

Hacking Stress: Reset with the 5 R's



Reframe:

- Identify your stressor: “getting infected by Covid-19”.
- Reframe your stressor: “an opportunity to get healthier”.
- Reframing turns down emotional volume and tames an overactive immune system.



Reconnect:

Share your joys and struggles with others:

- Connect online and live with distance precautions.
- Friends, family, coworkers, community, place of worship.
- Work resources: EAP or support groups.
- Professional help such as doctors or therapists.

Recognize:

Your brain will not “re-wire” unless you allow it to truly soak in a positive experience for at least 15-20 seconds.

Within 2 hours of bedtime, ask yourself:

- “What are three things that went well today and what was my role in making them happen?” (*“Three Good Things”*, Bryan Sexton, Ph.D.)
- By day 4 or 5, the positive becomes noticeably louder.



Respire:

- Do breathing exercises at rest.
- Integrate better breathing while you work, watch TV, cook, clean, garden.

Diaphragmatic Breathing

- Breathe in through your nose, inflating your belly.
- Breathe out through pursed lips, deflating your belly.
- Only belly moves, while chest remains still throughout.



Remove:

Media definitively changes our brain and blood chemistry and activates our immune system, especially if it invokes raw, primitive emotions like fear, anger, threat or survival.

Media Distancing

- Try to limit media exposure at bedtime and upon waking.
- Schedule specific time blocks for news media consumption or protected news-free times.
- Read headlines in an emotionally detached manner, do your breathing and if you feel negative emotions welling up inside you, disconnect immediately.



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