

PRACTICAL TIPS & IDEAS FOR BALANCING YOUR NERVOUS SYSTEM

These practical tips & tools are offered as invitations for you to experiment with and see what personally works for you.

FOR WHEN YOU ARE STUCK 'ON' & WANT TO RELAX High Anxiety & Nervous Energy / Hyper-aroused Stimulating the Parasympathetic branch of the Autonomic Nervous System (ANS)	FOR WHEN YOU ARE STUCK 'OFF' & WANT TO ENERGISE Low Mood and low Energy / Hypo-aroused Stimulating the Sympathetic branch of the Autonomic Nervous System (ANS)
BODY	
Keep your body still	Move your body
Sway body gently from side to side	Do star jumps or jump up and down on spot
Engage in mindful exercise such as yoga etc	Engage in brisk exercise: Go for a walk, jog or run, skip, juggle or throw a ball against the wall, Hoover a room, scrub the bath
Wrap yourself up in a (weighted) blanket	Dance / stretch
Listen to a Yoga Nidra mediation, body scan, guided meditation or visualisation (using Headspace or Calm App)	Wiggle your toes and keep your focus on the sensations in your feet
Progressive muscle relaxation exercise	Engage your senses through 54321 Grounding Technique
Go into calming nature (such as a green park)	Go into stimulating nature (such as walking by the sea)
BREATHING	
Breathe with a longer out breath: in for the count of 3 and out for a count of 6 or try conscious sighing	Breathe with a shorter out breath: in for a count of 6 and out for a count of 3
Breathing through the left nostril (closing the right nostril with a finger)	Breathing through the right nostril (closing the left nostril with a finger)
POSTURE	
Allow your back to round Fold forward, curling into a ball	Straighten your back and stand or sit tall with shoulders back Arch backward allowing body to stretch upwards and outwards
ENGAGE YOUR SENSES	
Listen to calming music or nature sounds	Listen to upbeat, energising music
Have a warm shower or bath	Take a cold shower
Use calming smells /oils: lavender, camomile	Use uplifting smells/oils: peppermint, lemon, or rosemary
Create a low light / dim environment	Using a light box or spending time in bright natural sunlight
Find calm people to be around	Find energetic people to be around
Dress in calm, soft muted colours	Dress in bright coloured clothes
Say words to self like: calm, relax and peace	Say words to self like: energy, life and buzz
Hold a soft object (a cushion, soft toy, blanket, scarf etc)	Hold a medicine ball or other invigorating object
FOOD & DRINK	
Eat soothing foods such as soup, porridge and oats	Eat crunchy food, such as carrot sticks
Root vegetables	Spicy foods including chili & ginger, or fruits such as citrus
Calming herbal tea such as camomile	Good quality hot chocolate
Milky drinks	Black tea/peppermint tea, or brush teeth with mint toothpaste
GOALS AND ACTIONS	
Turn off completed and let go of having to achieve anything.	Set small actionable goals that help create a sense of motivation and achievement
PROCESS YOUR FEELINGS	
Write all your thoughts, strong emotions and worries down (on paper or your phone)	Write a gratitude list, remember what is beautiful in life, find a sense of awe, wonder and enchantment.
Neuro doodling	Draw, create, paint, cook, bake, knit, sing
ENGAGE IN CREATIVE PRACTICE OR HOBBY THAT BRINGS JOY	
Engage in a relaxing hobby or activity that requires some light concentration: easy knitting, cooking, baking, playing music, reading, watching a film, singing	Engage in a more stimulating hobby or activity that requires some deeper concentration: more complex knitting, cooking, baking, playing music, reading, watching a film, singing
SOCIAL INTERACTION	
Stroke a pet (borrow one!)	Play with a pet
Call or make an arrangement to meet a call friend	Call or make an arrangement to meet a motivating friend