

THE LITTLE BOOK OF RESPONSIBLE SELFISHNESS

10-MINUTE STRATEGIES FOR SELF CARE



BY

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A NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR

Caring for others is incredibly rewarding.

Nothing compares to the feeling you experience when you know that you have been there for another person and made a difference to them when they needed help.

I have worked as a nurse for over 30 years and during that time I have suffered the effects of Compassion Fatigue. I took me a long time to realise that in order to care for others I must first care for myself and to not feel guilty about this.

Phoebe came into my life 13 years ago during a very stressful period for me and my time with her helps me cope with the work I do. She is my 'Responsible Selfishness'.

This book contains ideas you can do for 10 mins that help you take time for yourself, rest relax and re-charge your emotional energy.

At the bottom of each page is a score out of 10 for you to fill in when you have tried the activity. The last page has my email so you can let me know about anything else you have tried that works so I can share these with others.

Jayne



JAYNE ELLIS
CEO EF TRAINING
AND PHOEBE

10 MINUTES DOING NOTHING



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DOING NOTHING!

**We're busy doin' nothin'
Workin' the whole day through
Tryin' to find lots of things not to do
We're busy goin' nowhere
Isn't it just a crime
We'd like to be unhappy, but
We never do have the time**

Songwriters: Jimmy Heusen-Van / Johnny Burke

As odd as it may appear, giving yourself permission to just sit quietly and do nothing is very restful. If you need an excuse, make a hot drink but resist the temptation to look at your phone or turn on the TV or listen to music.

Just sit quietly for 10 mins and relax.

- Let your mind wander where it wants to go
- Try not to dwell on negative thoughts though - if they come just let them go
- Listen to the sounds around you
- Just enjoy the feeling of being still and having nothing to do
- Drink your hot drink slowly and enjoy it

See if you can work this little 'nothing' gap into each day

Rate this activity out of 10 on how useful you found it. Reflect on whether this works for you

/10

10 MINUTES MINDFUL WALKING



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MINDFUL WALKING

“If you are in a bad mood, go for a walk...

If you are still in a bad mood,

GO FOR ANOTHER WALK!”

Hippocrates

For many years it has been accepted that exercise is vital to mental health. It lessens anxiety and the other symptoms of the stress response. People who are physically fit have also been proven to be more emotionally resilient. Just a short walk every day will have a very positive impact on your mental health.

MINDFUL WALKING

- As you begin be aware of walking at a natural pace, your hands in a comfortable position
- Count your steps up to 10 and do this 6 times
- With each step concentrate on the feeling of walking, the rise and fall of your feet and the movement of your legs and your body
- If your mind begins to wander gently bring it back to the sensation of walking
- For a few minutes expand your attention to things you can hear just notice them
- Then shift your awareness to smells - again just notice them try not to focus too long
- Now move on to colours and things you can see, gently focus on each for a few seconds
- Keep this open awareness for 10 minutes while you walk, patiently coming back to awareness if something grabs your attention so you stay aware and neutral
- In the last minute come back again to the sensation of walking and noticing how your body is moving and count your steps again from one to 10, six times, then just stand still for a few moments when you are ready to end your mindful walk

Rate this activity out of 10 on how useful you found it. Reflect on whether this works for you

/10

10 MINUTES OF MUSIC



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MUSIC

"We recognise the universal power of music to touch the hearts of men and women everywhere and in all generations to inspire and encourage, to sustain and lift, to comfort and bring peace."

Gordon B Hinckley

Music has the power to change our emotions so can be used in many ways to help you feel more relaxed

Pick a piece of instrumental music, either classical or a film score

If possible, play the music through headphones - its easier to concentrate

Sit comfortably and take a few deep breaths to help you relax.

Breathe in for the count of 6 - pause - breath out for the count of 9 - repeat three times

Listen to the music and:

- Pick one instrument at a time to focus on it
- Listen really intently to every note and notice how the music is making you feel
- When the music is over sit quietly and take a few more deep breaths

Rate this activity out of 10 on how useful you found it. Reflect on whether this works for you

/10

10 MINUTES OF GRATITUDE



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GRATITUDE



"A moment of gratitude of makes a huge difference to your attitude"
Bruce Wilkinson

Paying attention every day to what you feel grateful for has been proven to put you in a positive frame of mind and help you connect with yourself and the world around you. When your work involves caring for others who are suffering it is even more important that you do this to add balance for what you are experiencing.

A FEW IDEAS!

Daily Gratitude 'check in'

Write down three things you are grateful for and keep it somewhere where you can see it

- On the fridge
- In the car
- On your desk
- By your bed

A gratitude journal

Keep a notebook by your bed and before you go to sleep write down things you are grateful for

Small acts of kindness

- Say 'thank you' to friends and co workers
- Buy someone a present, send them a card or flowers for no reason
- Do a random act of kindness—buy a coffee for a stranger/give to a local charity

Rate this activity out of 10 on how useful you found it. Reflect on whether this works for you

/10

10 MINUTES SNACKING



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MOOD FOOD

70% of your serotonin is made in your gut.

"What's going on in your gut is going to affect your mood!"

Dr Frank Lipman

Do not underestimate the effect that food has on your mood. Below are ideas of snacks that will not destroy your gut bacteria as many processed and sugary foods do and will help to balance your blood sugar and therefore your mood:

Nuts:

Balance your blood sugar and fill you up

High in monosaturated fats, omega 3 and 6; deficiency in these can lead to low mood

Sunflower seeds:

High in magnesium. Often called 'nature's tranquiliser' so can help reduce anxiety

Bananas (fresh and dried)

Contain an enzyme called tryptophan which converts to serotonin that transmits mood elevating substances in the brain. And the magnesium content helps relax the body's muscles plus the vitamin b6 regulates healthy sleeping patterns.

Dark chocolate

The darker the better! 70% cocoa or higher

Regulates and lifts your mood as well as reducing inflammation due to high levels of antioxidants

Rate this activity out of 10 on how useful you found it. Reflect on whether this works for you

/10

10 MINUTES TELEVISION



TV TIME

**“it’s a decompression chamber, immersion in a fantasy world for a few moments, a few hours.
Delightful”**

In her book *The Art of Rest*, Claudia Hammond surveyed 18,000 people and asked them to state the 10 things that they found the most restful - watching TV came in at number 9. The quote above is from one of the participants of the survey.

The other reasons they gave included:

- You can sit with your feet up
- Almost no mental effort
- Completely absorbing
- Immersed in other people’s lives so you can forget your own troubles
- Transported around the world (or off it!)
- A shared experience with others, companionship without the need to talk

However I will add a word of caution: not all TV is relaxing. If you are in a state of anxiety due to the emotional burden of your job, you need to be very careful that you do not ‘feed’ your anxiety by watching programmes that traumatise you.

These include:

- The News and some social media
- Violent crime dramas, including many popular soap operas
- Horror films
- Real life documentaries especially those you personally identify with in some way.

The opposite of these types of programmes are:

- Makeover programmes
- Programmes that celebrate human achievement and kindness
- Comedies and films with ‘the Disney factor’ i.e. a happy ending!


Rate this activity out of 10 on how useful you found it. Reflect on whether this works for you

/10

10 MINUTES HYDROTHERAPY



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BATH TIME

**“There must be quite a few things a hot bath won’t cure,
but I don’t know any of them”**

Sylvia Plath

Hydrotherapy has been practiced for centuries. Most cultures have rituals around bathing and for good reason - immersing yourself in warm water has many and varied health benefits.

These include:

- Helping you breath more easily; breathing = relaxation
- Reducing pain, inflammation and blood pressure
- Reducing the symptoms of anxiety and tension
- Improving gut health; happy gut = happy mind!
- Balances hormones
- Helps you sleep

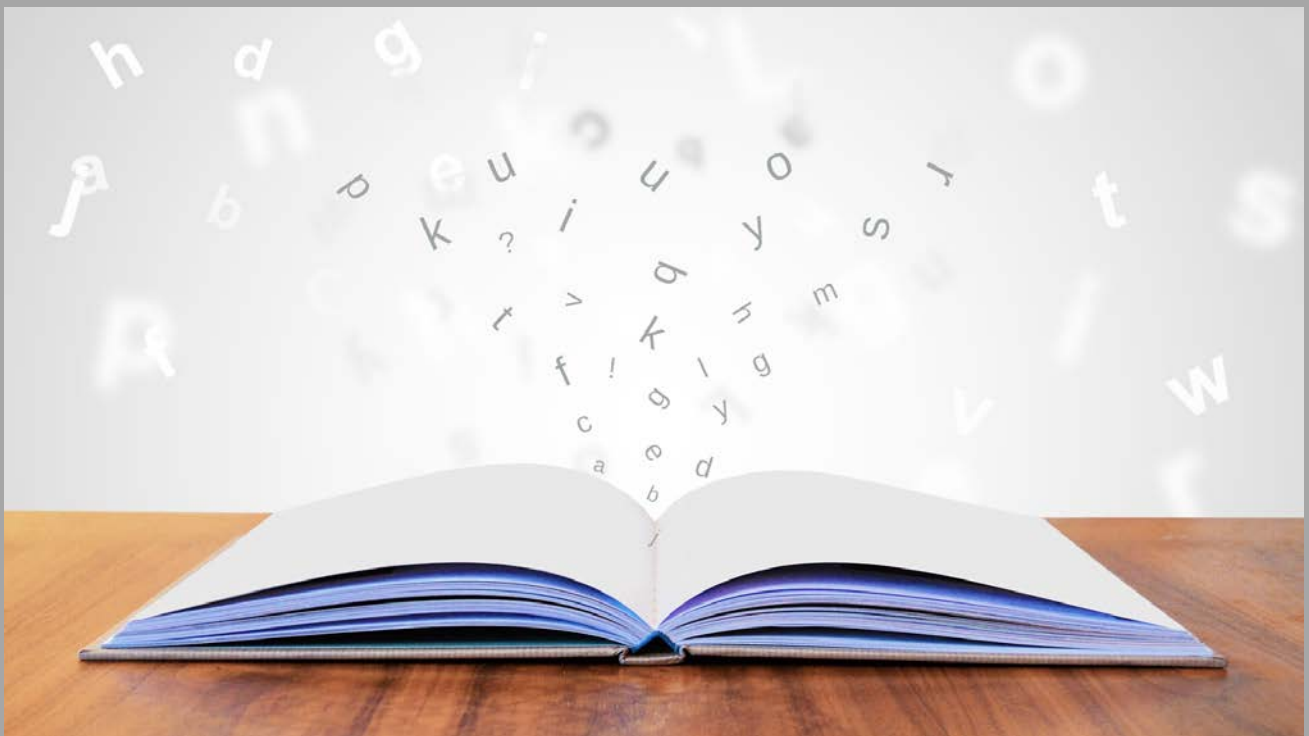
Bathing tips!

- Create a relaxing atmosphere - think candles and music
- Use bath salts, bubble bath or oil with a scent you like
- Take a drink in with you and maybe something to do like a book to read
- Have a pillow for your head
- Use a flannel or bath mitt to wash yourself as it feels nicer
- Get family ‘buy in’ to leave you alone
- DO NOT DISTURB!

Rate this activity out of 10 on how useful you found it. Reflect on whether this works for you

/10

10 MINUTES READING



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READING

“Reading forces you to be quiet in a world that no longer makes a place for that”

John Green

There are many good reasons why escaping into a good book is one of the best ways to relax and unwind but if you need some excuses here are a few reasons why 10 mins of reading should be in your daily routine.

Reading :

- Lowers your stress levels
- Makes you more empathetic
- Is a form of therapy
- Increases your intelligence
- Makes your brain stronger and can protect you from some types of dementia
- Helps you sleep

For a bit of fun... below is a list of 10 books that you are supposed to read before you die!

See how many you can tick off and maybe read the ones you haven't read yet?

1. Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austin
2. To Kill and Mockingbird by Harper Lee
3. Beloved by Toni Morrison
4. Great Expectations by Charles Dickens
5. Wuthering Heights by Emily Bronte
6. Lord of the Rings by J R Tolkien
7. A Fine Balance by Rohinton Mistry
8. The Catcher in The Rye by J D Salinger
9. The Remains of the Day by Kazuo Ishiguro
10. 1984 by George Orwell

Rate this activity out of 10 on how useful you found it. Reflect on whether this works for you

10 MINUTES PRESSURE (AND RELEASE)



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RELEASE

Acupressure is a form of traditional Chinese medicine that may provide temporary relief from anxiety symptoms. It involves stimulating pressure points in your body, either on your own or with the help of a professional.

Below are two pressure points you can try for yourself and see how they work for you. If you have any existing medical conditions, please check with your Doctor before doing this activity.

The Hall of Impression Point

The hall of impression point lies between your eyebrows. Applying pressure to this point is said to help with both anxiety and stress.



To use this point

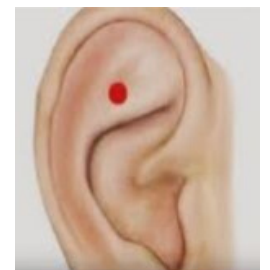
1. Sit comfortably. It can help to close your eyes.
2. Touch the spot between your eyebrows with your index finger or thumb.
3. Take slow, deep breaths and apply gentle, firm pressure in a circular motion for 5 to 10 minutes.

Heavenly Gate Point

The heavenly gate point is located in the upper shell of your ear, at the tip of the triangle-like hollow there. Stimulating this point is said to help relieve anxiety, stress and insomnia.

To use this point

1. Locate the point in your ear. It might help to use a mirror.
2. Apply firm, gentle pressure in a circular motion for two minutes



Rate this activity out of 10 on how useful you found it. Reflect on whether this works for you

/10

10 MINUTES DRINKING!



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DRINKING TO DE-STRESS



"Water is the driving force of all nature"

Leonardo Da Vinci

We are approximately 70% water and just being slightly dehydrated really affects our physical health and mental ability. You should be aiming to drink between 2 - 2.5 litres of fluid a day and while water is the best hydrator other beverages also count. But stay clear of alcohol as this can make you more anxious and affects your sleep.

However, there are some drinks that can actually help you feel less anxious.

TART CHERRY JUICE: While you won't immediately feel more relaxed just by drinking tart cherry juice, it does offer a multitude of health benefits including improving the duration and quality of sleep because they are packed with melatonin.

WARM MILK: The warm temperature is soothing, but milk's tryptophan content may be the primary reason that it's so effective. Tryptophan is an amino acid that's converted into the neurotransmitter serotonin which can help you feel calmer.

GREEN TEA: L-theanine, an amino acid found in tea plants, and it's the substance believed to promote relaxation. Drinking green tea can help sharpen focus and concentration, while reducing stress and enhancing overall well-being. For the best results use de-caff.

FRESH JUICE: Our bodies are designed to cope with pressure and stress effectively when given the right nutrients. Fresh juice offers an easy way to do this and as cortisol levels tend to be higher in the morning, drinking fresh juice that contains lots of vitamin C from foods like mango, cantaloupe and berries after waking is a great way to keep stress levels down and set yourself up for a much better day.

COCONUT WATER: Coconut water boosts energy levels, but it can also help to reduce stress and anxiety, as well as help you sleep better as it's an excellent source of B-complex vitamins as well as potassium and magnesium, minerals that help the muscles to relax and improve blood circulation. Coconut water is also said to help balance electrolytes in the body, helping us to remain calm and stress-free.

Rate this activity out of 10 on how useful you found it. Reflect on whether this works for you

/10

YOUR IDEAS



YOUR OWN IDEAS

If you have any ideas for more tips or strategies that you have found helpful please share them with me and I will pass them on to others

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