

Check-In With Yourself

Have you had a glass of water recently? If not, have a glass of water.

Have you taken deep breaths recently? Really do this – don't just say you've tried. Set an alarm for 5 minutes. Inhale for 2-4 seconds, hold for 1, exhale for 4-6 seconds. Repeat.

Have you said something nice to someone in the past day? Do so, whether online or in person. Make it genuine! Wait until you see something really wonderful about someone and tell them about it.

Have you started or changed any medications in the past couple of weeks, including skipped doses? That may be messing with you. Give things a few days, then talk to your doctor if it doesn't settle down.

Have you eaten recently? If not, get some food – something with protein (like nuts or hummus), not just simple carbs.

Have you stretched your legs in the past day? If not, do so right now. If you don't have the energy or time for a run or a trip to the gym, just walk around the block, down the hallway if you're at school, or down your street.

Have you moved your body to music in the past day? If not, jog for the length of a song at your favorite tempo, or just dance around your bedroom for the length of an upbeat song (singing along is a bonus).

If it's daytime, are you dressed? If not, put on clean clothes that aren't PJs.

Have you showered in the past day? If not, take a shower or a warm bath.

If it's nighttime, are you sleepy and fatigued, but resisting going to sleep? If so, put on PJs and make yourself cozy in bed. Close your eyes for fifteen minutes while focusing on breathing deeper with every breath- no electronic screens allowed! Adequate sleep is a necessity for stress management.

Do you feel ineffective? Pause right now and get something small completed, whether it's responding to an email, loading the dishwasher, or tidying up your room.

Have you cuddled a living being in the past two days? If not, do so. Don't be afraid to ask for hugs from friends or friends' pets.

Have you over-exerted yourself lately- physically, emotionally, socially, or intellectually? That can take a toll that lingers for days. Give yourself a break in that area, whether it's physical rest, taking some time alone, or relaxing with some silly entertainment for a little.

Have you waited a week? Sometimes we're just in a "funk" that we can't pull ourselves out of and there's no obvious cause for why we're feeling down. It happens. Keep yourself going for a full week, whatever it takes, and see if you still feel the same way then.

Do you feel paralyzed by indecision? Give yourself ten minutes to sit back and figure out a game plan for the day.

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