



# 6 Steps to De-Stressing and Settling Yourself

Given the number of people experiencing anxiety, it is helpful to learn the process of de-stressing. This uses the acronym SETTLE.

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## S Signals are useful



Feelings like anxiety and stress tell us that we need to prepare for action. The physical symptoms of stress- being wired or hyper-alert, feeling agitated, breathing quickly, or feeling a bit buzzy and light-headed all prepare us to either fight against something or run away from it. It is helpful to see your stress as a signal.

## E Embrace the fear

Usually when we feel stressed we are fearing something. Ask yourself, 'What am I feeling fearful or scared about at the moment?' and 'Is this fearful situation really going to happen or is it me imagining the worst possible outcome?'



## T Take it slow

Even if you need to act immediately, it is best to prepare yourself to do so effectively. Take three or four deep 'belly' breaths and breathe each one out s-l-o-w-l-y (usually silently counting out to yourself (one thousand, two thousand, three thousand). Rub behind each of your ears and sigh slowly then gently rub the indentation at the back of your neck in a circular fashion for 30 seconds.



## T Take a walk

Time to use the energy that stress has given you. If you can, go for a walk or run and while you are doing so, shift your eyes from side to side as you take in the environment. You could also do a workout or dance it out or wriggle your fingers and toes. If you can sing or hum to yourself while you do this, it will be even better.



## L Lessen your time frame

Try to sharpen your focus to what you can do now. When you are on high-alert stress status is not a good time to plan what to do tomorrow or to review what when wrong yesterday. Be here now.



## E Express your coping statements

This could include, 'I've got this', or 'I get to do this', or 'Anyone who ever did anything important felt some stress', or 'I wouldn't be doing this, if it wasn't worthwhile.' Then complete the statement, Once I've done this, I can... This builds positive anticipation.

