we are under extreme stress.

This guide provides helpful ideas to look after distress by guiding our minds away from distressing thoughts and feelings, back to the here and now (what we are doing right now).

Below is a list of some ideas. Use your imagination to think of some more. Choose what will work best for you and try using them when you are feeling really upset and stressed out:

- Try a sensing game with yourself (these work great with children too):
 - Name 5 things you can see in the room around you (eg: chair, painting)
 - Name 4 things you can feel (eg: my feet on the floor)
 - Name 3 things you can hear right now (eg: music playing, birds singing outside)
 - Name 2 things you can smell right now (eg: perfume or something cooking)
 - Name 1 good thing about yourself (eg: “I am strong”)



- Sit and take some slow, deep breaths. Hold your breath after your inhale and slowly breath out through your mouth. Feel the oxygen filling your lungs.
- Move your body. For example, do some push-ups, stretch your body, do some yoga or go for a walk. Focus on feeling your body move and notice the ground under your feet.
- Turn up the stereo and sing along to some music.
- Hold or chew a piece of ice and notice the temperature and feel the ice as it melts.
- Eat something – notice the temperature, texture and different tastes.





- Take a warm or cold shower - feel the water against your skin.
- Take your shoes off and walk in grass. Notice the feeling of it on the bottom of your feet.

- Put on a jersey or wrap yourself in a soft blanket.
- Wiggle your fingers or toes. Pay attention to the movement.
- Sit with a pet. Stroke its fur, notice its movements and any noises it makes.



- Sit down with a warm drink. Notice the steam rising and the feeling as the liquid enters your stomach.
- Go for a walk and pay attention to the scenery.

Tip: Use our **3-Minute Breathing Exercise** to help you reduce tension and anxiety or our **Mindfulness of Breath Audio** to become aware of your breathing. We also have a great **Muscle Relaxation Audio** to help guide you through an exercise to relax your body and relieve anxiety.

Tip: Use our **Connecting to the Moment** guide to help you carry out these activities mindfully so you can get maximum benefit from them.