

CREATING CALM

SIMPLE ACTIVITIES FOR
STRESSFUL TIMES

1. A Morning Affirmation
2. The One-Minute Calming Exercise
3. Helping Others
4. A Mindful Walk
5. A Round of Gratitude

A MORNING AFFIRMATION

Thank you for another day. I am alive, I am loved, and I am grateful.

Thank you for guiding me today, so that:

- I look for the powerful presence of love in every situation;
- I let go of worry and fear and choose calm instead;
- I honor all that life brings by responding with acceptance and appreciation.

Right here and right now, I have everything I need. And it is always right now.

Thank you, thank you, thank you.

THE ONE-MINUTE CALMING EXERCISE

1

Take 2 slow breaths

This is a simple calming exercise you can do anytime you have a minute available. It has three parts to it and is very easy to do. The first part is taking two gentle *slow* breaths:

Breathe in calm — breathe out worry.
Breathe in peace — and relax. (*Repeat*)

2

Relax one part of your body

For the second part, think of a part of your body that is tense. We are all unique and carry tension in different parts of the body. Sometimes it is in the neck area, sometimes it is in our shoulders or in our stomach. Where is that for you? Feel the tension there, then breathe in and relax it on your out breath.

Sometimes it helps to add a verbal instruction.
E.g., Breathe, then say 'Shoulders relax.' (*Repeat.*)

3

Visualize something calming

For the last part, take a moment to imagine something or someone that brings you calm or peace. It might be a park you've been to, the sounds of the ocean, the face of someone you love, or a pet. Close your eyes for just a moment if that is comfortable.

If you are with someone, share a little about that calm visualization with them.

HELPING OTHERS

IF YOU SEE SOMEONE WITHOUT A SMILE, GIVE
THEM ONE OF YOURS. ~ DOLLY PARTON

Consider the following questions:

- Is there someone you know that could use some support?
- How might you connect with them to talk, or lend an ear?
- Is there something that you can send them? (E.g., a supportive note or card, postcard, text, or email)
- Can you take a moment to send good thoughts to someone who is not doing well or is struggling with worry or anxiety?

Here is an example of a loving kindness meditation you could use for this.* Picture this person and read the following:

*May you be filled with loving kindness;
May you be safe from inner and
outer dangers;
May you be well in body and mind;
May you be at ease and happy.*

*<https://jackkornfield.com/meditation-on-lovingkindness/>

A MINDFUL WALK

WALKING MEDITATION IS A SIMPLE AND UNIVERSAL PRACTICE FOR DEVELOPING CALM, CONNECTEDNESS, AND AWARENESS. ~ JACK KORNFIELD

A mindful walk is simply walking while being aware. It can be done anytime and anywhere — walking to an elevator, walking to a store, walking in a park, or in your back yard.

Practice walking with awareness once a day. We get better with practice—kind of like learning how to play the piano.

Here are some suggestions to make mindful walking easy as pie!

- Take a deep breath as you start out, walk as though you are relaxed and calm (acting ‘as if’ helps it become a reality);
- Slow down just a little;
- Notice and appreciate little things around you as you walk;
- Listen for sounds, look for something beautiful to appreciate;
- Smile at someone when you pass them.

A ROUND OF GRATITUDE

THERE IS ALWAYS, ALWAYS, ALWAYS
SOMETHING TO BE THANKFUL FOR. ~ ANONYMOUS

A round of gratitude is a great way to ease worries and create calm. This round can be done as an evening practice by writing in a journal.

It can also be done throughout the day, while having coffee with someone, helping someone with a task, or while going for a walk. It can work wonders over the phone.

If you are supporting a person living with dementia or someone that is non-verbal, suggest things that you imagine they might have gratitude for (but then check it with them—"Is that true for you?")

Here are the questions that might be helpful. After each item below, please add why. That brings the statement from our thinking mind to our feelings. Complete the round by saying thank you three times.

1. Name one thing that makes your heart happy.
Because _____?
2. Name one thing you like about yourself.
Because _____?
3. Name one thing you really like about someone else.
Because _____?

Thank you, thank you, thank you.