

# Starting with You: Simple Ways to Reduce Stress



Stress is a natural response to pressure, change, and uncertainty. During Stress Awareness Month, we are encouraged to pause, notice how stress shows up for us, and take small steps to reduce its impact.

This is about awareness and action, not perfection.

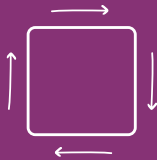
## Go-to-Activities

### WHEN STRESS SPIKES

#### BOX BREATHING

Breathe in for 4  
Hold for 4  
Breathe out for 4  
Hold for 4

Repeat  
for  
1–2  
minutes



#### GROUND YOURSELF



5 things you can see  
4 things you can feel  
3 things you can hear  
2 things you can smell  
1 thing you can taste

### WHEN YOUR BODY FEELS TENSE

#### PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION (PMR)

Gently tense each area for 3–5 seconds, then release

Hands and arms  
Shoulders  
Face and jaw  
Chest and stomach  
Legs and feet



Notice the difference as your body softens

### CHANGE YOUR ENVIRONMENT

Step away from  
screens for 5 minutes

Take a short walk,  
make a cup of tea,  
or get fresh air



### WHEN YOUR THOUGHTS ARE RACING

Write everything down to  
clear your head



Choose one small next step

Do something repetitive like walking or  
tidying

### DAILY HABITS THAT HELP

- Move your body
- Get consistent, good quality sleep
- Eat regular, nourishing meals
- Connect with someone in a meaningful way
- Laugh every day

## Why This Works

Stress activates the body's threat response. When it stays switched on for too long, it affects focus, energy, sleep, and mood.

These simple actions help signal safety to the nervous system and support recovery. Small, repeatable changes are more effective than big changes that are hard to sustain.

Stress Awareness Month reminds us that change starts with us. When we respond to stress with care, we build resilience and make it easier for others to do the same.

## A gentle reminder

You do not need to remove stress from your life.  
You just need enough moments of calm to balance it out.

That is how you #BeTheChange.

SMALL ACTIONS, BIG IMPACT

#BeTheChange

[www.stress.org.uk](http://www.stress.org.uk)



Stress Management Society  
From distress to the stress

# Reducing Stress Together: #BeTheChange through Connection



Stress often feels heavier when we carry it alone. One of the key messages of Stress Awareness Month is that connection, compassion, and understanding play a powerful role in reducing stress.

## Go-to-Ways to Create Connection

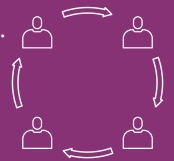
### QUICK MOMENTS THAT MATTER

- Send a short "thinking of you" message.
- Say thank you or acknowledge effort.
- Smile or greet someone by name.



### AT WORK OR IN GROUPS

- Start meetings with a one-word check-in.
- Normalise short pause or stretch breaks.
- Ask "What would help right now?"



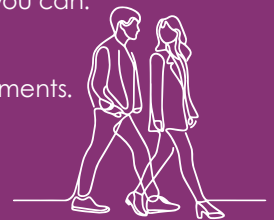
### WHEN SOMEONE ELSE IS STRESSED

- Listen without trying to fix.
- Say "That sounds really tough."
- Ask if they want support or just space to talk.



### BUILD CONNECTION INTO EVERYDAY LIFE

- Eat lunch with someone when you can.
- Take a short walk together.
- Share honestly, not just achievements.



### Why This Works

Human connection is one of the strongest protective factors against stress. Feeling understood, supported, and valued helps the body recover from stress faster and reduces feelings of isolation.

Small moments of connection create a sense of safety and belonging. These moments may seem simple, but they have a powerful impact on wellbeing, trust, and emotional resilience.

Stress Awareness Month highlights that change starts with us. When we choose empathy, kindness, and presence, we influence how stress is experienced by the people around us.

Looking after each other is not an extra task. It is a practical and meaningful way to reduce stress, together.

### A gentle reminder

You do not have to have the right words. Showing up matters more.

One small moment of connection can reduce stress more than you realise.

That is how we #BeTheChange together.

SMALL ACTIONS, BIG IMPACT

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