



# Stress Busters!

Stress is a normal part of life. Everyone experiences stress. Under stress, the body activates its “fight or flight” response often leaving us feeling worried, overwhelmed, anxious and irritable. It impacts our mood, concentration, appetite and sleep cycles. While it can be good to have some stress because it keeps you alert and motivated, we know that too much stress can be harmful to your physical and mental health.

Since we are all going to experience stress at some points in our life, learning strategies to manage or “cope with” stress are skills that you will use throughout your lifetime. Think back on our other Barrington Committed lessons. Sleep, exercise, nutrition and hydration – along with our connections and relationships with the people in our lives – all play a role in managing and relieving stress.

## When you feel stressed, here are some strategies you can try:

1. BREATHE! Just close your eyes and focus on the in and out of your breath for at least 2 minutes. Give Box Breathing or Bubble Breathing a try.
2. Try to identify the sources of your stress. It’s easier to address things that you know about.
3. Talk with someone about your thoughts and feelings – remember your DREAM TEAM is there to help.
4. Take a walk. Research shows that even a short walk outside reduces stress.
5. Get some sleep! Be sure that you are getting enough sleep to help with focus and stay healthy.
6. Have quiet time with a pet.
7. Practice relaxation exercises including muscle relaxation techniques, breathing or meditation.
8. Focus on your strengths and write down 5 things that you are proud of.
9. Exercise, dance, go for a bike ride. Get those good endorphins going!
10. Do things that make you happy. Have some FUN!
11. Focus on what you can control.
12. Create balance in your life and your schedule.
13. Limit your time on social media.
14. Take a break – read a book, listen to music, draw a picture, play catch, just do something you love.
15. Set small goals that can be accomplished.
16. Spend time with family and friends.
17. LAUGH! It’s good for your health.
18. Write down 5 things that you are grateful for. Gratitude is good for you!
19. Turn screens (computer, tv, phone) off 1-2 hours before bed for a better night’s sleep.
20. Practice or role-play situations that cause stress.
21. Eat regularly and focus on healthy snacks and meals to fuel your body.
22. Talk to a trusted adult about healthy coping mechanisms and brainstorm ways to help.
23. Make sure you have time in your life for PDF – playtime, downtime and family time - every day.
24. Find ways to do something for others. Small acts of kindness make you feel good.
25. BE KIND TO YOURSELF – realize that you don’t have to be perfect.

## REFRAME STRESS

Shift your thinking from

STRESS HURTS  
to  
STRESS HELPS

Some levels of stress are helpful and give you an opportunity and motivation for growth.

breathe in 1...2...

hold 1...2...



hold 1...2...

breathe out 1...2...

Box Breathing



Bubble Breathing

Inhale slowly through your nose.

Hold for 2.

Blow out for 6.

**It’s okay to not be okay. Ask for help when you need it.**

**Remember that your worth is not based on your grades, how you do on a test, or how well you perform in other areas of your life. You are wonderful and valuable and important simply because you are YOU!**



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