

Strategies to Reduce Stress & Relax

How often do you feel
stressed?

Modern Life = Consistent
Stressors instead of
Occasional Stressors

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Common Stressors

- Work – both employment and business
- Family – children/partners/other
- Home management
- Holidays
- Commute
- Tech addiction/overload
- Bad food/alcohol/other drugs
- WORRY
- These things are constant, but our body reacts to them as if they were immediately life-threatening.

**This has an awful affect on
our body and mind.**

Physiological Effects of Stress

 Relaxation Response	Stress Response 
↓ Heart rate slows ↓ Blood Pressure lowers ↓ Blood Lactate Levels reduce ↑ Immune System improves ↑ Sense of Well-being increases ↑ Sleep improves ↑ Normal Libido ↓ Brain Wave Patterns slow ↑ Digestion improves	↑ Heart rate increases ↑ Blood Pressure rises ↑ Cholesterol Levels go up ↓ Immune System is less effective ↑ Anxiety increases ↑ Depression more prevalent ↑ Sleep Disorders increase ↓ Libido decreases ↑ Irritability increases ↓ Digestion works less effectively

This Leads To...

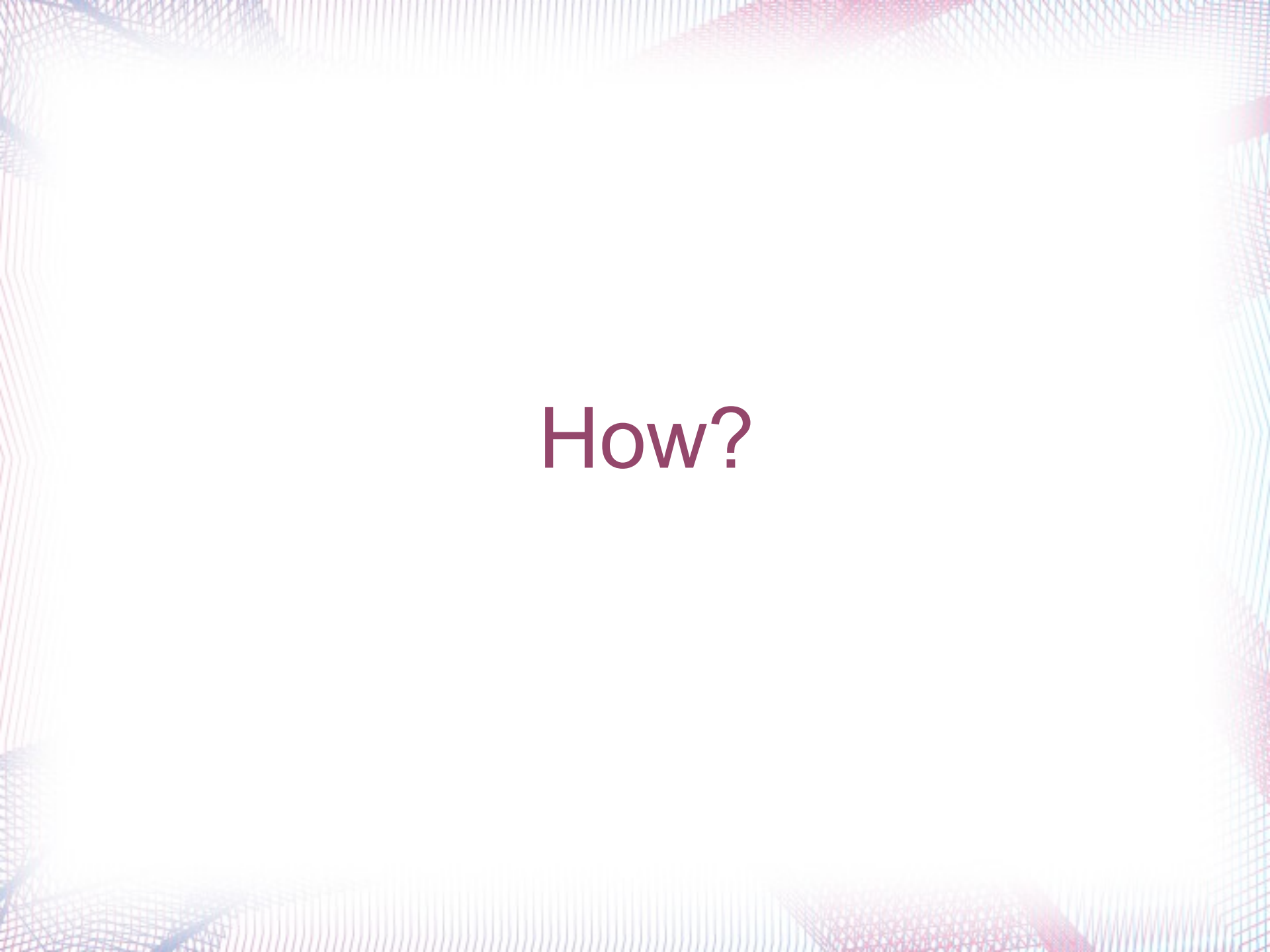
- Lack of sleep – therefore the lymphatic system doesn't work properly.
- Increased breathing speed, blood pressure and heart rate = increased risk of stroke, aneurysm & heart disease.
- Digestive problems as the digestive system is constantly being deprived of bloodflow.
- Headaches and muscle tightness.
- Immune system issues (sickness, auto-immune disorders) due to an overactive/unbalanced immune system
- In short – you feel sick and tired!

So, what's the solution??

We need to move out of the
'Red Zone' and into the
'Green Zone'

Red Zone = Stress Response
Active

Green Zone = Relaxation
Response Active



How?

There are a LOT of strategies

- Long-term – change our thought patterns, change our physical health, change our lifestyle.
- Short term – small, regular habits that will build to help us do the above!
- I'm going to focus on a couple of powerful, small steps today, and share a few strategies you can try right now, and use daily.

1. Breathing

- Controlled breathing is the fastest, easiest way to switch our bodies from the Red Zone to the Green Zone.
- This is the one autonomic process we can actively control. (If you're curious about this, research the Vagus Nerve.)
- When you change your breath, you change EVERYTHING else, because it's all interlinked.
- **Strategy:** Deep belly breathing/full yogic breath.
- **Strategy:** 1:2 Ratio breathing.
- **Strategy:** Ujjayi breathing.

2. Mindfulness & Meditation

- Mindfulness is just being aware of what IS, rather than getting caught up in our stories of what was, and what may be in future.
- Often, our thoughts are our worst enemy – we stress ourselves out via excessive rumination.
- WATCH: [Meditation, a Beginner's Guide](#)
- Mindfulness meditation is a practice that helps us learn to watch our thoughts, rather than getting caught up in them. This helps us create mental space and slowly learn to let negative thoughts dissipate rather than latching on to them and escalating.

3. Cardio Exercise and/or Yoga

- Exercise is a brilliant way to improve our mental health.
- READ:
[Spark, The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain](#)
- Cardio exercise creates all sorts of positive chemical cascades in our brain.
- Repetitive exercise (running, swimming) can also be extremely meditative.
- Yoga is both exercise and a way to practice mindfulness, too.

4. Healthier Sleep & Relaxation

- Getting enough sleep is CRUCIAL.
- New research shows the importance of sleep to the glymphatic system – this is the system that cleans your brain of detritus, and only happens in sleep.
- Put yourself to bed: with a bedtime and a routine.
- Listen to ASMR, meditation, or yoga nidra recordings to relax you.
- Stop looking at blue screens at least 2-3 hours before bed, or install a twilight app.
- (ASMR – I recommend [GentleWhispering](#))

Bonus!

I've created a Yoga Nidra
Recording for you – Merry
Christmas :)

Questions?

