



The Six S's: Stress-Releasing Exercises

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STOP

Stop everything you're doing, find a safe space and get connected by placing your feet firmly on the floor or sit on a chair with your spine lengthened.

SIGH

Take a deep breath in, all the way down into your belly and lower back, and exhale with a vocal "ahhh." If you would rather breathe quietly, focus on the soothing internal sound and slow, deep rhythm that your breath creates.

SCAN

Mentally scan your body from head to toe, and pay attention to how you feel and what you sense. Note where muscles are tense and other ways in which your body is holding stress. Breathe slowly through your nose and start tensing one of the tense areas a bit more—count to ten, then slowly relax. Repeat with any other areas of your body where you notice tension.

SHAKE

Stand with your feet hip-width apart, slightly flex your knees, and drop your shoulders. Begin shaking and feel the bounce through the knees, letting the vibration spread through your legs, hips, arms, and shoulders. This action helps finish the nervous system response to release physical stresses or traumatic experiences from the body.

STRETCH

Move your spine in six directions: front/back (raise your arms up, and bend at your hips), side to side (raise your arms up, and move torso laterally), and twisting (sitting or standing). Choose your favorite stretches that bring you the best relief.

SMILE

Smile as you recall a positive memory or something you're grateful for. This triggers *scientifically measurable* activity in the left frontal cortex, the area of the brain where happiness is registered. Laughter releases even more stress. Smiling or laughing is not forgetting or negating what stress has happened—it's allowing stress to dissipate from your physical body to allow for faster healing.