



# Breathe 2

Created by Reuban Roshy and Dhvani Ravi  
Edited by Dr. Suhas Chandran and Dr. Priya Sreedaran



The St John's handbook for the well-being of  
healthcare workers during the pandemic and beyond



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The cover illustration is a representation of the healing power that a deep breath can have on a healthcare worker.



### **Disclaimer:**

This book is not meant to replace professional consultation. If you or someone you know is experiencing severe distress, please seek professional help.

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**To every healthcare worker on the  
frontline of this battle,  
and the mighty fallen.  
This book is in your honour.**





# Foreword

-Dr. Kavery Nambisan  
(Novelist and Surgeon)

The second edition of the handbook comes at a time when all of us who work in the field of health are in urgent need of a 'breather' from the stresses of the past eighteen months.

During the first wave of the COVID-19 Pandemic, when working in isolation in the midst of chaos became the order of the day, we realized that we would have to tap into our inner resources in order to cope.

*At times, it was difficult. We are social beings, we need to meet and interact with other people. To keep on working without any social contact (especially when confronted by a stressful situation in which the risks to one's health are high) is a challenge we could have done without.*

But here it is: We lived through the severe second wave of a pandemic. We were exhausted, frustrated, helpless and angry. *Breathe helps to focus on each problem as it comes, encourages us to do our best, and move on. We are reminded to take a brief pause during our day and enjoy a few minutes of rest.* When we come out of our work environment, we are urged to shed our anxieties of patient care, forget the petty irritations and relax. We should spend at least half an hour doing something that gives us pleasure. Breathe deep, and get a good night's rest.

You and I are still here; we are living, working, coming home; we are breathing. We must look forward to the day when we can shed our anxieties caused by killer diseases and see each other smile.

*"Breathe" is here once again to help us do it.*



# Message from the CMS

Being a strong proponent of the idea of work-life balance and an ardent seeker of this fine art, I constantly look for things and people who in some way do that small thing which seems to alleviate, comfort or reassure a busy worker - especially a healthcare worker - in the midst of the continuously busy workday or night. It could be a thought, a song, a smile or a passage in written text. It could be a memory, a passage, a podcast or a video clip. It could be just about anything, and the only limit to this is one's own imagination.

Breathe, in its second edition is just that. It is a volume full of possibility and promise. Be it a poem, or a puzzle, an exercise or a song, Breathe has it in some measure. Sitting as I currently do, in the chair of an administrator, and watching the human healthcare journey played out at close quarters, I would unhesitatingly prescribe a generous dose of this book to any and all who could benefit, and that is a huge number.

My congratulations to the creative intelligence of the people who have put this together, my best wishes to those who will use it. May it enhance the pleasure and quality of your journey ahead!

*-Dr. Arvind Kasthuri  
(Chief of Medical Services,  
St. John's Medical College Hospital)*



# From the Editors' Desk

The devastating consequences of first and second waves of COVID-19 pandemic left healthcare workers breathless. It was then that Dr. Suhas Chandran first proposed a book that would try to help exhausted healthcare workers cope with fallout of the pandemic. Dhvani and Reuban ran with this idea and created the first edition of 'Breathe', a handbook of strategies and suggestions to deal with the fatigue and burnout arising from the pandemic. The handbook had also intended to provide a sense of solidarity and compassion to all professionals dealing with COVID-19 on the frontlines. The overwhelming feedback for the original handbook has led to the release of the second edition of 'Breathe'.

'Breathe 2' with updated suggestions and strategies aims to help healthcare workers as they go on managing their work and home while the pandemic persists in raging on with newer waves. The second edition has taken cognizance of the incidents of violence experienced by health care workers across India during the pandemic and has included a chapter on this, written by Dr. Divya Hegde, psychiatrist from St. John's Medical College.

I take this opportunity to thank Dr. Suhas Chandran for thinking of this book. Dhvani and Reuban deserve applause for their remarkable resourcefulness and quickness in creating and compiling this handbook. They have received a lot of help from Navya, Samrat, Thanmayi, Rayna, Bimal Saju, George BK and Perinba. I thank Dr. Denis for his critique that has helped refine this edition. I would be remiss if I did not mention the unstinting support of Dr. S M Manohari. Finally, I want to express gratitude to the institution of St. John's National Academy of Health Sciences for its unwavering encouragement to the 'Breathe' team.

Once again, we hope that this edition will be of help to all our healthcare worker colleagues during the upcoming third wave of COVID-19.

Thanking you,  
Priya Sreedaran



# From the Creators

The reception we received for the first edition of *Breathe* was overwhelming. What started out as a small initiative to help colleagues and seniors in our hospital ended up reaching so many healthcare workers and others. While we are grateful, we understand what it means: that the mental wellbeing of healthcare workers has been overlooked too long, and now the tide must turn.

The second wave of the COVID pandemic, relentless in its battering, has taken more than its toll on the mental and physical wellbeing of frontline workers. It stretched our healthcare system well beyond its capacity. And in the wake of this devastation, we recognise the need for a second edition of this handbook, to provide our solidarity to the workers on the frontline.

The first edition of *Breathe* was an attempt at testing the waters for such an initiative. The response has told us more than enough. We now recognise that there is a need for more specific advice catering to each type of healthcare worker, with structure, focus and direction.

To this end, we have considerably restructured the booklet and added new fun content. We hope that you will enjoy *Breathe 2* as much as you did the first edition, and that these suggestions are a start to your journey in prioritising your own wellbeing, and help you to 'heal thyself'.

-Creators (Dhwani Ravi and Reuban Roshy)



# How to use this book

This handbook, like the last, has carefully curated resources and creative outlets for your stress and frustration, as well as evidence-based techniques on how to de-stress and be mindful.

The booklet is divided into two sections. The first section is a monthly challenge of sorts, designed to help you pick activities for each day that put your wellbeing first, for as little or as much time as you can afford. We've embedded an Excel spreadsheet to help you keep track of your progress, and reward you with a beautiful 'month in pixels' at the end of it.

The second section is a section on tips to healthcare workers to help with challenges faced in the hospital. Every effort has been made to keep the advice as inclusive as possible!

The content is presented as lists of suggestions, prompts and puzzles, free for you to explore as you peruse. Like the first edition, much of our content links to wonderful resources outside, so don't miss the hyperlinks on all of the pages!

We hope that this handbook becomes a treasured resource for you, one you save and turn to every once in a while, and we hope that it succeeds in being your wellbeing companion.

# Contents

## 1. Breathe Everyday 10

(Compiled by Dhvani Ravi and Reuban Roshy)

### Short Activities for Busy Workdays

Meditation

Mini Workouts

Podcasts

Suggested playlists

Raagas to Destress to

Games

News

Articles and resources

Journaling prompts

Puzzles



### Longer Activities for Weekends/Days off

Curated virtual trips

Documentaries

Books

Movies

Web Series to watch

TEDx Talks

Comedy clips

Alternative therapies



## 2. Tips for the Hospital 54



# Breathe 2

# Breathe Everyday

A 30 Day Wellness Challenge to help you  
take wellbeing into your own hands



# Breathe Everyday

While we love finding fun and relaxing activities of use to you, we encourage you to take your wellness into your hands. Click on the image below to download the sheet and use it to list activities that you would like to do everyday that prioritise your wellness, and keep track of them by colouring the respective boxes.

Examples of such activities could be:

Exercise, Sleeping well, Eating well, Connecting with people, Making time for your hobbies, and so on.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Exercised													
Ate 3 nutritious meals													
Spoke to a loved one													
20 min deep breathing													
Walked around the park													
Slept 7 hours													
Did a Breathe 2 task													
Month in Pixels													

**LEGEND**

Great Day!       Good Day       Decent Day



# Breathe 2

## Morning Routine

A great day starts with a great morning. Follow these tips to kickstart your morning everyday.



## Meditation (10 min)

Starting your day with a morning meditation can gently release grogginess and help set the conditions for a more successful day. It gives us the best opportunity to be fully aware, fully awake, and fully alive before "doing" anything.

- Find a place that is free from a lot of noise or distractions You can add relaxing background music, light a candle and/or incense, or diffuse a relaxing essential oil.
- Wear comfortable clothes.
- Sit comfortably- on a cushion on the floor, on a couch or a chair. Try to have backrest so you can keep your back erect.
- Start with 5 to 7 long and slow deep breaths so you can start releasing tension.
- Then just start focusing your mind on an object. It could be the flame of a candle, or your breathing.
- Whenever you become conscious of thoughts, sensations in the body or sounds in the environment, just go back to the object you were focusing on, or go back to paying attention to your breathing again, or repeating your mantra, but do it mentally without moving your lips and your tongue.
- [Click here](#) for a guided morning meditation.



# Body Scan Meditation (5 min)

Research shows that mindfulness meditation and body scan meditation in particular – has many mental and physical benefits including reducing stress, increasing focus, improving sleep, greater levels of mindfulness (for example, observing thoughts and feelings while not reacting to stress) and increased psychological well-being.

- Sitting comfortably, take a deep breath in through the nose, and out through the mouth. As you breathe out, closing the eyes, allow the breath to return to its natural rhythm.
- With your eyes closed, start at the top of your head and mentally “scan” down your body. Bring your awareness to your head and neck, and notice if you feel any feelings, sensations, or discomfort.
- Repeat this practice for your shoulders, arms, hands, chest, back, hips, legs, feet, and so on – taking about 20-30 seconds to focus on each body part.
- When you encounter areas of tension during the scan, focus your attention on them and breathe. Try to visualize the tension leaving your body. Take note of your observations and when thoughts or feelings arise, return to the area of the body where you last left off.
- Don’t try to change anything – you are simply building a picture of how the body feels right now, in the moment.
- For a guided body scan meditation, try [this link](#).



# Walking Meditation

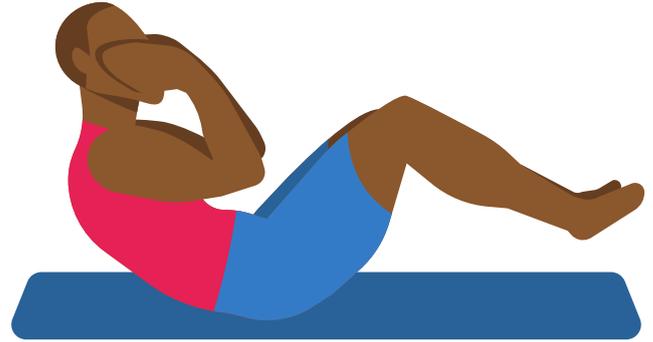
## (15 min)

Walking is such a habituated action for many of us that we tend to do it on auto-pilot and our mind tends to go wandering, too – caught up in remembering, dwelling, planning, worrying, or analysing. A walking meditation is designed to bring body and mind in sync while we're out and about and can be done anywhere and at any pace. Follow each cue for about 30-60 seconds:

- Body check - As you start to walk, notice how the body feels. Take a few seconds to become aware of your posture and the way you're carrying yourself.
- Observe your gait without trying to change the way you're walking.
- Notice the sounds or the noise that drift in, but do not dwell on it.
- Turn your attention to any familiar smells, pleasant or unpleasant. Notice how the mind habitually wants to create a story out of each smell and how it might remind you of somewhere, something, or someone.
- Next, acknowledge any physical sensations, like how the weather and the soles of your feet touching the ground makes you feel, and let go.
- Contemplate the sensation of movement in the body: how the arms hang or swing by your side or how the weight steadily shifts from right to left.
- Focus on your rhythm and use it as a base of awareness, a place you can mentally come back to when the mind wanders off.
- [Click here](#) for a guided walking meditation.



## Mini-workouts



Start your day with this 5-minute workout combining strength and flexibility exercises. Exercise has been proven to improve mood by an influence on the hypothalamic-pituitary axis.

### Sources:

1. NHS, United Kingdom
2. Sharma A, Madaan V, Petty F. Exercise for Mental Health. The Primary Care Companion to The Journal of Clinical Psychiatry. 2006;08(02):106.



## Feel Good Yoga

Awaken the body and mind and let go of any stress with this 20 minute set of stretches:

Yoga has been found to affect mood by elevating levels of a brain chemical called gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA), which is associated with better mood and decreased anxiety.

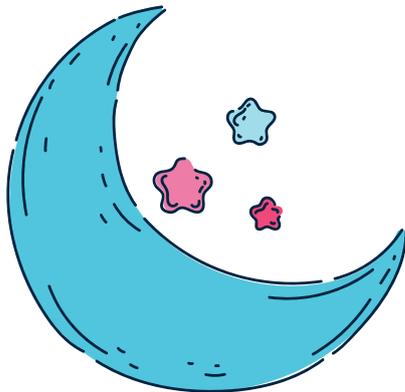
### Sources:

1. Headspace
2. Yoga for better mental health - Harvard Health [Internet]. Harvard Health. 2022 [cited 9 January 2022]. Available from: <https://www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/yoga-for-better-mental-health>



# Night Routine

Make sure you're doing everything you can to wind down and get a restful night of sleep, no matter how challenging your day was, using these tips.



## Wind-down Meditation (10 min)

Sleep meditations help create the inner conditions needed for a truly restful night and allow us to let go of the day. They help lower the heart rate by igniting the parasympathetic nervous system and encouraging slower breathing, thereby increasing the prospect of a quality night's sleep.

- Remove all distractions from your room, including your phone. Lie down in a comfortable position.
- Focus on your breathing. Inhale for 10 counts, then hold your breath for 10 counts. Exhale for 10 counts. Repeat five times.
- Don't get too caught up in keeping count of your breathing. Inhale, and tense your body. Pause, relax, and exhale. Repeat for the desired number of times.
- Notice your breath and body. If a body part feels tight, consciously relax it.
- When a thought comes up, slowly return your focus to just your breathing.
- [Here is](#) a guided wind-down meditation.



# Ambient sounds to sleep to

## Sleepcasts:

Sleepcasts are podcasts similar to bedtime stories which use sound and visualization to create the perfect atmosphere for healthy restful sleep.

- 10 Minute Sleepcast: Rainday Antiques: Find shelter from the hectic pace of life in 'Rainday Antiques': a place so cosy it seems almost to exist outside the normal rules of space and time.
- 10 Minute Sleepcast for Deep Sleep: Beachcomber. Allow the body and mind to relax, with a stroll down your own private stretch of shoreline.
- Sleepcast: Cat Marina - At night, the peaceful Cat Marina comes to life – and it's the purrfect place to meet some feline friends.

## Sleep Music

Sleep music helps establish a soothing baseline of sound without too much variation, to help you fall asleep – and keep you asleep. It masks other sounds, inside or outside.

Click [here](#), [here](#) or [here](#) for samples.

## Soundscapes

- Camp Fire Soundscape for Relaxing, Focus or Deep Sleep.
- Sleep Vibes and Rain: Relaxing rain falls in a steady rhythm while rich vibes create a subtle melody to lull you to sleep.
- Sleep Waves and Singing Bowls: A rushing stream creates a background for the resonate tones of singing bowls to help you relax.
- 45 Minute Deep Relaxation Water Sleep Sounds for Falling Asleep: Foothill Falls-



# Podcasts

These podcasts are available on Spotify. However, you do not need to be a subscriber to listen.

## *Stories from a pandemic: Breakdown or breakthrough? (32 min)*



Short stories from it's okay to talk initiative by Sangath (a mental health researcher organisation in India) which talks about how people overcame challenges.

We found ourselves quite motivated by these narratives.

## *Mini purposes and lots of them: The Mindful podcast (8 min)*



Mini-purposes and why many of them can help create a big sense of purpose in daily life.

## *Voice note to an old friend in the middle of a pandemic*



Poems to calm down by Megha Rao

## *Visualisation : The Dr. Happy Podcast*



A podcast that helps to connect to the ideology of the technique of visualisation in a soothing voice

## *A meditative story: Ten percent happier with Dan Harris*



A story with meditation prompts embedded into it surrounded by breath-taking music

## *Covid innovations: A travelling professor's diary*



Tune in to listen to some of the many innovations during this pandemic by Siddharth Deshmukh



# Track list

A set of fun and peppy playlists to destress to



## Stress Relief

*Calm your mind with gentle piano and ambient music.*



## Totally Stress Free

*No need to stress out. Stay relaxed with these easy upbeat songs.*



## What's Cooking?

*An upbeat playlist of fun Hindi songs to vibe with.*



## Happy Hits!

*Hits to boost your mood and fill you with happiness!*



# Raaga List

A collection of Raagas to soothe the soul



*Raga Bhatiyar*



*Raga Bairagi*



*Raga Charukesi*



*Raga Patdeep 1*



*Raga Patdeep 2*



*Raga Brindavani*



*Raga Behag*



*Taal Farodast*



## Around India in 80 Taps

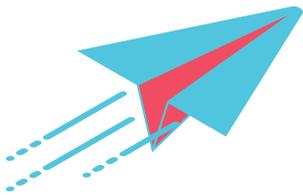
Take a virtual trip to some of the most scenic places with these curated trips on Google Earth



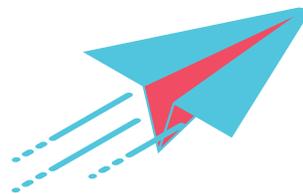
*Explore Kochi*



*Explore Bollywood Film Locations*



*Explore Taj Mahal*



*Explore the  
Vijayanagar Kingdom*



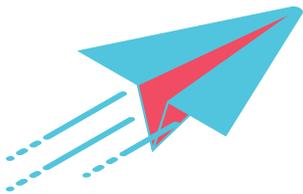
*Discover Mount  
Kangchengjunga*

*Click on the airplane next to the place you would like to visit and buckle up. Find many more such trips on the Voyager page on Google Earth*



## **Around The World in 80 Taps**

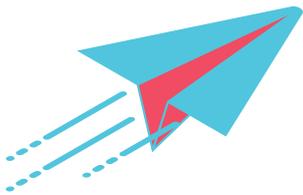
Take a virtual trip to some of the most scenic places with these curated trips on Google Earth



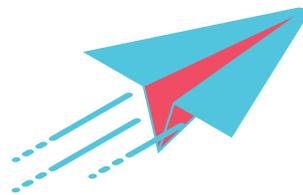
*Explore Porto*



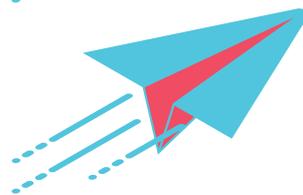
*Explore Ottawa*



*Explore Belfast*



*Explore Old Towns  
of the World*



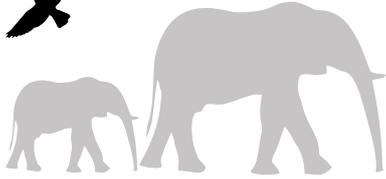
*Discover Egypt*

*Click on the airplane next to the place  
you would like to visit and buckle up.  
Find many more such trips on the  
Voyager page on Google Earth*

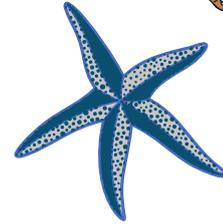


# Breathe 2

## Documentaries to watch



Available on YouTube



### A Kenyan Wildlife Safari (20 min)



*Go on a relaxing virtual safari in Lewa Wildlife Conservancy, Kenya*

### The Cosmos: Narrated By Morgan Freeman (36 min)



*A guided tour extending from the surface of the earth to the largest observable structures of the universe, and then back to the subnuclear realm*

### Timelapse of the future: a journey to the end of time (29 min)



*This experience takes us on a journey to the end of time, trillions of years into the future, to discover what the fate of our planet and our universe may ultimately be*

### Our Planet - Coastal Seas (49 min)



*From fearsome sharks to lowly urchins, 90 percent of marine creatures live in coastal waters and protecting these habitats is a battle humanity must win.*

### The Gorgeous Wildlife of the Mediterranean (51 min)



*The contours of the Mediterranean have changed during the course of its history. Watch and explore one of the world's most diverse ecosystems.*



# Reading List



*Books to help de-stress after a long day*

## Three Thousand Stitches: Ordinary People, Extraordinary Lives - Sudha Murthy



*a collection of 11 short stories drawn from Sudha Murthy's personal life surrounding her work with the devadasis of Karnataka.*

## A Man Called Ove - Fredrik Backman



*a funny, moving, uplifting tale of love and community that will leave you with a spring in your step in an easy-to-digest 120 page package.*

## Ikigai: The Japanese secret to a long and happy life - Hector Garcia



*this book gently unlocks simple secrets we can all use to live long, meaningful, happy lives*

## Life is What You Make It - Preeti Shenoy



*a story of a woman who develops a mental illness and how she combats it with love, hope and determination*

## Here, There and Everywhere - Sudha Murthy



*a compilation of short stories about the bitter-sweet life experiences of the author, each with a lesson in itself*



# Game Night

*a list of short arcade games for when you need a breather*



## Infinity Loop

*A puzzle game about creating intricate looping patterns by connecting multiple things and make fun out of it. This game is a good puzzle game but with a great zen mode.*



## Alto's Odyssey

*An endless runner and a sandboarding video game with beautiful, minimalistic graphics and a smooth, satisfying gameplay in Zen mode*



## Flow Free

*A simple yet addictive puzzle game where you have to build tubes of different colors starting from different points scattered around a grid*



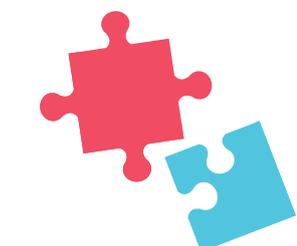
## My Oasis

*An idle clicker and tapping game, there are no intense controls, just easy gameplay and soothing, peaceful sounds to accompany the calming visuals*



## Shadowmatic

*A puzzle where the player rotates abstract objects in a spotlight to find recognizable silhouettes in projected shadows, relevant to the surrounding environment.*



## Jigsaw Planet

*Puzzles can be a great way to relax and unwind at the end of a long day.*



# News Hour

*Stay informed without the doomscrolling with these short, concise news apps and websites*



**Inshorts**



**Newsbyte**



**Opeddiction**



**Daily Hunt**





# Articles and Resources

*Articles written by other healthcare workers on Thrive Global about how to cope.*

## **5 Ways to Manage Your Coronavirus Stress:**

How to take extra time and care for ourselves to improve our well-being during this time of upheaval- by Michelle A. Williams & Shekhar Saxena at Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health

## **Five Life Lessons to Learn from Our Corona Warriors**

as they toil at a seemingly insurmountable task, braving disease and death, day after day by Dr Divya Parashar, Clinical Psychologist & Wellness Mentor.

## **This is a Long War, Take Own Health As Seriously As Patient Care: Dr Muffazal Lakdawala**

by Kuheli Sen, writer-journalist.

## **So You Haven't Seen Your Friends in a While.**

Here's How to Meaningfully Reconnect - by Jessica Hicks

## **Care, Connect, Cure**

Stress and trauma are just some of the fallout of Covid-19 that caregivers are facing daily. Compassion fatigue is slowly taking over. By Shrradha Sidhwani, AEI Institute (USA)

## **Doctors' Wellbeing during the COVID-19 Pandemic**

By the Department of Psychiatry, St. John's Medical College, Bangalore



# Breathe

## Movie

# Recommendations



A good movie on a day off can be an escape from our everyday lives. Here are few feel good movies to add to your watch list!



### The Pursuit of Happyness

*A struggling salesman takes custody of his son as he is poised to begin a life-changing professional career.*



### The Bucket List

*Two terminally ill men escape from a cancer ward and head off on a road trip with a wish list of to-dos.*



### Little Miss Sunshine

*A family determined to get their young daughter into the finals of a beauty pageant take a cross-country trip.*



### Untouchable

*After he becomes a quadriplegic from a paragliding accident, an aristocrat hires a young man from the projects to be his caregiver.*



### You've Got Mail

*The owner of a bookstore chain meets the owner of a quaint little bookshop online and they fall in love with each other, blissfully unaware that they are actually business rivals.*



### Wake Up Sid

*The story of a lazy college student who with a turn of events realises his potential in this world and becomes a success in the fast-paced life of Mumbai.*



### Hichki

*A positive and inspiring story about a woman who turns her biggest weakness into her biggest strength.*



# Watch List

Web series to binge on, or savor episode-by-episode as per your schedule.



## Star Boyz

*science-fiction comedy series by comedian Kenny Sebastian with some really great visual effects and punchlines.*



## Mom and Co.

*A heart-warming series where a mother and a son bridge the gap between them.*



## Laakhon Mein Ek

*A 15 year-old-boy interested in mimicry finds himself in an IIT coaching institute where he is a misfit.*



## The Reunion

*An unexpected invite from the past opens the door to a whole lot of memories to a group of friends.*



## Starting Troubles

*Based on the real life experiences of Dr. Jagdish Chaturvedi, this is the perfect watch if you are looking for a web series that tickles your funny bone and leaves you with something to think about.*



# TEDx Talks

**TEDx**

Listen to these after a busy day, to get your shot of humour or inspiration.



## More than funny.

*by Michael Jr, Comedian, with a comfortable, conversational style that hides a sly sense of mischief.*



## How I remade one of India's toughest prisons

*by Dr Kiran Bedi, on how she managed one of India's toughest prisons -using a new focus on prevention and education to turn it into a centre of learning and meditation.*



## Lady in the House, her Responsibilities & Ambitions

*by IPS Amrita Duhan, also a doctor, homemaker and a mother, on her inspirational journey and reflections upon why age & responsibility should not be a barrier on your path to achieve anything in life.*



## How a 13 year old changed 'Impossible' to 'I'm Possible'

*by Sparsh Shah, a child prodigy, singer/song writer/rapper born with brittle bones, but an unbreakable spirit.*



## "Never give up" stories from India

*by Manoj Dora, Director of Collaborative Projects and Outreach at Brunel Business School, on how he made his way from a small village in India to the United States, and his initiatives that empowered several households to escape poverty.*



## Inside the mind of a master procrastinator

*by Tim Urban, blogger and founder of the website "Wait but why".*



# Just for Laughs

*Here are some stand-up comedy videos that are perfect pick-me-ups when you need a laugh at the end of a long day.*

*All of the videos below are available on YouTube.*



**The Emergency Room - by Brian Regan**



**Hot pockets! - by Jim Gaffigan**



**How the British took over India - by Trevor Noah**



**Indians Travelling to America - by Atul Khatri**



**Strange Behaviours During Exams - by Dr Jagdish Chaturvedi**



# Alternative Therapies

Here are some other forms of therapy that have some evidence to support their ability to relieve stress.



Art Therapy.

Animal Therapy.



Journal Therapy.

Mindfulness



Movie Therapy.

Movement/dance  
Therapy.





# Alternative Therapies

Here are some other forms of therapy that have some evidence to support their ability to relieve stress.



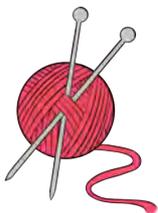
Music Therapy.

Poetry Therapy.



Gardening

Baking - Sweet  
Savoury.



Knitting

Creative Visualisation



# Journaling Prompts



Journaling lowers stress and its effects on your body and mind. It is also found to help with depression and alleviate general well-being.

*Add your thoughts as comments or download the page onto your computer and jot down your thoughts in concise points (try and avoid long paragraphs)*

## Source:

Ratini M. Is Journaling Good for Mental Health? [Internet]. Medicine Net. 2022 [cited 9 January 2022]. Available from:

[https://www.medicinenet.com/is\\_journaling\\_good\\_for\\_mental\\_health/article.htm](https://www.medicinenet.com/is_journaling_good_for_mental_health/article.htm)















# Journaling Prompt

Take a moment to think about this prompt, and what it evokes in you.

What are you

a. Grateful for?

---

---

---

---

b. Anxious about?

---

---

c. Upset about?

---

---

d. Excited about?

---

---

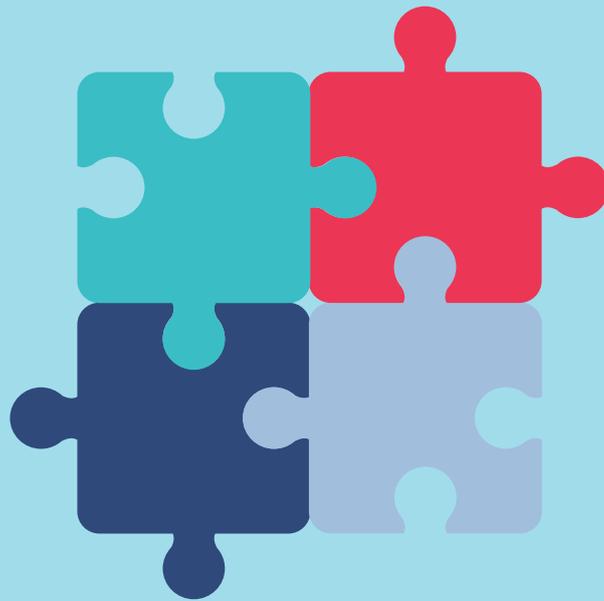
e. Determined to change?

---

---



# Puzzles

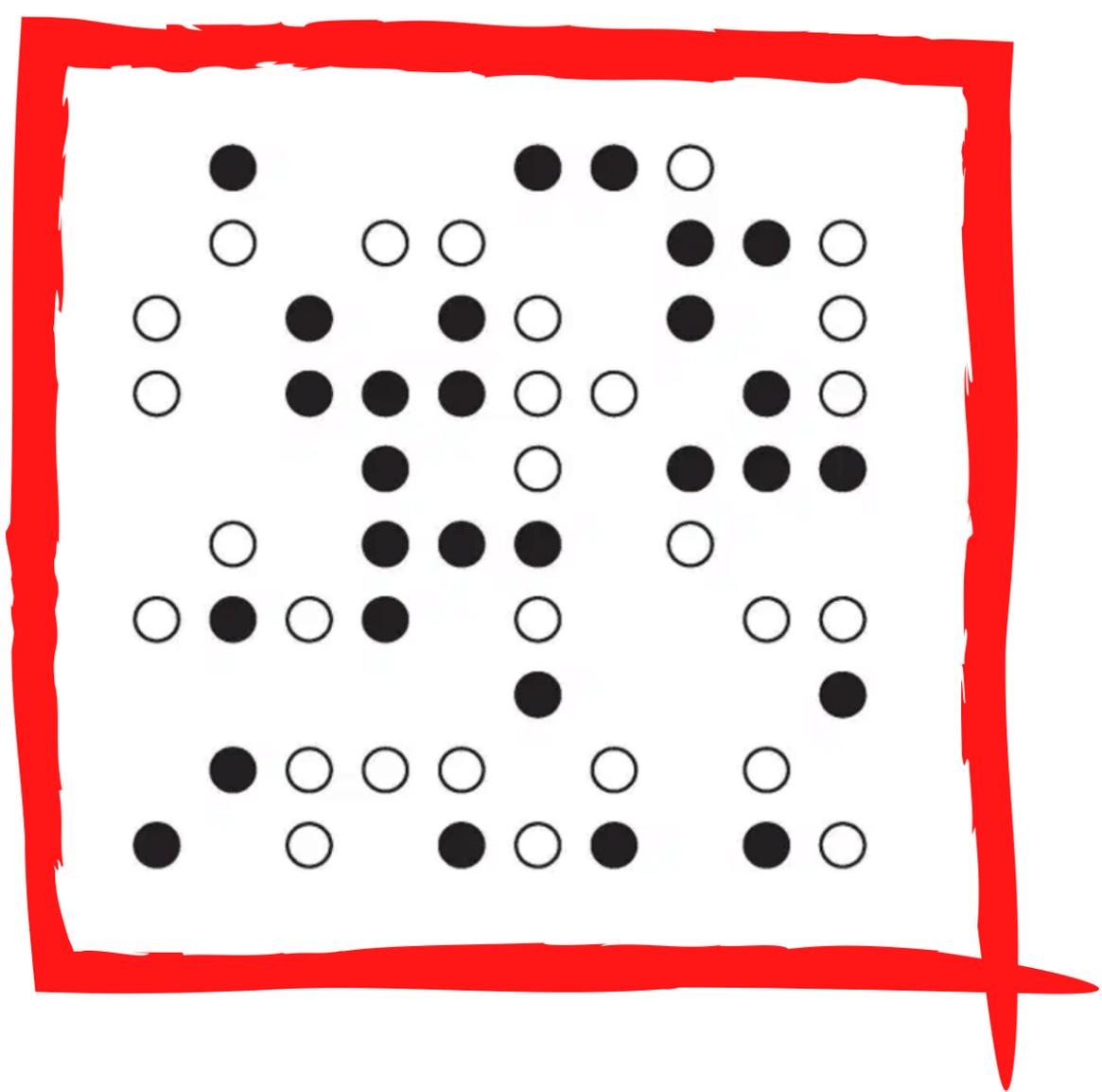


In our hyper-connected world with constant demands for our attention, focusing on a single task like a puzzle puts one's mind into a meditation-like state. It provides a sense of peace and tranquility and is an excellent source of stress relief. Flip ahead to find a selection of fun puzzles to try!



# Black and White

Draw horizontal and vertical lines to join the circles into pairs of a single white dot and a single black dot. Lines cannot cross each other or a circle.





## ALL DONE

Arrange each set of blocks to spell out a series of words that mean 'everything is done'

Puzzle 1

ACC ED OM ISH PL

Puzzle 2

DE CO LU NC D

Puzzle 3

D FI ZE NA LI

Puzzle 4

VE HI E AC D



# Five Steps to Calm

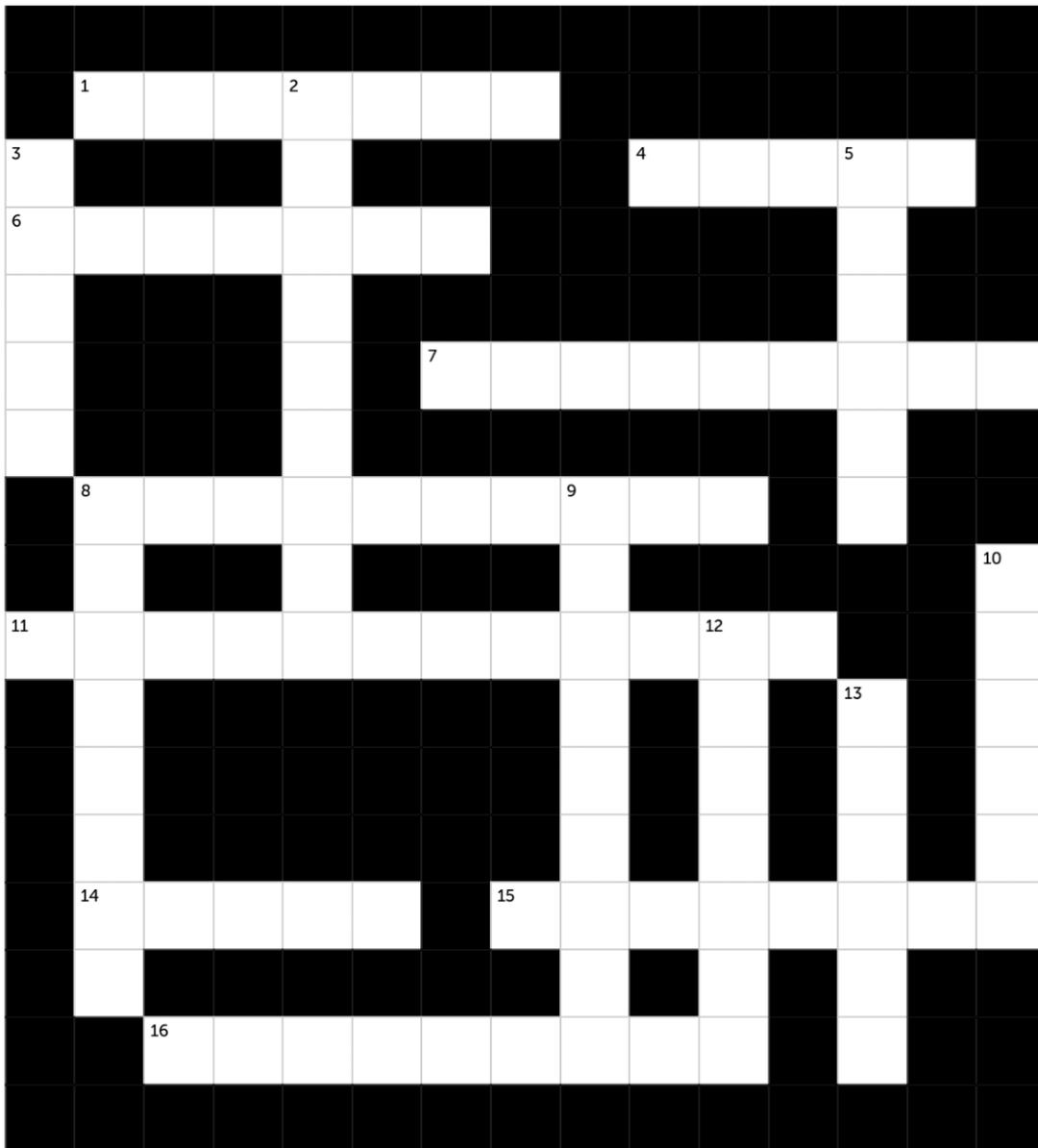
Change the word 'MESS' to 'CALM' by changing one letter at a time. For example, you could start by changing 'MESS' to 'MISS' and then 'MESS' to 'KISS'





# Criss Cross

Here's a crossword where the answers are provided, but can you figure out where they fit?



5 Letters  
Iomud  
Moyle  
Shore

6 Letters  
Arabian  
Hackney  
Suffolk

7 Letters  
Finnhorse  
Groningen  
Mongolian  
Oldenburg

8 Letters  
Losino  
Mesaki  
Miyako  
Morgan

9 Letters  
Asturian  
Balearic  
Lusitano

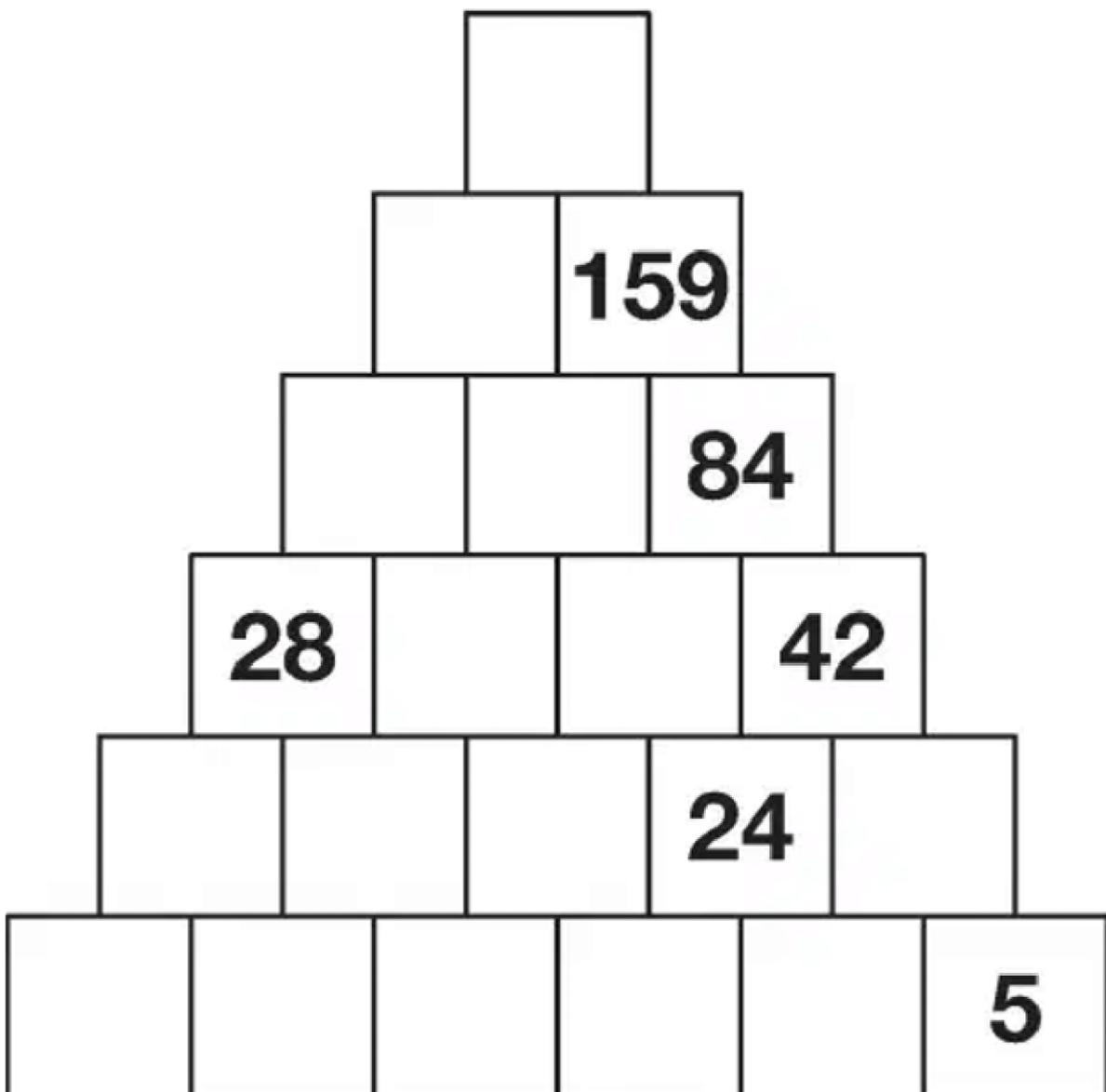
10 Letters  
Bherum Pony

12 Letters  
Cleveland Pony



# Number Pyramid

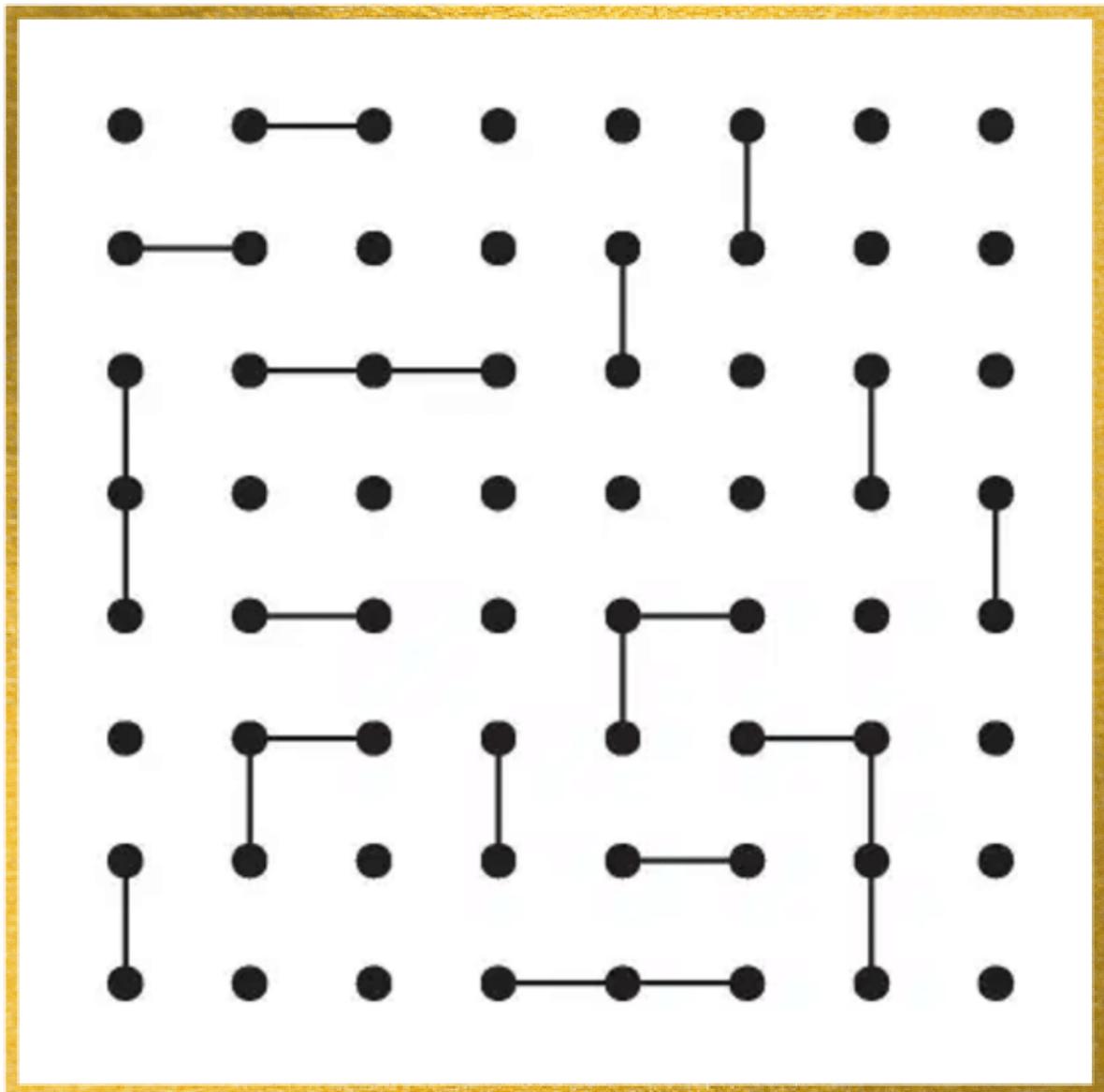
Fill each square such that it equals the sum of the two squares below it





# Loop the Loop

Join all the dots using horizontal or vertical lines to form a single loop. The loop may only touch each dot once and cannot cross over itself at any point.





# Self Care

Find the words from the list in the given grid

W	F	T	S	E	L	B	M	U	H	S	L	M	B	P	H	L
G	O	E	P	O	S	D	E	T	R	U	S	T	I	N	G	S
T	C	I	U	P	C	P	L	E	U	L	A	V	A	A	I	E
M	U	R	E	M	L	I	B	L	O	V	E	Z	W	C	I	L
I	S	E	T	A	Q	F	A	Q	H	N	S	M	M	I	C	F
E	E	L	N	B	H	O	T	L	Y	Y	U	I	R	O	N	C
C	L	A	S	C	O	Q	P	O	G	I	Y	N	E	U	D	A
N	F	X	G	M	P	F	E	K	I	D	M	D	S	N	E	R
E	I	A	S	N	A	R	C	N	E	Q	L	F	P	T	P	E
D	M	T	T	S	I	N	C	V	N	U	A	U	E	A	E	G
I	A	I	R	L	E	T	A	Y	E	S	C	L	C	B	N	A
F	G	O	O	E	N	N	R	G	H	K	Q	N	T	I	D	R
N	E	N	F	E	K	S	E	O	E	W	I	E	A	L	E	U
O	K	S	M	P	U	V	W	R	P	M	W	S	T	I	N	O
C	V	R	O	X	U	E	F	B	A	P	E	S	F	T	T	C
J	P	F	C	O	R	L	M	N	B	W	U	N	A	Y	Z	X
B	K	T	S	M	E	M	O	R	Y	S	A	S	T	Y	S	Y

Acceptable **Accountability** Awareness **Calm** Comfort  
**Confidence** Courage **Focus** Humble **Hygiene** Love  
**Management** Memory **Mindfulness** Plan **Relaxation**  
Respect **Self-Image** Selfcare **Shower** Sleep **Social**  
**Supporting** Trusting **Value**



# Simple Sudoku

			4
			2
4			
3			

	1		3
2		1	

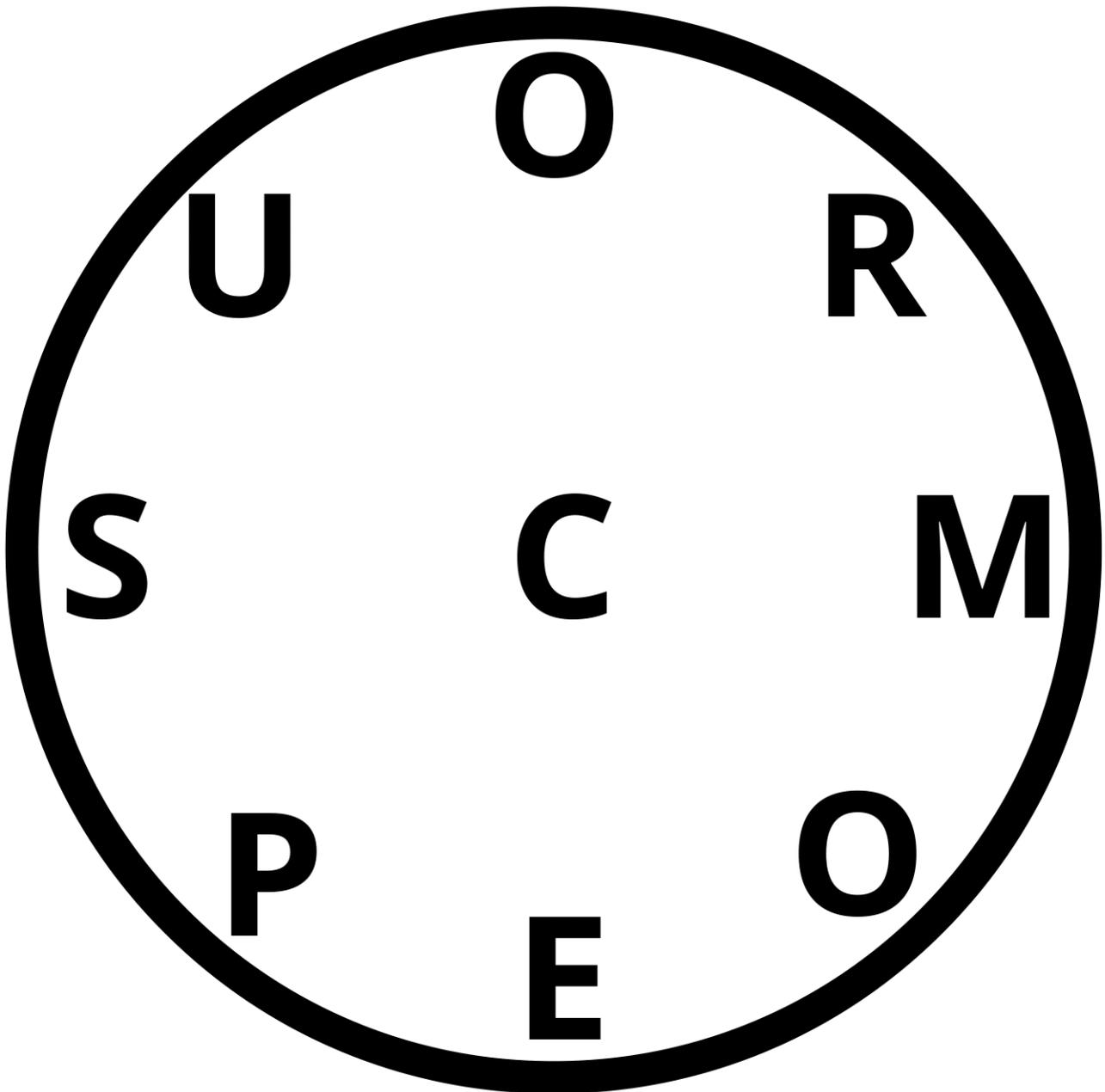
			4
1			
			3
3			

1	4		
		2	1



# Word Bubble

How many words of 3 letters or more can you make with the letters in this circle? Do not repeat the letters more than the number of times they're given!





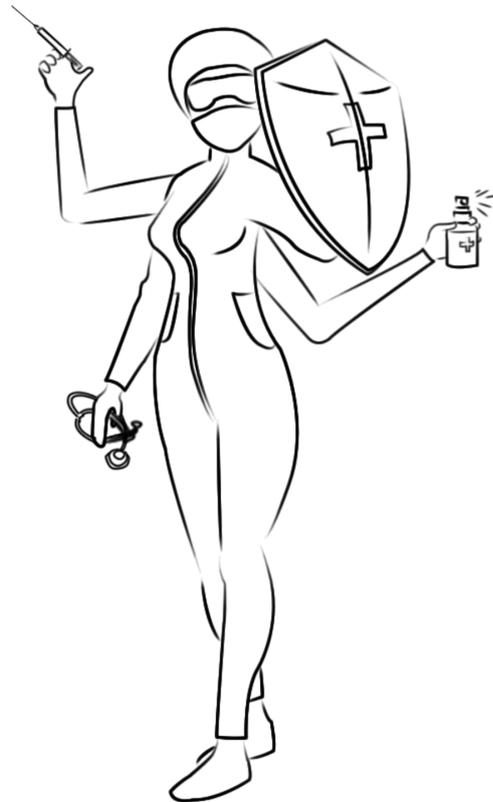
# Tips for the Hospital



# To younger staff:

## Anxiety is not inability

*Uncertainty is normal in times like this.* Despite guidelines and targeted work, the feeling of uncertainty stays and adds to the stress.



No one can discount the risk of getting infected—*but with the right precautions, it is preventable.* You also have access to medical professionals in your work circle, who will do everything they can to help you recover if you do get infected.



## Dealing with the massive workload

Working all the time does not mean you will be an effective contributor. *Do not see yourself as the only person who can solve all the problems around you. Remember, this crisis will pass.*

Think of this as a period of learning to deal with future crisis situations.



Video: [How to don and doff PPE](#)  
Source: Center for Disease Control, USA

- Ask and understand specific tasks given to you.
- Observe how team members take care of their tasks.
- Make sure you are using PPE correctly.
- Take a few extra minutes when needed, no matter the urgency of the situation.

A pandemic of this scale is not a regular occurrence. *Remind yourself that one day, you will look back on your work with pride and satisfaction.*



# Breathe 2

- Take a one-minute stretch break whenever possible throughout the day. Though already moving a lot during the day and coping with a heavy physical load, integrating brief stretch breaks can support the body.
- Take a short nap, or close your eyes for a few minutes, if you worked an overnight shift or didn't get the sleep you need. Resting and recharging for five or 10 minutes will boost your energy to be there for your next patients.



Stretch during  
small breaks.



Lay down, relax

And

close your eyes.

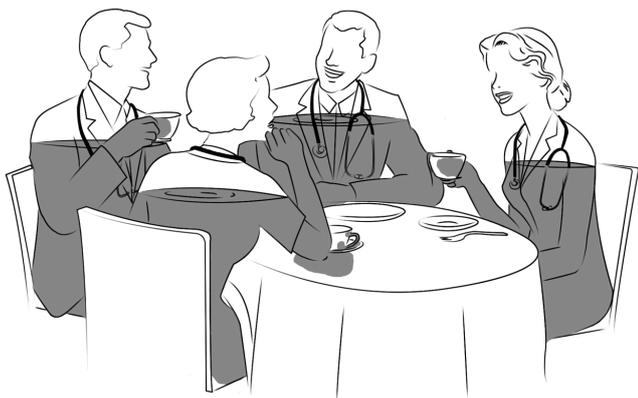


*Nila*



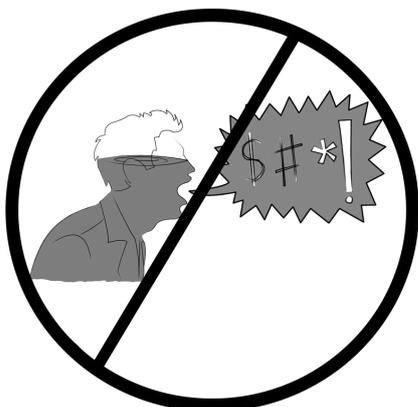
# To senior staff/supervisors:

Remember that everybody has been on edge for the past year and believe that everyone is still doing the best they can. *We are all in this together.*



Have a daily team meeting to boost morale and praise achievements. *Encourage team members to have regular debriefing meetings.*

Identify colleagues who may need extra support and make timely referrals



Avoid blaming or taking out your frustration and anger on peers, juniors, patients and caregivers.

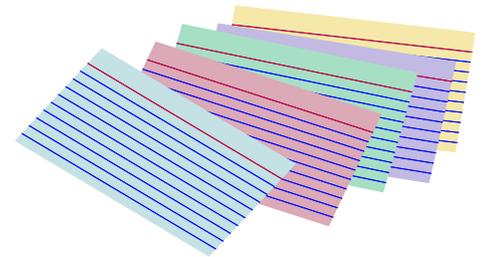


# To the Nursing Staff:

With the pandemic crisis growing worse in India, the country's frontline health workers, especially the nursing staff are overworked and stressed. In such times, it is natural to feel burnt-out. Here are some micro-steps that will help you reset and recharge

## During your shift:

- Invest in a pair of comfortable shoes. *You are on your feet all day, so do your best to take care of yourself and avoid unnecessary back or foot pain.*
- Consider keeping a laminated set of key facts that you need to know, like important drug interactions, drug dosages and other things you find difficult to remember, so that you don't expend extra energy trying to remember difficult-to-remember facts. Here's a sample.
- Listen to a calming song on shift breaks or after a shift ends.
- *On your break, take a few minutes to go outside.* Even a short walk outdoors will help you recharge.
- *Set aside a few minutes of recovery time after a challenging moment.* Instead of returning immediately to your work, take a short walk or a few minutes of conscious breathing.





## After your shift or before the next shift:

- Make sure to get adequate rest and catch up on sleep lost during the week
- Having a good meal ensures good sleep and helps you get ready for your shift.
- ***Make sure you're well hydrated*** before you're next shift begins
- If possible, indulge in any hobbies or activities which help you rejuvenate.
- Find a "relief buddy" who makes you feel safe and try to briefly connect with them each day. This might be a family member, a friend, a superior, or a colleague with a particularly grounding presence.



### Reference:

The Healthy Daily Habits First Responders Need Right Now [Internet]. Thriveglobal.in. 2021 [cited 11 July 2021]. Available from: <https://thriveglobal.in/stories/the-healthy-daily-habits-first-responders-need-right-now/>



# To parents who are also healthcare workers:

During this pandemic, *it is natural for healthcare workers to feel anxious about contracting the virus and infecting their children and loved ones.* Coupled with this, they get to spend very little time at home. Child care becomes a huge burden especially when both parents are healthcare workers. Here are some tips that may help:

- **Work as a team:** A simple and efficient way to make cleaning more fun is to do some of it in teams
- **Do chores together:** Assigning chores is the most productive way of teaching responsibility and accountability to your children.



# Breathe 2



- **Turn off your mobiles:** rule of switching off all your electronic gadgets should be mandatory for family time.
- **Eat together and listen to each other:** Sharing a meal together allows the opportunity to talk about each other's lives. This can be a time for parents to listen, as well as to give advice and encouragement.
- **Look for books** that your child would enjoy reading and try reading with them.
- **Start a hobby or project that your child is interested in:** Activities like cooking, crafts, collection of cartoon, etc., will make great hobbies in future.
- **Exercise or Workout together**



- **Plan activities as a matter of solidarity:** Activities like praying as a family, or appreciating some of the work of some other frontline workers before bedtime can be a good example for an activity of solidarity.
- Finding someone- a family member or a friend who can take care of children in your absence can be a big relief. Finally, **remember that even if you are unable to spend time with your children due to a lack of time or circumstances, they will always be proud of you and your work.**
- Now that children are forced to stay indoors, doing everything from attending school to catching up with friends online, **it's important to set boundaries and engage them in screen-free activities.** Here's a sample schedule:

### Daily Schedule

Before 9:00 AM	Wake up!	Make your bed, eat breakfast, brush teeth, get dressed
9:00-10:00	Outdoor Time	Family walk or outdoor play
10:00-11:00	Academic Time	No Electronics! Reading, homework, study, puzzles, journal
11:00-12:00	Creative Time	Creative play, drawing, Legos, crafts, music, cooking, baking
12:00-12:30	LUNCH	
12:30-1:00	Home Chores	Clean rooms, put away toys, take out garbage, pet care
1:00-2:30	Quiet Time	Reading, nap, puzzles, yoga
2:30-4:00	Academic Time	Electronics OK! Educational games, online activities, virtual museum tours
4:00-5:00	Outdoor time	Family walk or outdoor play
5:00-6:00	Dinner time	Family dinner, help with clean-up and dishes
6:00-9:00	Free Time	Relaxing before bedtime
9:00 PM	Bedtime	Put on PJs, brush teeth, clothes in laundry

Reference:

Janardhana N, Joseph S, T. R. K, Mehrotra S, Kumar A, Chand P et al. PSYCHOSOCIAL CARE FOR FRONTLINE HEALTH CARE WORKERS: An Information Manual. 1st ed. Bangalore, India: NIMHANS; 2020.



# Balancing your commitments



It can get physically and mentally exhausting to balance your professional and personal commitments with your own wellbeing.

- Schedule your time, be clear about what you are going to achieve, and when.
- Establish 'No Meeting' Time Blocks and schedule breaks.
- Say 'No' to video calls that aren't valuable.
- Avoid Multitasking.
- Schedule screen-free time.
- Make sure you make time for yourself and family - distancing does not mean social isolation - how to connect with family via video call, phone calls.
- Try not to feel guilty about putting yourself first sometimes.  
[This article](#) or [this one](#) may help.



# Coping with Grief

This pandemic has led to the deaths of several loved ones including coworkers and colleagues. These losses can impact you and everyone in the workplace.

Recovery takes time and can be even more difficult with the realities of physical distancing policies. You may not be able to experience and cope with grief in ways you would otherwise, such as physically spending time with colleagues, friends and family; visiting a place of worship; or attending a funeral in person.

These changes can be traumatic and may impact grieving. You can support colleagues who have lost loved ones and cope with the loss of a coworker by gaining an understanding of grief, loss, and how to interact with coworkers after a death.

Read on for some suggestions, or visit [this website](#) by the Center to Advance Palliative Care, New York for more curated resources.



Source: Grief and Loss in the Workplace During COVID-19. New York City: NYC Health; 2021.



# What to Say to a Grieving Coworker

- **Show empathy:**

Simply stating that you are aware of their loss, how difficult this may be for them, and that you are there to support and help as needed, is often the most we can or need to do.

- **Acknowledge that grief is a process:**

Grieving is a process. As one comes to terms with their loss, they can experience days when coping and grieving seem more challenging than others. Try to check in with them regularly.

- **Offer your support**

Offer your help and assistance in a way that will not add to any difficulties they might be experiencing by making them feel pressured to accept.

- **Take your cues from the griever**

Just listen and be ready, if and when they want to talk, but never pressure them to share.



Source: Grief and Loss in the Workplace During COVID-19. New York City: NYC Health, 2021.

# Coping with Loss

Depending on the nature of your relationship, you may or may not go through a grieving process following a coworker's death. Grief is a natural and normal response to losing someone important to you. There is no right or wrong way to grieve. Everyone experiences grief differently and each loss is unique.



## Coping as a team

- **Acknowledge the loss**

Create the space and time for coworkers to talk about what has happened, rather than go on as if nothing has happened

- **Acknowledge individual reactions**

When a coworker dies, it can affect each person in the workplace in different ways. Be aware of the different ways that people react to the loss and respect those differences.

- **Be kind to each other**

Be patient, gentle and understanding with one another during this time. Find ways to cooperate and share any additional workload. Consciously perform acts of kindness toward your friends and colleagues.

- **Practice self-care**

You may need to give yourself extra amounts of things that nourish and replenish you, such as rest, relaxation, exercise and diversions. Express your thoughts and feelings to trusted people.

- **Give yourself and others time**

Allow yourself and others the time they need to process the loss, and be aware that there is not a predicted amount of time this can take.

- **Honor the lost coworker**

Consider honoring the lost coworker in an appropriate way, such as collecting money for a charity, creating an online commemoration, or sending a letter to the deceased's loved ones



Source: Grief and Loss in the Workplace During COVID-19. New York City: NYC Health, 2021.



## Coping as an individual

- **Accept your feelings.**

Recover at your own pace and in your own way. Be patient with yourself.

- **Talk about your loss.**

You may find this comforting and feel less alone. Connect with friends and family through phone, text and other digital platforms.

- **Take stock of what is going well.**

Write down your strengths and bright moments from the day or share with others.

- **Limit your exposure to media coverage related to COVID-19.**

Turn off the TV, shut down the computer, skip COVID-19 related social media posts, and put down the papers.

- **Take a break.**

Do something relaxing, energizing or an activity that will lift your spirits.

- **Be part of the community.**

Community can offer you a network of support. Stay connected through digital platforms.

- **Ask for help if you feel overwhelmed.**

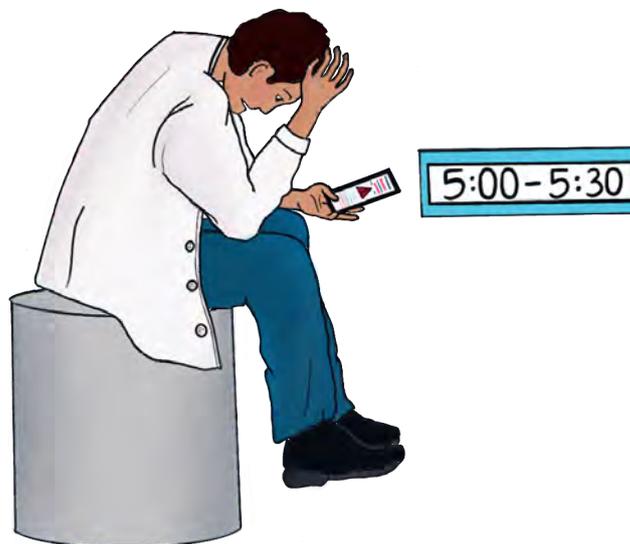
Feelings of grief are natural reactions to important losses. If these feelings persist, your mood does not improve or worsens, or you feel unable to function and perform basic daily activities, reach out for help.



# In preparation of the next wave

## Stay informed but don't obsess

- Remember, your seniors and administrators will certainly update you if there is urgent information to be shared.
- Avoid checking for updates constantly.
- Check social media only once or twice at fixed times during the day.



- If you begin to feel overwhelmed, stay away from media completely and ask someone reliable to share the most important updates with you.
- Try to take some time off when you are able to, and use it to rest and recharge with friends or family.



# Dealing with anxious/upset patients and caregivers

*When patients and caregivers are scared about getting infected, communication becomes even more important.*

- Point literate patients towards posters, information leaflets and online forums. Spend more time explaining to individuals who cannot read.
- Reassure them that safety protocol is being followed. Do not feel compelled to remove all the doubts that patients have, but have a set of responses prepared for FAQs. Validate their feelings by saying things like "It's worrying, isn't it?", or "You're doing the best you can, and that's good."

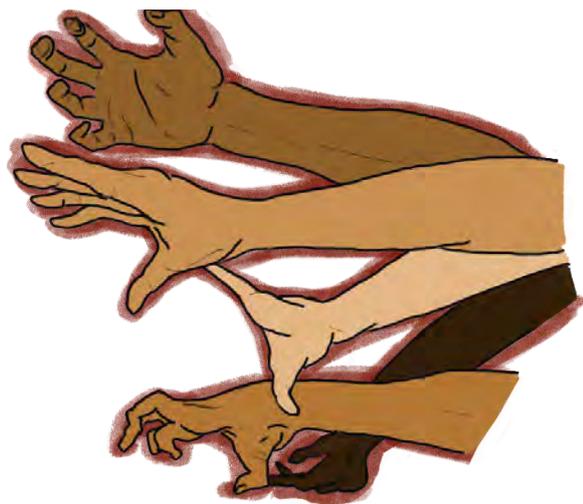




# Handling violence against healthcare workers

By Dr. Divya Hegde,  
Dept of Psychiatry, SJMCH

The ever increasing incidents of violence against healthcare workers which can range from verbal abuse to physical assault, has put many on alert as they navigate their day-to-day responsibilities. Preparing for such incidents can help handle potentially dangerous situations.





### **While it's happening:**

- Prioritize your own safety.
- Identify an exit route.
- Call for help.



- If feasible:
  - Employ de-escalation by active listening and appropriate body language. Prior to the attack, there is usually increasing escalation and the threatened person's natural tendency is to assert dominance and authority, which causes attackers to demonstrate their dominance and control.
  - Show empathy to patients and bystanders by using assertive language rather than aggressive language.
- Intervene with medication if necessary and appropriate for aggressive patients.

### **Immediately after/once you're safe:**

- Get a physical examination to make sure you are unharmed.
- Attend a debriefing with all staff involved in the incident.
- Report the incident as early as possible to the hospital authorities.
- Follow up and plan on future measures like pressing charges if necessary.



## ***Anger is not always a bad emotion!***

Anger is always a reaction to something, that something may be our thoughts and perceptions. Anger is also an emotional reaction to our perceived needs not being met. Anger often drives us either to force someone to meet our needs or to punish them for having failed to meet them. Manifestations of anger may range from mild irritation to out of control rage.



### **Signs of Anger:**

- Physical agitation - Pacing up and down, twitching legs
- Change in facial expression and tone of voice
- Tense taut muscles, especially legs and arms
- Heart pounding fast, flushing and sweating
- Change in eye contact
- Behavioral expression like screaming, yelling, use of inappropriate language.
- Occasionally becoming extremely quiet and not responding.



Here is the 5 A's approach to manage angry patients:

1. Assess
2. Allow/absorb
3. Avoid advice
4. Assist
5. Arrange

## ASSESS



It includes assessment of degree of anger and comprehension of the problem that caused the anger.

- Degree of anger - volume, tone, facial expression and use of inappropriate/foul language
- Is he/she restless or agitated?
- Comprehension of problem - Has the patient understood the current problem?
- Has he/she understood what is expected of him/her?
- Has he/she been explained / informed about the treatment?



## ALLOW/ABSORB



It includes allowing verbal expression of anger as needed.

- Language might be colorful, often inappropriate.
- Usually if just irritability, the anger will subside after expression.
- If it persists or escalates, terminate the encounter and call for help.
- Absorb the outburst by delaying any immediate verbal reaction.
- Take a minute after outburst to react.
- Do not react immediately as any reply could be misunderstood
- Reflect on the outburst by giving adequate time
- Subsequently resume the discussion in the peaceful manner



## AVOID ADVICE



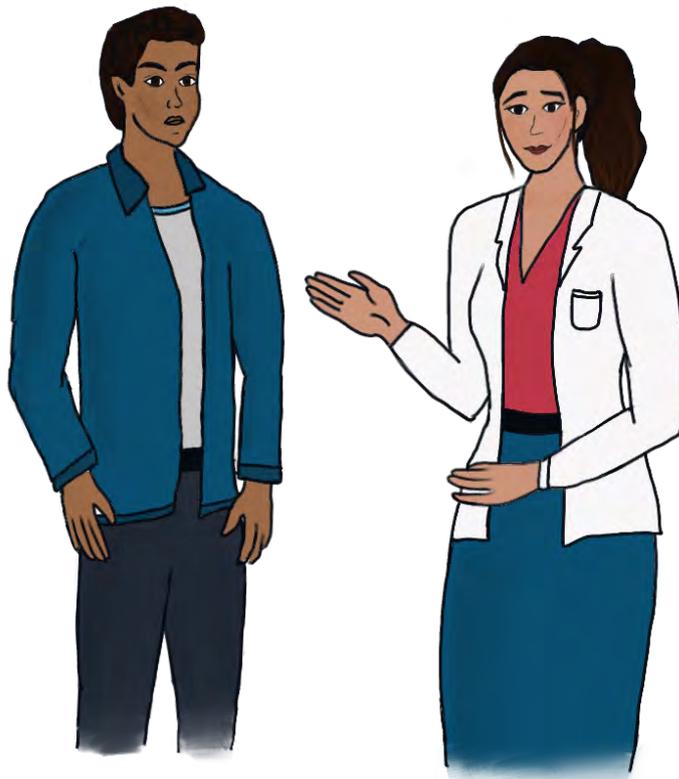
Instead of advising, acknowledge and agree with the distress of the angry individual

- Never give into the temptation and advise the patient as it can be misunderstood and may escalate the anger
- Avoid confrontation
- Try to link the medical/clinical situation to his/her distress and offer explanation for the same
- Give adequate time for the patient to make decision
- Gently discuss that his/her anger can undermine the situation
- Outline the limitations of the system parallelly, that helps in calming down.
- Finally arrive at common grounds and help in making the decision



## ASSIST

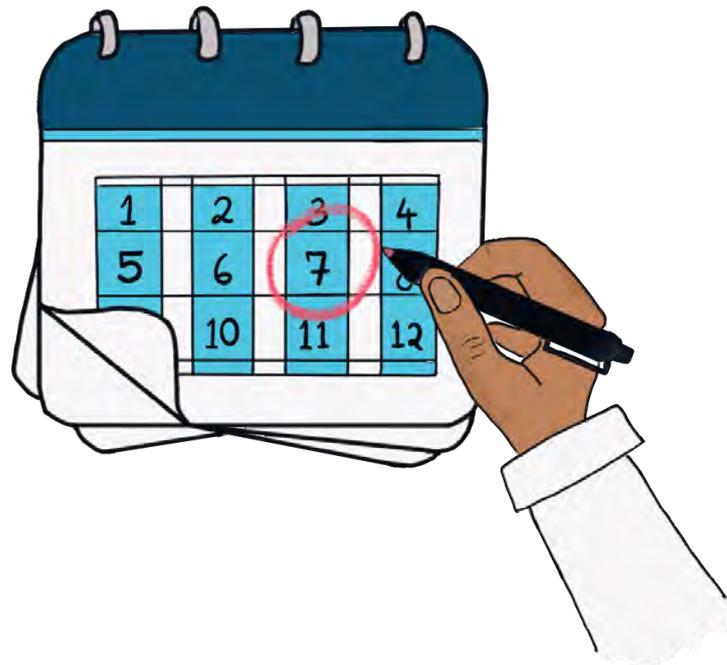
- Offer solutions to patient once the patient has calmed down
- Suggest resources which could help generate solutions e.g., Medical social work for financial help, details and contacts for second opinion etc.
- Empower the patient in coming to a decision e.g., Risks of not getting a test/procedure etc.
- Assist in carrying out the decision e.g., fix an appointment  
Arrange attender to help the patient etc.





## ARRANGE

- Make the execution of decision convenient e.g., giving appointment. Arranging logistics etc.
- Arrange for follow ups and referrals when necessary
- Arrange for other help e.g., Translators so that information can be conveyed, Attenders, food etc.



### References:

1. Glasgow RE, Emont S, Miller DC. Assessing delivery of the five 'As' for patient-centered counseling. *Health Promot Int.* 2006 Sep;21(3):245-55. doi: 10.1093/heapro/dal017. Epub 2006 Jun 2. PMID: 16751630.
2. Addressing Violence in Healthcare Facilities: How to Stay Safe as a Professional [Internet]. *EduMed.* 2021 [cited 11 July 2021]. Available from: <https://www.edumed.org/resources/workplace-violence-in-healthcare/>
3. Lab Coats With Bullseyes on Them? Protecting Yourself Against Violence [Internet]. *Medscape.* 2021 [cited 11 July 2021]. Available from: <https://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/866668>

# Breathing Exercises



Deep controlled breathing is a good way to relax, relieve stress and reduce tension. It decreases blood pressure, heart and respiratory rate.

**Source:**

Stress Management: Breathing Exercises for Relaxation | Michigan Medicine [Internet]. University of Michigan Health. 2022 [cited 9 January 2022]. Available from: <https://www.uofmhealth.org/health-library/uz2255>



Breathing exercises have proven efficacy in calming one's nerves and helping one manage their anxiety.

Here are three breathing exercises of increasing complexity. Feel free to try just one, or all, and continue to practise whichever suits you best.

## Pursed Lip Breathing

This simple breathing technique makes you slow down your pace of breathing by having you apply deliberate effort in each breath. You can practice pursed lip breathing at any time. It may be especially useful during activities such as bending, lifting, or stair climbing. Practice using this breath 4 to 5 times a day when you begin in order to correctly learn the breathing pattern.

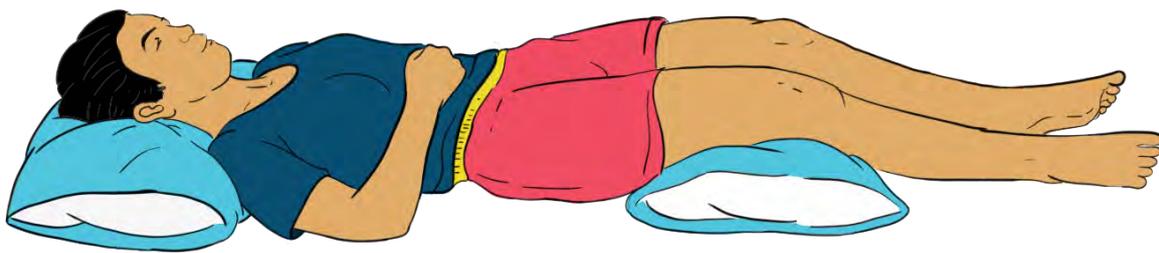
- Relax your neck and shoulders.
- Keeping your mouth closed, inhale slowly through your nose for 2 counts.
- Pucker or purse your lips as though you were going to whistle.
- Exhale slowly by blowing air through your pursed lips for a count of 4.





# Diaphragmatic Breathing

Diaphragmatic breathing, or “belly breathing,” involves fully engaging the stomach, abdominal muscles, and diaphragm when breathing. This means actively pulling the diaphragm down with each inward breath. In this way, diaphragmatic breathing helps the lungs fill more efficiently. Diaphragmatic breathing could have a lot of benefits including strengthening the diaphragm, improving stability in the core muscles, slowing the breathing rate, lowering heart rate and blood pressure, reducing oxygen demand and promoting relaxation.



- Lie down on a flat surface with a pillow under the head and pillows beneath the knees. Pillows will help keep the body in a comfortable position.
- Place one hand on the middle of the upper chest.
- Place the other hand on the stomach, just beneath the rib cage but above the diaphragm.
- To inhale, slowly breathe in through the nose, drawing the breath down toward the stomach. The stomach should push upward against the hand, while the chest remains still.
- To exhale, tighten the abdominal muscles and let the stomach fall downward while exhaling through pursed lips. Again, the chest should remain still.



# Breath Focus Technique

This deep breathing technique uses imagery or focus words and phrases. You can choose a focus word that makes you smile, feel relaxed, or that is simply neutral to think about. Examples include peace, let go, or relax, but it can be any word that suits you to focus on and repeat through your practice. As you build up your breath focus practice you can start with a 10-minute session. Gradually increase the duration until your sessions are at least 20 minutes.

- Sit or lie down in a comfortable place.
- Bring your awareness to your breaths without trying to change how you're breathing.
- Alternate between normal and deep breaths a few times. Notice any differences between normal breathing and deep breathing. Notice how your abdomen expands with deep inhalations.
- Note how shallow breathing feels compared to deep breathing.
- Practice your deep breathing for a few minutes.
- Place one hand below your belly button, keeping your belly relaxed, and notice how it rises with each inhale and falls with each exhale.
- Let out a loud sigh with each exhale.
- Begin the practice of breath focus by combining this deep breathing with imagery and a focus word or phrase that will support relaxation.
- You can imagine that the air you inhale brings waves of peace and calm throughout your body. Mentally say, "Inhaling peace and calm."
- Imagine that the air you exhale washes away tension and anxiety. You can say to yourself, "Exhaling tension and anxiety."



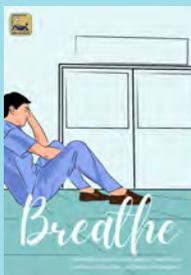
# Feedback for the Previous Edition

"I have decided to use some of the tips suggested in the book in my day-to-day life especially during this pandemic."

"What I loved was that the creators seemed to acknowledge that different people are inspired by different means to manifest the peace within themselves."

"'Breathe' is a timely released, well compiled, resource material that is being well received and widely circulated."

"Health care workers need a portal for relaxation and to take care of mental health. With limited means of socialization at present, providing a handbook which has ideas for self-care, sitting at home, is a wonderful initiative."



You can download the first edition of *Breathe* [here](#)



# Get Help



(Helplines that may be of use)

The Green Oak Initiative helpline for  
Healthcare Workers:

+916366447484

(Mon-Sun, 8am-10am & 5pm-8pm)

*The Green Oak Initiative is a community mental health centre based in Bangalore that started a helpline exclusively for healthcare workers dealing with the stress of the pandemic.*

For St John's Medical College Faculty only:

'Reflections' helpline: +919538963690

doctorswellbeing2020@gmail.com

**Remember, you  
are not alone!**

