TRY A MONDAY REFRESH

1. BREATHE:
   Settle your mind on your breathing.

2. BE MINDFUL:
   Observe your thoughts moment to moment.

3. SHIFT TO THE POSITIVE:
   Redirect your thinking to be positive.

4. SPREAD THE HAPPINESS:
   Share your positive energy with others.
Mindful Breathing can help you overcome stress, reduce anxiety, deal with depression – and all you have to do is sit there! (Well, almost all…)

- Sit comfortably. Most people close their eyes.
- Focus on your breath coming in & out through your nose.
- When your mind wanders into the past or the future just gently return to your breathing.
- It’s that simple.
IT’S MONDAY. SMILE!

Studies show that smiling can reduce your anxiety, lower your blood pressure, and trigger your brain’s reward centers (like eating chocolate).

Taking a break to smile tells your brain it feels good, and when your brain feels good it tells you to smile more. Then people see you smiling and smile back, which makes you smile even more. So smile and start a chain reaction of happiness.
This Monday, Discover the Magic of Music.

Listening to music can reduce stress and anxiety. In particular, slow, quiet classical music can have a deeply relaxing effect on the mind and body, lowering blood pressure and decreasing the levels of stress hormones.

- This week, when you feel stressed let music take you to a more peaceful place.

- Music can not only calm you, it can also energize you so make a playlist of songs that put you in a positive mood.

- Sing along if you feel like it. In one study, singers were found to have lower levels of the stress hormone cortisol.
We walk & text, walk & talk, walk & eat – but sometimes it’s refreshing to just walk. Focus on each step, from your heel hitting the ground to the ball of your foot to your toes. Don’t worry about where you have to get to, just focus on the act of walking. It’s almost like being a toddler again.

**Your Healthy Monday Reset**
TAKE AN ART BREAK!

The Metropolitan Museum created a series of short videos narrated by their curators about different works of art. This week, go to www.destressmonday.org/take-an-art-break and watch one or more of these videos. Contemplating art can relax and renew you.
THIS MONDAY, DON’T LOSE YOUR LUNCH.

Two-thirds of employees either skip lunch or eat it at their desk. This week take a break instead. Stopping to eat lunch will re-energize your body and raise blood sugar levels, helping with clarity and focus all afternoon. Joining co-workers is not only refreshing it helps feed those work relationships.
This Monday, Plan a Get-Away!

Americans leave an average of nearly 10 vacation days unused every year. Ironically, many studies show that job performance improves with the frequency of vacations, as does job satisfaction. This week, get out the calendar and plan some breaks – it’ll feel good now and even better when you’re actually on vacation.

Your Healthy Monday Reset
Clean up the small stuff

Tasks that are hanging over your head can cause you stress, whether it’s paperwork that’s piled up, appointments that need to be made, or small household concerns.

Instead of letting this stress build, set out to solve some of the little problems in your life this week.

On Monday, make a list of all the small things waiting to get done and schedule time to take care of them. Just getting started can reduce your stress, and each project you finish helps you feel in control again.
Change your brain. Change your life.

Neuroscience is finding that how we direct our attention alters our brain activity and even our brain’s actual structure.

This week focus your attention on positive things like kindness, gratitude, and compassion.

Not only will you feel good in the present moment, but you may be developing new neural structures – actually changing your brain.

Your Healthy Monday Reset
In the past evolution has favored those who paid attention to the negative over the positive – avoiding a predator was much more important than enjoying a sunset. That may be one reason why our brains seem like Velcro when it comes to negative experiences and Teflon when it comes to the positive. But this negative bias is no longer as helpful as it once was.

This week, balance out that innate negativity by actively paying attention to what’s positive. It’s not Pollyanna, it’s just finding the right balance.
WATCH FOR SYMPTOMS OF STRESS

Headaches, indigestion, loss of appetite, muscle tension, and sleep issues can actually be signs of stress.

This week, if you notice any of these symptoms, pause, take a few deep breaths, and consider whether stress could be causing what you’re feeling.

Keep a written record and, if symptoms recur, make an appointment to consult with a professional.

Your Healthy Monday Reset
Take a Lesson from Your Dog

We humans are the only creatures who worry about the future, regret the past, and blame ourselves.

This week, observe a dog. See what it's like being fully immersed in the present.

Try all week long to be mindful of how much time you spend worrying, regretting, and blaming. When you catch yourself doing it, return to the present and… go chase a Frisbee or something.

Your Healthy Monday Reset
Your Monday workout at work: WALL SITS

Regular physical activity benefits your whole body and can reduce your risk of cardiovascular disease, type-2 diabetes and more. Get a mini-workout at work with Wall Sits.

- Stand with your back against the wall, then bend your knees and slide your back down the wall until your thighs are parallel to the floor.
- Hold it for… well, the world record is 12 hours but 12 seconds may feel like enough.
This Monday stretch yourself. Try CHAIR YOGA.

Chair Yoga can reduce your stress, improve flexibility and refresh your mind.

Begin sitting tall, hands on thighs.
- **Inhale:** tilt pelvis back and bring belly to back of your spine.
- **Exhale:** curve spine toward the back of the chair forward, drop shoulders, with your chest facing up.
- **Inhale:** round shoulders and look down toward your lap.
- **Exhale:** return to sitting tall.
START EXERCISING MONDAY and you could sleep better all week.

People who exercise 4 days a week report improved sleep quality, longer sleep, and less time falling asleep. Even for people with insomnia a moderate workout can be the equivalent of a sleeping pill.

- Make sure you finish your workout at least 3 hours before you plan on going to bed
- Download one of the new sleep apps that track your movement at night and can help evaluate your sleep.
- After a couple of weeks see if exercise is helping you sleep better.
Try a MONDAY MILE!

The CDC recommends adults get 150 minutes of moderate physical activity each week. Walking a Monday Mile gets you on your way. And if you can do a mile a day by Friday you’ve done it!

It’s always more fun with a friend, so grab a walking buddy. You can also start a Monday Mile group at your workplace.