

weightwatchers

weekly

May 14-20, 2017

Say
Ahh...

Why relaxation can help your weight-loss success—and how to make it happen



Say Ahh...

Shed stress and you can feel better—physically, mentally, and emotionally! Unchecked stress can take a toll on your health: Research has linked high levels of stress to everything from the severity of a cold to an increased risk of heart disease. It's also not good for your weight-loss journey: As you'd probably guess, one reason is that often we eat in response to stress.

But having a go-to technique to ease tension when you feel it building can keep you from turning to self-defeating solutions like comfort eating. It's a double win: You'll feel better equipped to handle the stressors in your life and you'll feel good about the choices you make.



The first step to handling stress is simply to expect it—it happens to all of us (though we may have different stress triggers). Then, when it does hit, you can pivot right to a helpful, nonfood solution.

Cover photo and photo left by iStock.

WHAT TO DO: BREATHE DEEP

Instead of turning to food when stress hits, try any of these easy exercises to quiet your mind and relax your body. Practice them even if you're not feeling stressed, so it's easier to call them up when you need them. Try each exercise up to three times each week.

WHOOSHING BREATH:

Smile slightly. Breathe in through your nose. Breathe out through your mouth, making a quiet, whooshing sound. Take long, slow, deep breaths in, letting your belly expand. Feel the air moving in and listen to the sound when you breathe out. **Try for one minute.**

COUNTING BREATH:

Breathe deeply into your belly, letting it expand. Pause. As you breathe out, count "one" to yourself. Inhale again, counting "two" as you breathe out. Continue for four breaths, then start over at one. **Try for one minute.**

RELAXING SIGH:

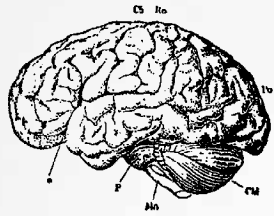
Sigh deeply. Let out a sound of deep relief as the air rushes out. Then let the air come in naturally. **Try 10 times.**

BREATHE IN RELAXATION, BREATHE OUT TENSION:

As you breathe into your belly, letting it fill with air, say to yourself, "breathe in relaxation." Imagine the relaxation entering any tense areas in your body. Pause. Then breathe out, saying, "breathe out tension." Let go of the tension. **Try for one minute.**

THIS WEEK'S FOLLOW-UP

When you feel stressed, choose one breathing technique above and start to practice it to manage stress instead of turning to food.



THINK AGAIN

Look at your stress-busting approach, and give it a reality check. Then opt for actions that help you feel good in the short *and* long term.

UNHELPFUL

"I'm so stressed out—I need to eat something!"



HELPFUL

"Stress is hard, but there are other ways to manage my stress without eating."

UNHELPFUL

"It's hard work changing my eating habits and choices, tracking, and staying on plan—it's stressful!"



HELPFUL

"Changing my eating habits can be hard work, but carrying extra weight is also hard work—it's stressful on my body. I have to make some changes—but I can also fit in my favorite foods."

YOUR TURN! What **unhelpful** thought have you had when your life was tense? Write it here. Give it a reality check, then write your **helpful** thought here.

UNHELPFUL



HELPFUL

Meditation illustration by Thinkstock

INSPIRATION FROM OUR COMMUNITY!



"CLEARING YOUR HEAD ON A DAILY BASIS IS A GREAT PRACTICE. FOR ME, IT'S JUST BEING STILL WITH MYSELF OR A WALK IN THE WOODS WITH THE DOGS." —OPRAH

"I'm going to breathe. I'm going to be OK. And I'm going to get through this without food as my crutch."
—MPLSCITYGIRL*



"I'VE REPLACED UNHELPFUL EATING TO DE-STRESS WITH THE HELPFUL BEHAVIOR OF ACTIVITY INSTEAD!"
LAURA

*Posted on Connect on the mobile app (for subscribers).



What's your best nonfood **#StressBuster**? Share on Connect on the mobile app (for subscribers).



Get in on the
Excitement!



No Artificial Sweeteners.
4 SmartPoints® value or Less.
Deliciously Decadent!

**FAST
& EASY**

From the *Everyday Delicious* cookbook.



[FAMILY DINNER]

SPAGHETTI CARBONARA

A classic, lightened up!

8 SmartPoints® VALUE PER SERVING //

PREP 5 MIN // COOK 15 MIN // SERVES 4

- ½ lb whole-wheat spaghetti
- 3 slices bacon, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 large egg
- 1 large egg white
- ½ cup grated Parmesan
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper

Cook spaghetti using package directions. Drain and keep warm.

- Meanwhile, cook bacon in large nonstick skillet over medium heat until crisp. Add garlic and cook, stirring constantly, until fragrant, 30 seconds.
- Whisk egg and egg white in small bowl.
- Add spaghetti to skillet; toss to combine. Remove skillet from heat. Immediately add eggs, Parmesan, salt, and pepper; toss to coat. Serve at once. Yields 1 cup per serving.

Recipe © Weight Watchers International, Inc.
All rights reserved. Photo by Kate Sears.