Junior Officer Advisory Group
Readiness & Deployment Committee
Behavioral Health Team

Practicing Wellness

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Mental Health Reset: Striving for Stability

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Built-up stress is no fun, but did you know it can cause damage if it is prolonged? Living under constant pressure creates stress on your mental health, and that pressure affects and impacts your physical health. Decompressing will help recharge your energy and give you the strength to move forward. With the various demands of your daily life, finding time to decompress may feel more like a luxury. However, it is essential for your optimal health and well-being.
If you find it challenging to take time for yourself, exploring a few relaxing activities can help get you back on track to create healthy routines and sustain long-term wellness.

How to relax at home: Often, easy, relaxing activities at home are needed to decompress. A few simple and sustainable ways to relax at home are essential for creating a balance. Developing a self-care routine will allow you to take time to invest in your happiness, energy, and well-being. Some suggested activities are:

- Deep breathing. This helps to slow your heart rate and regulate your nervous system. Box breathing is one way to practice deep breathing, which consists of inhaling for four counts, holding for four counts, exhaling for four counts, and holding for four counts again.
- Light exercise. Moving your body is an excellent way to decompress after a stressful situation because getting active balances your physical and mental state by releasing endorphins.
- Take a warm bath. Immersing yourself in a warm bath can help soothe tense muscles and clear your mind, so you can begin recharging through serenity and rejuvenation.
- Have a friend over. After a long day, sharing your time and thoughts with a friend or family member can help you work through the day's stress. Catching up with a friend will also ensure a balance and well-being in your social life, an essential component of overall wellness.
- Start a new book or show. Finding an escape in a good book or show can help you temporarily set the stressors from work and life aside so you can enjoy a time of stress-free relaxation.

How to relax while at work:
- Take a 15-minute walk. If you sit behind a desk all day, one of the best solutions is going for a short walk. This allows your brain to release endorphins that increase energy levels and improve mood.
- Stretch. Stretching of the neck, back, and waist loosens up the body and increases blood flow. This is an excellent option if you are in a time crunch.
- Listen to Music. Listening to songs decreases stress hormones and can also boost creativity, so why not bring something engrained so deeply into our lives and the workplace?
- Make a Checklist and Action Plan. When you feel overwhelmed by endless taskers, grab a pen and notepad, take a deep breath, and make a checklist.
- Listen to what you Need. Listening to what you need during stressful times is key to doing what is necessary to improve your mental health.

Resources: [Brief structured respiration practices enhance mood and reduce physiological arousal - PMC (nih.gov); How stress affects your health (apa.org)](#)