



# **Easy & Accessible Ways to De-Stress**

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# The Butterfly Tapping Method (The Butterfly Hug)

The Butterfly Tapping Method (or Butterfly Hug) is an easy way to soothe yourself and de-stress whenever you feel agitated. Moreover, it can help you calm down and clear your mind before you fall asleep.

1. Cross your arms in front of your chest, so that the fingertips of each hand touch the opposite shoulder or upper arm

2. You can close your eyes either entirely or partially, however you prefer



3. Try to breathe slowly and deeply

4. Then, you move your hands like the wings of a butterfly:  
You tap your fingertips on your arms/shoulders in an alternating rhythm.

I.e. your right hand taps your left shoulder/arm, then your left hand touches your right shoulder/arm, and the process repeats itself

5. Usually, the pace isn't too slow nor too fast but you are free to alter the pace depending on your own preference.

6. Try to observe what passes through your mind, e.g. feelings, thoughts, and images and try to accept them in that moment without judging them or pushing them away. They are valid, and this method will help you process them

7. Optionally, you can also use the mental imagery method (see page 4) while you're performing the butterfly method

8. It's up to you for how long you continue the exercise. Listen to your feelings and continue or stop whenever you feel comfortable to do so.  
A few minutes might be a good start at first, but if you feel the need to continue, you are free to do so!

# Writing Exercises: Clear your Mind

## The To-Do List

If you struggle with restless thoughts about e.g. outstanding tasks, the To-List Method is a great option for you!

You can do it at any time, but it's especially beneficial right before you go to bed.

### How does it work?

The To-Do List allows you to pour everything that keeps your mind occupied onto a piece of paper. All of these thoughts are safely stored on there, which keeps your head clear and allows you to look at your notes whenever you actually need them.



### What do I need for this method and how do I create a good To-Do List?

- All you need is pen and paper or your phone (e.g. your notes app)
- Write down all the things that you still have to do and which keep your head busy. There are no rules what exactly you have to write down or in which format, it's entirely up to you.
- Some people like to separate certain topics and create multiple To-Do Lists (e.g. one for chores, one for appointments,...) and others like to write them down all at once as one big list. Neither works better than the other, they're both effective.
- The only truly important thing:  
You write everything down which is currently on your mind, to assure nothing lingers in your head and continues to bother you.
- That being said, here are a few suggestions:
  - Include what you need to do and when you need to do it
    - E.g.: "Go to the CWC (at 1pm Tuesday)"
  - Include what you need to do and when it needs to be done at the latest i.e. a deadline
    - E.g.: "Buy new groceries (Friday)"
  - Add exclamation marks ranging from ! to !!! to signify the importance of a task
    - E.g.: "Go to the CWC (!!)"



# Mental Imagery Relaxation

Mental Imagery is a meditation and relaxation technique which is based on focusing on a certain experience, sound, thought and/or object in order to calm your mind down. It is supposed to help you relax, soothe anxiety and stress, and improve sleep.

1. Get yourself into a comfortable position, close your eyes and take a few deep breaths
2. Now, imagine a peaceful scene in a place of your desire. It can be a real or entirely imagined place, that's completely up to you. An example would be a lush forest, a beautiful mountain scenery or a beach during the sunset.
3. Now, think of the details in this scene. Try to imagine the scents, the sensations, and the sounds which you encounter in this place
4. Picture yourself walking through this scene, down a small, peaceful path while you continue to imagine all the sounds and scents around you as you stroll down this path
5. You can stay within this scene for as long as you like / for as long as you need until you feel relaxed. A recommendation would be about 15 minutes.
6. While you stay in this scene, continue to breathe deeply and calmly
7. Once you're finished, open your eyes again and allow yourself to slowly slip back into reality



Some people like to listen to sounds that fit to their imagined place while they engage in mental imagery relaxation. You can find free App recommendations for these sounds in "Apps, Podcasts,...Recommendations" on page 6

For a more specific example of a Mental Imagery Relaxation process, read the text below:

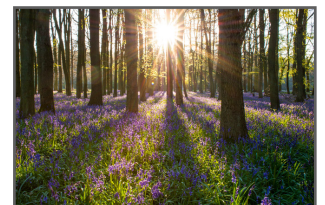
## Forest

Imagine sun rays that shine through the forest. They aren't harsh, instead, they're soft and warm, and allow the colorful flowers and the green grass to gleam beautifully in their light. The rays dance over you and spread a comfortable warmth over your entire body.

Slowly, this warmth combines with the sensation of a soft breeze that brushes over your skin, which is just strong enough to let the leaves of the trees rustle softly.

You can smell the freshness of the woods and the flowery scents of the different plants and flowers around you, and you take a few deep breaths to fill your lungs with the fresh air. Here and there you can hear the birds singing their songs, happily, and without any worry, while you stroll through the forest.

The ground underneath your shoes crunches slightly as you walk along the path, step by step, while you take in the beautiful landscape and can feel your entire body relax more and more.



# Breathing Exercises

Breathing Exercises can be helpful anytime you feel stressed or anxious, or feel the need to relax and calm down before you fall asleep. Feel free to try all of the following methods and find out which one works best for you.

## The 4-7-8 Method

This is how you do it:

1. Try to get into a comfortable position
2. Breathe in slowly through your nose for 4 seconds
3. Then, hold your breath and count to 7 in your head
4. Now, exhale with force through your mouth, purse your lips so your breath makes a “whoosh” sound as it leaves your lips. Do so for 8 seconds
5. You can repeat the circle for up to 4 times (but do not do more than 4, to prevent feeling dizzy)



This exercise might take some practice and the 4-7-8 seconds may be too much for some people. To start off and practice, you can also shorten these times to e.g.:

Inhaling for 2 seconds → Holding for 3 seconds → Exhaling for 4 seconds

## Deep Breathing

This method can be used whenever you like, however, it may be especially helpful when you're trying to fall asleep and need to calm down.

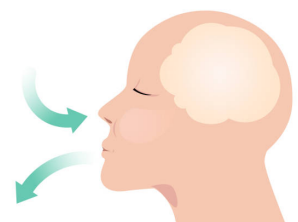
1. Try to get comfortable
2. If you like, you can close your eyes
3. Slowly breathe in through your nose and allow the air to fill your belly
4. Breathe slowly out of your nose
5. Place one hand on your stomach and the other one on your chest
6. As you breathe, the hand on your stomach should move more than the hand on your chest.
7. Take three more full and deep breaths, and pay attention to the way your stomach rises and falls
8. After that, take a small moment for yourself to relax and collect yourself before you move on



## Equal Time

This method requires you to match the time you breathe in and out, and can be used anytime and anywhere, as long as you have the possibility to sit (or lie) down. 5 seconds is used as timeframe below, however, you can modify it according to your own abilities and comfort.

1. Get into a comfortable position
2. Breathe in through your nose and while you do so, count to five
3. Breathe out through your nose and count to five again
4. Repeat it a few times



# Apps, Podcasts,... Recommendations

## Guided Meditations



### New Horizon

- Includes many guided meditations but also offers the possibility to listen to a variety of relaxing stories

## Soothing Sounds & Melodies



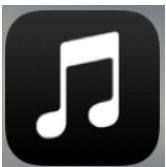
### Soothing Sleep Sounds

- Among these recommendations "Soothing Sleep Sounds" has the widest variety of sounds, including rain, crackling fire, rivers, ocean, and many more!



### Soothing Sounds

- Includes a smaller offer of sounds, examples are: Nightly windy forest, heavy rain for sleep, ocean waves, and waterfall



### Sleep

- This simple app has the following sounds: Rain, white noise, brown noise, blue noise, pink noise, violet noise, and air conditioner

→ All of the apps are entirely free and can be downloaded in the App Store!

## Most Streamed Meditation Podcasts on Spotify

- [Sleep With Me](#) by Dearest Scooter
- [Nothing much happens: Bedtime stories to help you sleep](#) by Kathryn Nicolai
- [Guided Sleep Meditation & Sleep Hypnosis](#) by Sleep Cove
- [Get Sleepy: Sleep Meditation and Stories](#) by Slumber Studios
- [On Purpose with Jay Shetty](#) by Jay Shetty
- [Snoozecast](#) by Snoozecast
- [ASMR Rain Recordings](#) by Buffy

→ While you are at the CWC, you can use the CWC's Spotify to access the podcasts!