

## Steps to Effectively Manage Stress: Part I

By Wei-Chien Lee, PhD, clinical psychologist

Any change in our environment can create stress. Stress is invisible, but it has an impact and can lead to various physical and psychological reactions and responses.

### Stress is a normal response to change

We experience stress when we face any kind of change. Whenever someone introduces a change into our daily routine, our minds must shift direction and focus, which creates stress. In times of change, stress is inevitable.

When stress occurs, we have three possible responses: fight, flight, or freeze. For instance, if you're hiking and you run into a mountain lion. The stress hormone kicks in and your mind wonders, "Should I fight it? Can I run away? Or, I don't know what to do, I'm frozen."

These are normal responses. Our responsibility is not to eliminate these reactions but to learn how to deal with them and take the next steps.

Stress triggers emotional responses, but it can also cause physiological reactions. For example:

- Dry mouth or feeling cold
- Sweating and increased heart rate
- Changes in blood pressure
- Shoulder and muscle soreness
- Change in sleep patterns
- Fatigue
- Headaches and body aches
- Upset stomach or gastrointestinal disturbances
- Medically Unexplained Physical Symptoms (MUPS)

In my clinical work, I have seen many people experience headaches, sleep disturbances, strained relationships at home, lack of energy at work, difficulty concentrating on tasks,

## 有效管理壓力的步驟 (上)

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壓力來自於變化，任何環境的改變，都可以形成壓力。壓力無影無形，但是有真的有影響，會對我們的身體和心理產生各種反應和變化。

### 壓力是正常反應

我們面對任何變化，都會感受到壓力。今天我們在做事情時，如果有人給我們任何變化的時候，我們腦筋要換一個方向，換一個注意力，這時就會有壓力。在任何變化的時候，就會有壓力。

壓力發生時，我們身體心理做出三種可能反應：fight, flight, or freeze, 也就是：“備戰、逃命或凍住”。就像如果你去登山，看到一隻大山貓，你的壓力出現，你的心理想，「我要戰鬥呢？逃得開嗎？還是我不知道該怎麼辦？怎麼辦，我就是動不了。」這些是正常反應。我們的責任不是在於說不要有這些反應，而是在於說怎麼樣去應對，怎麼樣去做下一步。

壓力有情緒上的反應，但是也有生理上的反應。例如：

- 嘴巴變乾，或皮膚覺得冷，
- 冒汗，心跳加速，
- 血壓改變
- 肩膀，肌肉痠痛。
- 睡眠改變
- 疲倦
- 頭疼，身體疼痛
- 肚子不舒服，腸胃失調
- 醫學上無法解釋的身體症狀 (Medically Unexplained Physical Symptoms (MUPS))

在我的臨床工作中，我看到很多人頭痛、睡眠不好、家裡的關係不好、

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or even physical health issues, and they are all related to stress. Everyone deals with stress, but most of us have never learned how to manage it.

### Identify the Sources of Stress

Take a moment to think about the sources of your stress. When I ask people, "Do you have sources of stress?" many will say, "Not really." However, when I ask them to list their stressors, they often realize that their stress level is quite high.

**Stress is like a pebble in your shoe.** At first, it's uncomfortable, but after a while, you get used to it. Although your body adapts to it, it doesn't mean it's not affecting you. If you add an extra pebble to your shoe every day, it might take a dozen or more days before you realize you can't run, and your feet are bleeding. It's only when you remove all the pebbles that you realize how comfortable it is without stress!

Take a moment to pause and assess the pebbles in your shoes. Ask yourself, how many pebbles are in your shoes, and how do these pebbles affect your emotions, relationships, and physical health? Please also keep in mind that we can't see the pebbles in other people's shoes. So even with family or friends who appear to have no issues, we should remember that we don't see how many pebbles they have in their shoes.

### How to release stress

Here are some effective ways to deal with or release stress in the moment.

1. Take deep breaths
2. Step away and do something else
3. Count one to ten
4. Move your body

Research has found that the most effective way to release stress is to take a deep breath. Deep breathing helps release stress-fighting hormones. During times of high stress, our minds often drift to the past or future. So, the first thing to do is observe your surroundings. Use your eyes, ears, and other senses to stay with your body. It will help you remain in the here and now, the present moment.

工作上沒有精力、工作上找不到重心或者甚至身體不好，其實都跟壓力有關。每個人都要處理很多壓力，但可能我們大多數人這輩子都還沒有上過課，學習怎麼處理壓力。

### 確定壓力的來源

想想看你有什麼壓力的來源。每當我問人：「你有壓力來源嗎？」，大家說：「沒什麼壓力呀！」，但是如果我叫大家數的時候，往往大家才發現壓力蠻大的。

**現代人的壓力，就像鞋子裡的石頭**，剛開始很痛，很不舒服，但過幾個小時以後就習慣了。習慣了並不表示你沒有受到影響。每天在鞋子裡多放一個石頭，可能要到十幾天以後，才發現跑不動，腳流血。直到有一天把石頭都拿掉了，才發現原來沒有壓力是這麼舒服！

希望大家停下來，看到你鞋子裡的石頭。問自己，你鞋子裡有多少石頭。這些石頭對我們的情緒、人際關係、身體健康有什麼影響？

當我們的家人，鞋子裡有石頭時，我們是看不到的。所以當我們看到別人好像沒有事情的時候，記得提醒自己，我們是看不到他們鞋子裡頭有多少個石頭。

### 有效抗壓，立馬可做的事：

1. 深呼吸
2. 離開，做其他的事
3. 數到十
4. 動一動

科學研究發現最有效的抗壓方法是深呼吸。因為深呼吸會釋放出抗壓賀爾蒙。

壓力大的時候會想過去和未來，所以首先要做的事情，觀察你所在的地方，用眼睛，用耳朵等感官去感覺和觀察，想想我現在在這裡，此時此刻此地。

Once you settle down, you can try deep breathing. Breathe quietly, slowly, and gently. Take along, deep inhale. Make sure your abdomen moves, indicating your diaphragm is moving as your belly expands. After inhaling deeply, pause for a moment, and then exhale slowly and gently. After a few deep breaths, return to regular breathing. You'll notice that your breath has become deeper and more relaxed.

Two key points about deep breathing:

1. There is a slight pause between inhalation and exhalation.
2. Inhalation and exhalation should be smooth, gentle, and comfortable.

Deep breathing is incredibly beneficial for our bodies. If you experience stress, you can do deep breathing immediately. Practice at least 20 minutes every day for long-term benefits. After practicing for a while, you may notice some changes, even a decrease in your stress levels. Most people find they are less likely to become overwhelmed the longer they practice.

**It's okay to leave the situation when you're feeling stressed.**

When we're angry or under high stress, our reactions are often not what we want them to be. It's a good idea to step away and do something else. Spend 30 to 90 minutes engaging in another activity to help release your stress.

If you can't physically step away from a difficult situation, try counting from one to ten in a very calm voice. This can help you see if your reactions change.

**Move your body.** When you're feeling stressed or if you've been sitting for too long, remember that your body needs to move. There's a strong connection between emotional and physical health. So, stretching and moving your body isn't just for stress relief; it also has significant benefits for your mind and emotional well-being.

Stress can sometimes be related to your mindset. Making certain changes in your mindset can help you avoid unnecessary stress.

[To learn more, you can watch the recording of the webinar on stress-reduction here.](#)

眼睛看一個喜歡的東西，安靜下來，不要想其他的事情。然後安靜的，慢慢的，溫柔的，長長的吸氣，記得腹部先動，也就是腹式呼吸，肚子凸出來。吸完暫停一下，再慢慢的，溫柔的，長長的呼氣。深呼吸完了以後，做一個正常的呼吸，你會發現慢慢呼吸變深了。

深呼吸有兩個重點：

1. 吸氣和呼氣間有小小的暫停。
2. 吸氣和呼氣是長長的，溫柔的，舒服的。

這樣的呼吸對我們的身體有極大的幫助，如果有壓力發生，你可以馬上做，為了長期健康，建議每天至少做二十分鐘。通常剛開始練習時，會覺得有改變，壓力會比較小一點，大多數人做久了會覺得好像比較不容易爆開。

**壓力大時可以離開現場。**

當我們生氣的時候，或壓力大時，所做的反應常常並不是我們想做的事情，可以暫時離開做其他的事情。通常建議是30到90分鐘做其他的事，讓自己把壓力降下來。

如果很糟糕的情況，真的不能離開，記得**從一數到十**，用非常冷靜的聲音在心裡數 1 ... 2 ... 數到 10，看看自己有沒有不一樣反應。

**動一動：** 壓力大的時候或是坐太久，記得身體一定要動。情緒健康和身體健康有非常強烈的關聯。所以身體動一動，伸展一下，不只是抗壓，對智力，對情緒有很大的好處。

壓力有時是和心態有關。有些心態的改變，可以避免不必要的壓力。

[了解更多壓力管理的方法，請觀看講座錄影](#)