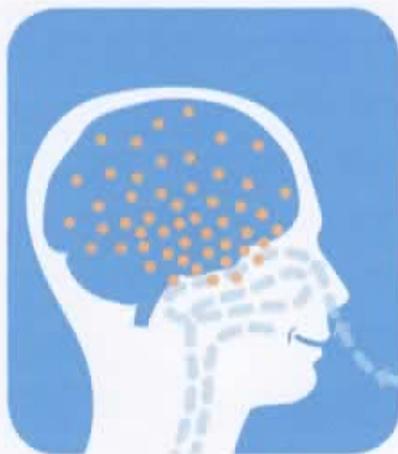


Three Easy Instant Stress-Busters



Practice each of these Stress-Busters until they become easy to do and you can immediately de-stress and self-soothe. Whenever a family discussion gets “hot,” call a “Ten Second Time-Out” to disengage, and use these three instant stress busters.

1



Calm Breaths

Take three slow, deep breaths through your nose; hold each breath for a second; and then very slowly release the air.

As you take slow, deep breaths through your nose, tiny cells high up in your nasal passage are stimulated, giving off nitric oxide.

Nitric oxide is a relaxing, short-lived brain neurotransmitter. It causes our blood vessels to relax and dilate so they carry more oxygen to the brain, and we feel more calm and alert.

2



Warm Waterfall (Progressive Muscle Relaxation)

- a) Close your eyes and tighten all your muscles, even those in your face.
- b) Imagine a gentle, warm relaxing waterfall that begins to pour softly over your head, run down your face, and flow all the way to your feet. As the soft, warm water touches each part of you, relax that set of muscles.
- c) When the imaginary warm water reaches your feet, flick the water off your fingertips, open your eyes, step out of the “puddle” and you are completely relaxed, de-stressed, and alert.

3



Positive “C” Talk (“Self-Talk”)

- I am **C**alm and in **C**ontrol.
- I **C**an make this moment better.
- I **C**an smile.

As you repeat each of these three statements to yourself, take a slow, deep cleansing breath through your nose. Hold it for two seconds, and then let the air out slowly through your lips. On the last “C” statement—after you breathe out, SMILE!

Smiling triggers “feel-good” brain chemicals. You’ll feel a happy difference.