

10 Tips FOR SLOWING DOWN

In our fast-paced world, slowing down and practicing mindfulness can become an afterthought, but it's necessary for our well-being. Methods for slowing down may vary, but here are ten practices you can start right now to reduce stress, alleviate symptoms of anxiety, and reset for better mental health.

- 1 Go on a nature walk.** Walking in nature for only ten minutes can help us reap the benefits of sunlight, incorporate exercise into our day, and help us stay grounded. Walking also helps to boost cardiovascular health and stay strong.
- 2 Practice breathing exercises.** From belly breathing to box breathing, adding breathing techniques into your regular routine encourages both lung health and stress relief.
- 3 Go cloud gazing.** Cloud gazing is a wonderful option to reset your mind and focus on the present while benefiting from all else nature has to offer.
- 4 Keep a journal.** Hand-written journals are an excellent way to collect your thoughts and release any stress onto the page. There are also no rules to them: write down your thoughts, or even ramble on about your favorite books or movies. Add sketches for a creative twist!
- 5 Start a garden or keep a plant.** Gardening is a great way to get back in touch with the world around you. Some plants even help improve air quality.
- 6 Build something fun.** From birdhouses to flower boxes, building structures with your hands can be a great way to unwind, take a break from the screens, and get the whole family involved.
- 7 Create art.** We don't have to be professionals for art to be an outlet. Draw in a notebook, sketch on the sidewalk in chalk, or try your hand at painting or pottery.
- 8 Read fiction.** Along with improving social cognition and helping delay the onset of neurodegenerative conditions, reading fiction can provide a healthy escape from everyday life. Physical books can also serve as a grounding tool.
- 9 Practice grounding exercises.** Grounding exercises can help reduce feelings of anxiety and techniques like the 5-4-3-2-1 Grounding Technique incorporate all five senses to help us achieve a sense of calm.
- 10 Opt for a picnic instead of the break room.** Eating outdoors not only offers the opportunity for fresh air and sunlight, but can help improve your mood. It can also offer quiet time or social wellness if friends or family are included.

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