

# De-Stress Like a Pro

## Quick Wins to Find Your Calm

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# AGENDA

- “Stressors” vs “stress”
- Stress cycle completion activities
- Calming tool kit
- Further resources & supports

*Note: Our goal is not to resolve all stress & cover all strategies. I wish we could 😊!*

# STRESS IS NORMAL. THE KEY IS MANAGING & REDUCING IT



# WHAT ARE YOUR SIGNS OF STRESS?

When someone asks you how your night went



# HOW DO YOU MANAGE STRESS?



# “STRESSORS”

## Dear Stress

Let's Break Up.



**Stressors:** activate stress response in the body. Body sees stressors as “potential threats”

### -External Stressors

(exams, co-op issue, events...)

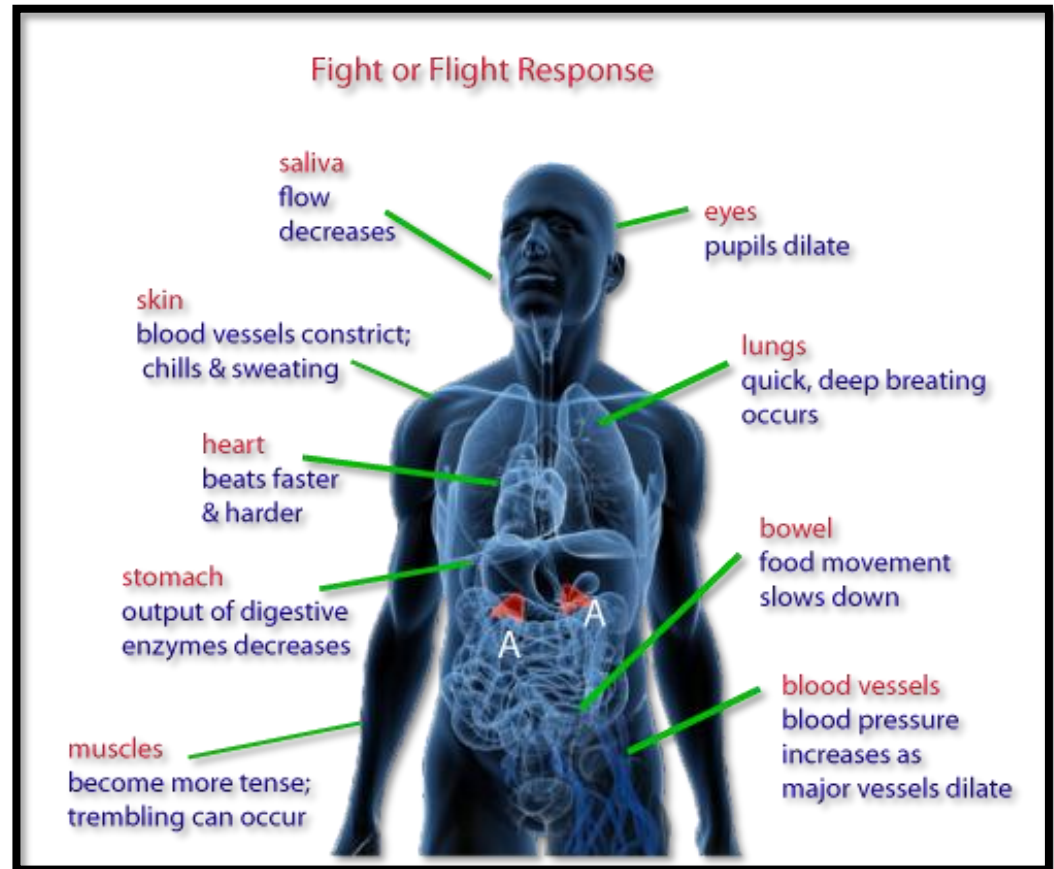
### -Internal Stressors

(negative self talk, overly high standards...)

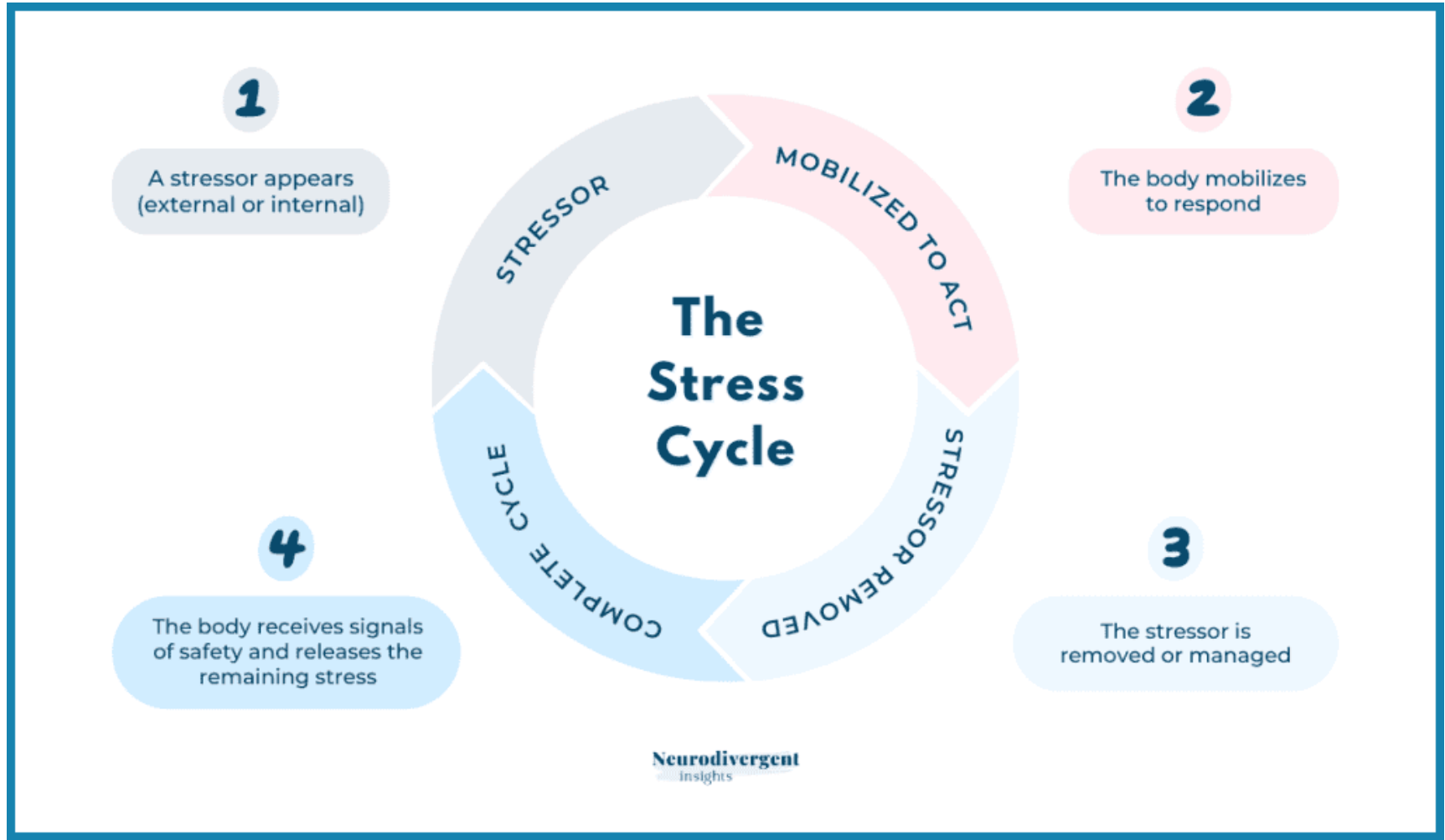


# “STRESS”

- Neurological & physiological shift in the **body** with perceived “threats”
- Activates stress response or fight-flight-freeze



# THE STRESS CYCLE



Adapted from <https://neurodivergentinsights.com/completing-stress-cycle/?srsltid=AfmBOopTsk-BwZgKwRvR5J7blwLrk6FDIZOWPrvhT2ExkRYX9unfPYjB>



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**Most people focus on solving the problem.**

**We also need to complete the Stress Cycle.**

**How Do You  
*Complete Your*  
Stress Cycle?**



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# EVIDENCE-BASED WAYS TO COMPLETE THE STRESS CYCLE



- Physical Activity
- Laughter
- Crying
- Sleep
- Positive Social Interaction
- Affection
- Creative Expression & Imagination
- Breathing/Relaxation strategies

# WHAT ACTIVIT WILL YOU START OR KEEP DOING?



- Physical Activity
- Laughter
- Crying
- Sleep
- Positive Social Interaction
- Affection
- Creative Expression & Imagination
- Breathing/Relaxation strategies

*Pro Tip: Proactively aim for 20 mins/day in 1 activity (in addition to sleep 😊)*

# CALMING TOOL KIT: PACED 4-4-8 BREATHING



# CALMING TOOL KIT: PAIRED MUSCLE RELAXATION



# CALMING TOOL KIT: CALM SPACE



# OR TRY A COMBO: DBT INFORMED “TIP” SKILLS



## TEMPERATURE

Change your body temperature. Splash your face with cold water, hold an ice cube, let car AC blow on your face, take a cold shower



## INTENSE EXERCISE

Do intense exercise to match your intense emotion. Sprint to the end of the street, do jumping jacks, push ups, intense dancing



## PACED BREATHING

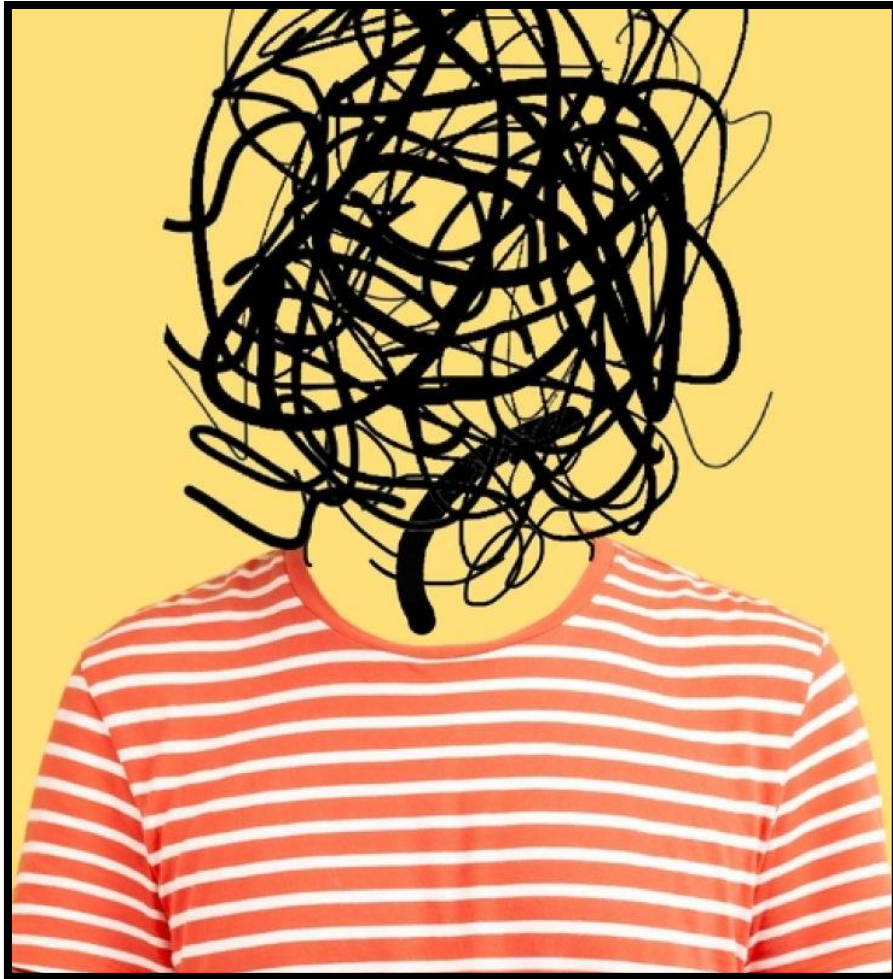
Try Box Breathing: Breathe in for 4 seconds, hold it for 4 seconds, breathe out 4, and hold 4. Start again, and continue until you feel more calm.



## PAIRED MUSCLE RELAXATION

Focus on 1 muscle group at a time. Tighten your muscles as much as possible for 5 seconds. Then release & relax. Repeat with other muscle groups.

# OVER-THINKING & WORRY



- This can be a REALLY helpful area to address
- Not covered in-depth today
- Completing stress cycle can help this
- Counselling & psychotherapy often target this
- Great self-help tools & resources exist...

# CAMPUS RESOURCES & SUPPORTS



- Counselling Services provides support including for stress
- No cost & no wait list
- Support while on & off-campus
- Workshops & groups
- Call 519-888-4096 or at Needles Hall
- Empower Me program 24/7:  
<https://wusa.ca/services/student-supports/empower-me/>
- Urgent Help & Emergency Contacts:  
<https://uwaterloo.ca/students/health-and-well-being>

# SOME RESOURCE IDEAS

- “Anxiety” Moodjuice self-help guide: [https://www.mcgill.ca/counselling/files/counselling/anxiety\\_moodjuice\\_self\\_help\\_guide.pdf](https://www.mcgill.ca/counselling/files/counselling/anxiety_moodjuice_self_help_guide.pdf)
- “Brene with Emily and Amelia Nagoski on Burnout and How to Complete the Stress Cycle” (podcast): <https://brenebrown.com/podcast/brene-with-emily-and-amelia-nagoski-on-burnout-and-how-to-complete-the-stress-cycle/>
- “Burnout: The Secret to Unlocking the Stress Cycle” by Emily Nagoski & Amelia Nagoski
- “Centre for Clinical Interventions” free workbooks: <https://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/resources/looking-after-yourself>
- “Completing the Stress Cycle When Stress Never Ends”: [“Completing the Stress Cycle When Stress Never Ends](#)
- “Face Your Fears – How to do Exposure”: [https://www.anxietycanada.com/sites/default/files/FacingFears\\_Exposure.pdf](https://www.anxietycanada.com/sites/default/files/FacingFears_Exposure.pdf)
- “Feeling Great” & “Feeling Good” books by David D. Burns
- “Mind Over Mood: Change How you Feel by Changing the Way You Think” by Dennis Greenberger & Christine A. Padesky
- “Mindfulness-Based Self Compassion” recordings & activities by Kristin Neff: <https://self-compassion.org/>
- “Mindful Way Through Anxiety” recordings: <https://www.guilford.com/companion-site/The-Mindful-Way-through-Anxiety/9781606234648>
- “Shyness and Social Anxiety” Moodjuice self-help guide: <https://sitotapsy.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Shyness-and-Social-Anxiety.pdf>
- Apps for stress and anxiety ie. MindShift CBT & Calm app or recordings on Youtube for relaxation strategies



# QUESTION & ANSWER TIME

