

## BUILDING RESILIENCE TO STRESS - PART 4 BOUNCING BACK STRATEGIES

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

**Bouncing Back Strategies** are strategies that we can use **after a stressful event**, like after we have walked out of that difficult exam



## BOUNCING BACK STRATEGIES

### STRATEGY #1: BE YOUR OWN SUPPORTER

After a stressful event like taking an exam, it is common to have **self-critical** thoughts like:  
“I’m too stupid for university, I’ll never understand this”



Instead of engaging with the thought, we should think about what we’d say if it was our best friend saying this to us about themselves

We likely wouldn’t agree with them and instead would **say something supportive** like:  
“Of course not! Let’s figure out a way to study so you can feel more ready!”

Showing **kindness to ourselves** is **not** about letting ourselves off the hook or holding ourselves to lower standards



In fact, showing kindness to ourselves has lots of benefits and can help enhance our performance

View the **Be Your Own Supporter** resource



We know that showing kindness to ourselves also known as being self-compassionate can be difficult for many of us.



We have additional resources to support with that!

View **Self-compassion Checklist** Resource

View **Additional Self-compassion** Resources

### STRATEGY #2: TIP YOUR BODY CHEMISTRY



#### TEMPERATURE

- Decreasing our body’s temperature is a good way to help us **calm down quickly** when feeling stressed
- We can do this by spraying our face with cold water, or if it’s winter, we can go outside for a minute or two



#### INTENSE EXERCISE

- When our body is revved up by emotion, **working out can help us feel calmer**
- We can engage in **intense exercise for a short period of time** (e.g., running on the spot or punching the air for a minute or two)



#### PACED BREATHING & PAIRED WITH MUSCLE RELAXATION

- We can engage in some **paced breathing** like the calming breath we showed you earlier
- We should make sure that we are **releasing tension** as we are breathing out



This strategy helps to change our body’s chemistry in order to **calm us down during times of high stress**

## STRATEGY #3: RELAXATION AND SLEEP

Sometimes after a very stressful event, we can have trouble sleeping because of the stress and we might still be thinking about what happened

In that case, we have two different strategies we can suggest:



### 1 Yoga Nidra



This is not your typical yoga exercise. This helps to **distract us from racing thoughts**, so we can relax or fall asleep.

View the [Yoga Nidra](#) Resource

### 2 Visualization

This can be a powerful technique to help relax and fall asleep. We can close our eyes and **imagine that we are in a place where we feel calm** like on the beach, on a mountain, etc. **We can imagine the sounds we would hear and the sensations we would feel.**

If we are having trouble imagining those we can also use audios of the beach, mountain or whichever place we have selected to help us visualize the scene.

View the [Visualization](#) Resource



If you find the sounds in these resources aversive, try different audios to see which type of noise that you find soothing.

## SUSTAINABILITY: TIPS FOR MAINTAINING REGULAR PRACTICE

**We will only get the benefits if we actually use these strategies!**

Here are some tips to help us maintain a regular and consistent practice

### Schedule It Into Your Day



- We can set a reminder on your phone or laptop
- We should be strategic about the time we choose to make sure it is a time that is convenient for us
- If we see that a certain time is just not working, we can change it!

### Have a Back Up Plan



- Sometimes our scheduled time doesn't work – we should have a back up plan! See what works best for us
- For example, if we usually meditate on Monday evening but can't fit it in, we can do one of our quick strategies like coming to your senses on our commute to school instead.

### Doing Something is Better Than Nothing!



- Even a few minutes a day can make a huge difference
- For example, if we don't have time to do a full 10-minute body scan, we can try to fit in a brief coming to your senses, as it only takes a few seconds to do.

## CONTACT INFORMATION



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