

Need a Quick Stress-Reliever? Try One of These Surprising Science-Based Strategies.

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There is a saying in the Balkans, where I was born and raised, that loosely translates to: “There is nothing worse than finally seeing the light, only to be plunged again into darkness.” As a psychologist, I have observed my patients’ extraordinary levels of stress and anxiety start to ease, only to be replaced by anger, disappointment and despair as [coronavirus](#) cases have resurged and the promise of the pandemic’s end has become more elusive.

The widespread return to in-person school and the uneven return to offices this fall are further contributing to the sense of being pushed to the limit. This has led many of my patients to ask what they can do in the moment when they feel frazzled, overwhelmed, panicked or tunnel-visioned. Although tried-and-true self-help strategies, such as exercise, good sleep, socializing, mindfulness, positive reframing and self-compassion, are still the best prescription for lowering stress overall, sometimes a practical solution that can provide immediate relief is what’s needed.

Here are some outside-the-box but science-based strategies that can help us calm down quickly, so we can keep functioning and doing what needs to be done.

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