



## Stressed? Bring your senses to the rescue

Use the following exercises to identify the sensory experiences that work quickly and effectively to reduce stress for you. The examples listed below are just suggestions of specific ways that God provides sensory experiences to help us reduce stress. God created every aspect of our bodies. He is ultimately our source of strength, hope and peace, but you can use your senses He created to help you focus on Him.

**Sight:** If you're a visual person, try to manage and relieve stress by surrounding yourself with soothing and uplifting images. You can also try closing your eyes and imagining the soothing images.



- Look at a cherished photo or a favorite memento.
- Bring the outside indoors; buy a plant or flowers to brighten your space.
- Enjoy the beauty of nature like a garden, the beach, a park, or your own backyard.
- Surround yourself with colors that lift your spirits.
- Close your eyes and picture a situation or place that feels peaceful and rejuvenating.
- Focus on Scripture verses that you hang in your home.

**Sound:** Are you sensitive to sounds and noises? Are you a music lover? If so, stress-relieving exercises that focus on your auditory sense may work particularly well to reduce stress.



- Sing or hum a favorite tune. Listen to uplifting worship music.
- Tune in to the soundtrack of nature—crashing waves, the wind rustling the trees, birds singing.
- Buy a small fountain, so you can enjoy the soothing sound of running water in your home or office.
- Hang wind chimes near an open window.
- Listen to Scripture being read to you through an app or another person.

**Smell:** If you tend to zone out or freeze when stressed, surround yourself with smells that are energizing and invigorating. If you tend to become overly agitated under stress, look for scents that are comforting and calming.



- Light a scented candle.
- Lie down in sheets scented with lavender.
- Stop & smell the roses—or another type of flower.
- Enjoy the clean, fresh air in the great outdoors.
- Spritz on your favorite perfume or cologne.



**Touch:** Experiment with your sense of touch, playing with different tactile sensations. Focus on things you can feel that are relaxing and renewing.

- Wrap yourself in a warm blanket.
- Pet a dog or cat.
- Hold a comforting object (a stuffed animal, a favorite memento).
- Soak in a hot bath.
- Give yourself a hand or neck massage.
- Wear clothing that feels soft against your skin.



**Taste:** Slowly savoring a favorite treat can be very relaxing, but mindless eating will only add to your stress and your waistline. Certain foods actually have healthy and relaxing properties.

- Chew a piece of sugarless gum.
- Indulge in a small piece of dark chocolate.
- Sip a steaming cup of coffee or tea or a refreshing cold drink.
- Eat a perfectly ripe piece of fruit.
- Enjoy a healthy, crunchy snack (celery, carrots, or trail mix).



**Movement:** If you tend to shut down when you're under stress, stress-relieving activities that get you moving may be particularly helpful. Anything that engages the muscles or gets you up and active can work.

- Run in place or jump up and down.
- Dance around.
- Stretch or roll your head in circles.
- Go for a short walk.
- Squeeze a rubbery stress ball.

