**Dealing with Stress**

This article will provide you with many ways of dealing with stress. Each technique can be used to help calm both children and adults in countless situations.

**Square Breathing**

Square breathing is a way to restore calmness and control. It is also called combat or autogenic breathing. There is a method that can help you take control of your emotions including fear and anger, and lower your stress. It works well with young children and adults, regardless of your age.

The somatic nervous system is involved in actions you have under conscious control such as moving your arms and kicking a stone out of your path. The automatic nervous system is involved with those things that you do not have under conscious control, such as your heartbeat and perspiration. Breathing and blinking are the only two actions of your autonomic nervous system that you can bring under conscious control anytime you choose. Breathing is the bridge between your somatic and autonomic nervous system.

Step 1: Take a deep 4 second breath through your nose with your mouth closed. Feel the air slowly come up and fill your stomach. Your belly will move outward.

Step 2: Hold for 4 seconds at the top.

Step 3: Exhale for 4 seconds downward through your open mouth.

Step 4: Hold for 4 seconds at the bottom.

That’s it! Pretty simple! You can complete the cycle between one to three times depending on the circumstances. When a toddler is losing control, you can say things like, “Karina, I see that you are frustrated. Let’s take a deep breathe together. It will be okay.” This breathing technique can be used in any stressful situation such as preparing for a presentation, calming a toddler down, and driving in traffic etc. When time for preparation permits, you can use this breathing technique to clear your mind, then visualize yourself doing what you need to do correctly, and then go complete the action.

**3 Foot Bubble**

Another method for dealing with stress is the “3 foot bubble” method. Imagine that you are on the Grand Canyon climbing up a thousand foot wall. Half way up you get really scared and become paralyzed. You look down and see tiny little specks. What you need to do is focus on your “3 foot bubble” that is around you. Realize that the only things you can control are your thoughts, your actions, and your words. You can’t control the bird that is flying around and you can’t control others around you. You need to focus on calming your mind and doing what is necessary to continue climbing; that which is in your power to control. You can control your thoughts and where you move your feet and your hands. You can control if you want to go up or down.

**How to Stop Worrying**

Dale Carnegie wrote a book called “How to stop worrying and start living.” The book provides a lot of great insights into how to stop worrying. The following key points from the book will help you reduce your stress if you follow the techniques.

The next time you face trouble follow these 3 steps:

1. Ask yourself, “What is the worst that can possibly happen if I can’t solve my problem?
2. Prepare yourself mentally to accept the worst—if necessary.
3. Then calmly try to improve upon the worst—which you have already mentally agreed to accept.

One such problem could be getting laid off from work. What would you do if that happened? You would likely get unemployment insurance and might have to ask family for help. It might take a year or so to find another job. You won’t starve, it will be hard, but you will make it through the hard times. You will be okay. Accept the fact that it may be hard for a while, but eventually through time, you will be okay. Now that you have accepted the possibility of it happening, do your very best to analyze some solutions and improve upon that situation.

The best way to analyze a potential problem is by writing out and answering the following questions:

1. What is the problem?
2. What is the cause of the problem?
3. What are all possible solutions?
4. What is the best solution?

Remind yourself of the exorbitant price you can pay for worry in terms of your health. Put up your old umbrella and keep the rain of criticism from running down the back of your neck. Instead of worrying, focus on being thankful and doing the very best you can. A great way to forget our own happiness is by trying to create a little happiness for others.

If you believe in God, the perfect way to conquer worry is through prayer. Ask God for peace, for wisdom, and for help.

We hope that you found these tips and strategies for reducing stress and worry to be helpful. Please feel free to share this article with anyone who you think will benefit. Thank you!

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