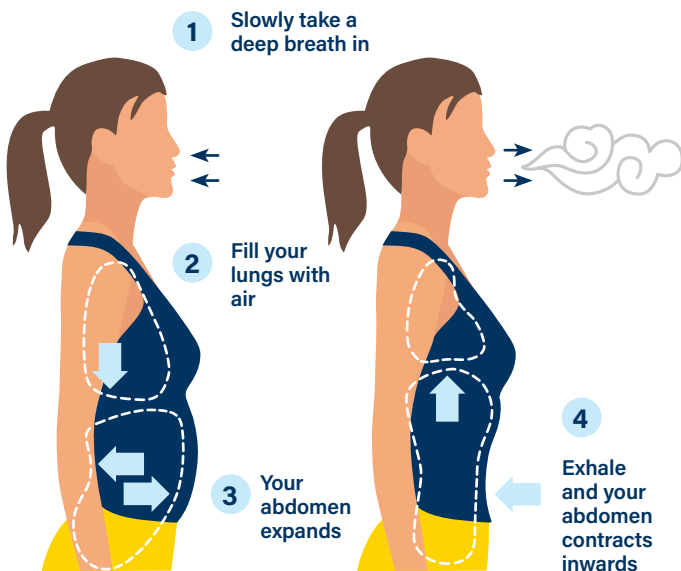


# SELF CARE STRATEGIES



NEW SOUTH WALES



## Diaphragmatic Breathing

Lie on your back on a flat surface (or in bed) with your knees bent. You can use a pillow under your head and your knees for support, if that's more comfortable.

Place one hand on your upper chest and the other on your belly, just below your rib cage.

Breathe in slowly through your nose, letting the air in deeply, towards your lower belly. The hand on your chest should remain still, while the one on your belly should rise.

Tighten your abdominal muscles and let them fall inward as you exhale through pursed lips. The hand on your belly should move down to its original position.

## Third Space

The third space refers to the space (time, place) between activities in your life. The third space exists between work/volunteering activities throughout the day, and largely the time and place between the workplace and home. It is important to utilise our third space to show up to our next place in the best way possible. To utilise our third space, we need to: Reflect, Rest and Reset in order to move forward. (Adapted from Dr. Adam Fraser - *The Third Space*)

**REFLECT:** Process your thoughts and feelings.

**REST:** Take the time to get back to calm.

**RESET:** Get ready to face the next work day.

## Grounding

Grounding exercises are things you can do to bring yourself into contact with the present moment. We've all experienced being grounded when the body and mind are connected and working together. We feel "at home". While it can be a fleeting feeling, there are grounding techniques to help us get and stay rooted in our bodies.

Being grounded can mean two things:

- Being fully present in your body and/or
- Feeling connected to the earth

## GROUNDING ACTIVITIES

- Take 10 slow breaths
- Splash some water on your face
- Go for a walk outside
- Do a body scan
- Slowly sip a warm drink
- Label your surroundings:
  - 5 things I can see
  - 4 things I can feel
  - 3 things I can hear
  - 2 things I can smell
  - 1 thing I can taste

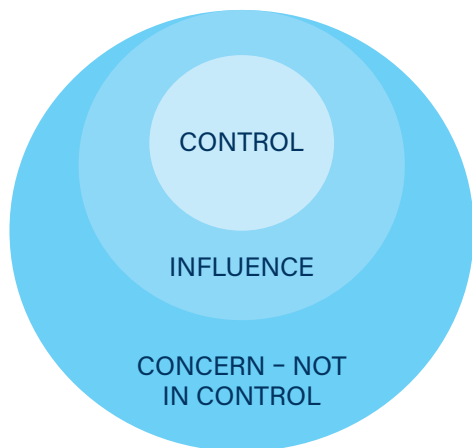


REFLECT | REST | RESET

# SELF CARE STRATEGIES



NEW SOUTH WALES



## Retain a sense of control – Circle of Influence

It could help to look at a challenging event based on what you could control, what influence, and what you have no control over. When trying to regain control of your emotions and thoughts, focus on things you could control like:

- Your thoughts
- Your behaviour
- Your beliefs and attitude

## Shift your Perspective

When a challenging situation arises, our respond is often automatic (e.g., yelling in response to stumping your toe). However, there is space between the situation occurring and our response. This space represents our choice – how we choose to respond to the situation (e.g., choosing to bite your lip instead of yelling because you need to be quiet).

In this space, we have a brief but critical moment to think about the situation. By thinking about the situation, we can better evaluate the situation, our perspective on the situation, and impact it has on us. We can change how we view a situation, our mindset, and our response.

### REFRAME

#### Shifting perspective

##### Pause

Stop. Take a moment. Check in with your thoughts and feelings.

##### Choose

Can I react differently?

##### Relabel

Is this a problem or an opportunity to learn?

##### Reframe

What is a more helpful way of thinking about this?

## Physical Wellbeing

Take care of your general health and wellbeing.



••••• **Regular Exercise** - Exercising briskly for about 20 minutes at least three times a week can help lift your mood. This is because regular aerobic exercise releases chemicals in your brain called 'endogenous' opiates. Also, walking every day is a great way to get some fresh air and give you some space to think and be alone.



••••• **Consistent and Good Quality Sleep** - While individuals differ in the amount of sleep they need, most experts would agree that, at the very least, 6-7 hours is necessary for the average adult. Both the quantity and quality of sleep are important. What gets in the way of good sleep for you?



••••• **Healthy Diet** - Diet choices can also impact on levels of stress. We all know a balanced diet is crucial to preserving our health but certain foods and liquids can negatively impact on our ability manage stress. What helps you eat a more balanced diet?



••••• **Limit Alcohol** - To reduce the risk of harm from alcohol-related disease or injury, healthy men and women should drink no more than 10 standard drinks a week and no more than 4 standard drinks on any one day. The less you drink, the lower your risk of harm from alcohol.