

TOP
5
STRESS
HACKS



Top 5 Stress Hacks

Stress is one of, if not the major causes of disease and **dis-ease** in modern society.

Physically it has been linked with:

- Cardiovascular issues like high blood pressure, stroke,
- Arrhythmia and heart attack.
- Metabolic disorders like obesity, diabetes, hypothyroidism, anorexia, adrenal fatigue.
- Whole body diseases like cancer and autoimmune diseases
- Respiratory disorders like asthma, COPD and chronic bronchitis.
- Digestive disorders like IBS, ulcerative colitis, crohns, gastritis, ulcers, and even constipation
- Musculoskeletal disorders like fibromyalgia, pain, rheumatoid arthritis,
- Skin disorders like acne, psoriasis and eczema.

Mentally it is a major factor in:

Depression, anxiety, rage, sleep disorders, social avoidance and everything in between.

High stress levels cripple our immune system, deplete our energy, dampen our spark and disrupt our sleep.

Above all, the biggest burden of stress on our lives is that it's the thief of joy. When stress is high and unmanaged, the fun and joy is stripped from our lives. Everything feels pressurised, everything feels urgent and even when spending time with our friends or families it's hard to stay present and in the moment without being distracted with stressful thoughts.

MindbodyHQ are experts in stress management.

The following 5 stress hacks will significantly reduce the effects of stress on your health and just as importantly your mindset.

We hope they provide you with some helpful action tools for your life.

Regards,

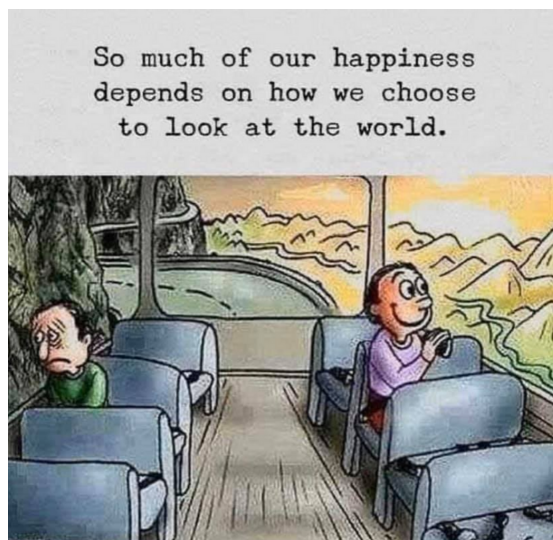
Levi Walz
MindbodyHQ founder



Hack #1: Gratitude

"You can't always control what goes on outside, but you can always control what goes on inside" – Wayne Dyer.

Without doubt the biggest factor contributing to the stress level in our body is 'our mind' and how it processes stress.



"How we see ourselves and our reality plays a huge part in not only the amount stress we are under, but most importantly how that stress affects us.

Two people can be going through similar events and have completely different stress reactions. Please look at the men in this picture.

Both men in the above picture are on their way to work at the same company in the same position and earn the same amount of money. Both don't necessarily love their job or have overly different career trajectories.

Person 1, let's call him John is crippled by negative thoughts that he is trying to block, but cannot control:

- "I hate this job, how am I going to get through the next 8 hours, imagine if this bus broke down. Oh please let this happen, just give me a day off."
- "I can't believe my wife said that to me this morning. What is her problem, she never says anything nice about me."
- "I'm so overweight and old... I can't believe I've let myself go. If this bus breaks down, I'm going to go join the closest gym immediately. That's it, this time it's going to happen."
- "Look at Andy with his big smile. That guy irritates me."



"Person 2, lets call him Andy is off to work too:

- "I'm so lucky to have such a picturesque drive to work, these mountains are magnificent."
- "Sally seemed a little stressed this morning. I hope everything is ok, I think I'll text her. - Hey babe, just wanted to tell you how much I love you and can't wait to see you tonight. You make every day a little bit brighter- "
- "Wish I didn't sleep in this morning, I really could have done with that gym session. I'm so lazy sometimes. Oh well, I must have needed the rest. Got to listen to my body, I'll do something active and fun tomorrow morning. Actually, maybe Sally might want to go for a walk when I go home."

If a year goes by and most days have a similar theme can you imagine the difference in the quality of life for both men?

The great news is that no matter what you have been through in the past, no matter what you are going through now you can train your brain to operate more like Andy.

Please don't be mistaken, we are not proposing a fake style positive psychology practice where you avoid all negative thoughts and say positive affirmations all day.

Our philosophy is ACT based and therefore understands that positive psychology and affirmations can make the majority of people feel worse. We believe the people should feel their feelings fully without pushing them down, running away from them or distracting themselves. They also need to learn how to feel their feelings without becoming tangled up in them and stuck with the ones that are not helpful.

If you want to learn how to play tennis, piano or learn a new language it's obvious that you would need to practice regularly. This goes the same for any skill, including stress management. If you would like to feel less stressed and start seeing the world a little more like Andy than John, then you need to train your brain daily.

Our first hack begins by training your brain with a daily gratitude and self appreciation practice.

- Are you harsher on yourself than any other person on earth?
- Would you speak to your best friends the way you speak to yourself?
- Do you focus more on what you want and where you want to go than what you have already?



“Try this hack for the next 7 days and we guarantee you will feel noticeably less stressed and more relaxed.

Step 1:

- Every morning wake up and think of 1 thing you are grateful for in your life.
- The key here is to not just think about it, but actually sit with this thought for a minute or two.
- Visualise it, experience it in your mind and feel the gratitude in every part of your body.
- Please don't skip this step and simply write down 3 or more things you're grateful for like the standard gratitude process you may have seen or even tried..
- Our subconscious needs to connect with the emotion of the gratitude for it to create a lasting effect that will change your brain.
- The '3 and flee' method may help you feel good for about 10 seconds, but will not create any lasting change in your brain chemistry.

If you'd like a list of gratitude prompts click [here](#):

Step 2:

Think of something you are proud of, have achieved or appreciate about yourself.

It can be something simple like:

- I am a really good listener. When people talk with me, I really give them my full attention
- I am a good dad/mum. I really do a good job in raising my child. I'm proud of the effort and love I put in every day
- I did a good job on the 'xyz' project this week. I really think it is going to be useful

Just like we did with the gratitude exercise, the key here is to sit with the feeling of the appreciation and visualise it deeply. Please don't just say it quickly and move on like nothing happened. If you do this you lose 90% of the benefits of doing the exercise and long term very little will change. You must stay in the moment. Visualise the appreciation, let it seep into every cell in your body. Put a smile on your face while you are visualising and notice how this increases the intensity.

For a list of simple self appreciation prompts you can use each morning [click here](#):



Step 3:

- Write both down in a place you can re-read regularly.
- We recommend using the MindbodyHQ app for this, however a piece of paper is fine.

Step 4:

- Repeat daily.
- You will feel the difference on day 1 (seriously).
- After a week you will feel noticeably less tense and look forward to this practice daily.
- In a few months you will notice that things seem easier, life seems a little more fun and you can't put your finger on why.

Hack #2: Habits Over Goals

Stop setting goals! Stop delaying Happiness!

Seriously, it's time to give goals the flick. You've probably heard the phrase "If self criticism worked we'd all be perfect"... It's a good point yeah? We all criticise ourselves, but what does it bring other than feeling shit..

Well, the science and stats now suggest similar things about goal setting. Why do 95% of people who set goals fail and end up back where they started?

The main issue is that goals are OUTCOME focused. In life we only have control over our ACTIONS. Those actions deliver an outcome, but the outcome is not under our direct control.

At MindbodyHQ we say that "goals are for groundhogs"....

- Set a goal
- Make progress
- Feel restricted
- Fall behind the outcome
- Give up
- Feel bad
- Set a new goal in a few months and repeat the cycle... SCARY RIGHT?



Goals Failure #1

Let's compare our 2 guys from above.

John set an outcome focused goal to lose 12kg of weight in 6 months by exercising more.

For one-month John moved more, ate healthier and was getting more sleep. Sadly, at the end of the first month he had lost just 500grams of weight. To achieve his goal of 10kg in 6 months John needed to lose 2kg every month. He was already 1.5kg behind his schedule at the one-month mark.

Instead of feeling good about moving more and eating healthier, John was frustrated and felt like he was failing. John started to fixate on the result and would weigh himself daily, sometimes even more!

On days where the scale measured less John felt better (even if it was by 10grams). On days when he was heavier John felt shit and had to fight feelings of giving up or wanting to eat his body weight in chocolate.

At the end of 2 months of moving more and eating health John had lost 1kg and was feeling more energetic. This didn't matter to John though as every day he felt like a failure.

On the first day of month 3, with 11kg left to go on his goal John's willpower faltered and he binged out. John gave up on his goal and went back to not moving and eating poorly.

Andy is ACTION focused.

He trains daily, sleeps 8 hours per night and makes a colourful vegetable packed dinners at least 5 nights per week. He tracks his consistency in these behaviours.

Every day Andy is ticking off new behaviours and feeling like he is building a better self. Andy has 100% control over whether he achieves his actions daily. Andy loves how his new actions make him feel and will continue them forever.

After a few months of following the new behaviours Andy noticed he needed new pants and felt so much more energetic and healthy.



Outcome vs Actions

Most people set goals/expectations/outcomes that don't match the actions they are prepared to do or the time period they set.

- Lose 6kg in the next 4 weeks
- Save \$10,000 in the next 3 months

This leaves them feeling disappointed and demotivated and is a huge reason why so many people stop and start goals over and over without having consistency.

Goals Failure #2

Another area where having an 'outcome only' focus fails people is at the end of the goal period.

If a person does achieve their goal within the time period – it's very common to stop the behaviours that achieved the goal and go back to how they were.

- At the end of a 12 week challenge stopping exercising
- After saving for a holiday, stop saving
- After eating healthier to fall pregnant go back to eating poorly.

This is fine if you only wanted to change for a short period of time... but again this is rarely the purpose.

One of the biggest challenges personal trainers, dieticians, financial advisors and the like struggle with is making sure clients always have new goals to go onto straight after a goal period ends. They know that if a client finishes their goal period without having a new goal ready or if they decide to 'have a break', the chances of relapse are high!

Combining a time period and an outcome focused goal without being clear on what matters most is a minefield for failure or rebounding.

Goals Failure #3

Focusing on the destination, while ignoring the journey.

Imagine driving from one side of the country to the other. An outcome only focused person spends the entire trip counting the distance left to go. Each new location is one step closer to achieving their goal.



An action focused person makes the most of every day, every new location and every new experience along the way.

Outcome focused:

- I'll feel good when I am 12kg lighter
- I'll feel less stressed when I have 1k in the bank
- I'll feel less stressed when I have 2k in the bank
- My life will be great once I have a partner
- My life will be great once I leave my current partner

Action Focused:

- How does a happy and healthy person act and think? I will act this way today
- How does a financially independent person act and think? I will act and think this way today.
- What does a loving relationship look like? What are the actions people in loving relationships do every day to keep their relationship strong. I will act this way.

The action focused person rewards themselves on the actions they take or do not take. An outcome focused person is rewarded by the outcome regardless of if the action aligns with the person they want to be.

- For people with a weight loss goal this can mean starvation and restriction just to achieve a set mark.
 - For people with a savings goal this can mean stealing or ignoring their morals to achieve a set mark.
-

MindbodyHQ Success Protocol

1) Long Term

Ask yourself the question: Is this something that will benefit me for the rest of my life?

If so, work on creating a new habit (by replacing an old one) and committing to it long term.

Forget about the expectation of the outcome and concentrate on the process/action.



Who does the person you want to become act like, think like, train like, talk like?

Become very clear on where you are headed and who you will be. Then simply live that person IMMEDIATELY. The best thing about this process is that unlike OUTCOMES, you have 100% control on achieving your ACTIONS.

Every day you can move forward, every day you can achieve, every day you can feel good. When we feel good about things we do more of them and this builds consistency and eventually automated habits.

Feeling pain is great to get us started. For example: "I hate xyz about my life it's time to change". But if you rely on pain and feeling bad to keep you motivated long term without having any pleasure in the process you are guaranteed to fail.

2) Short Term

If this isn't something you are planning on doing for the rest of your life, you need to create a PROJECT, not a habit.

A project is something with a deadline, set objectives and specific outcomes that must be met. These are not 'goals' or 'wishes' they are objectives.

At the end of the project, you move to another project. Our recommended project management tool is 'Asana' and there's a free version available.

Our recommended Habit creation tool is in the MindbodyHQ program and app.

You can also track your projects or habits via pen and paper too.

So, don't be a groundhog any longer. Replace setting goals with creating habits or completing projects!



Hack #3: Mindfulness

Yes, we know you've heard this a million times... But it doesn't make it any less true. Learning how to become present with your thoughts and neither focused in the past or future is absolutely essential to reducing stress and improving your happiness.

Meditation is a great tool that helps us become present in the moment, however as many of you reading this have experienced first hand, meditation can be difficult, boring or both. Many of you may even find the practice of meditation stressful, which defeats the purpose completely.

There are 2 reasons why we may struggle with meditation.

1) Most people try to meditate while their mind is already racing. This is like learning how to swim in the middle of 10 metre surf.. We should always learn to swim in calm water and this is also true of meditation. Once we master the practice in the calm, then it becomes highly beneficial and powerful when we are stressed.

2) Most people meditate using their mind only. At MindbodyHQ we realise how hard it is to control a mind that is racing a million miles an hour full of thoughts. We use our physical body to help slow down our thoughts. When our mind is quiet or less noisy, then focusing on the present moment is easier and far more enjoyable (because you can feel the benefits).

We are positive when most you begin to feel the true benefits of meditation you will be more inclined to practice this valuable tool more often.

The Guided Hype:

You may have seen a lot of guided meditations or sleep stories being promoted recently. These certainly make meditation easier, however most 'stories' style meditations are more of a distraction tool than a mind focusing meditation. They distract us from our thoughts rather than teaching us how to quieten them.

To get the biggest STRESS REDUCTION benefits from meditation you need to achieve 2 main objectives:

- Lower your breaths per minute and beats per minute
- De-fuse from your thoughts and be in the present moment.



When following regular guided meditations, unless continually cued to slow your breath most people will hardly slow their 'breaths per minute' rate at all. Slowing the breath triggers the mind and body to 'DE-STRESS' and SWITCH over to our relaxation, regeneration and recovery mode. This is important to know when you are stretching too. To allow the muscles to fully relax concentrate on slowing your breath.

The thing to know about stress is that it's totally fine to go through periods of stress and high tension. Our body and mind were designed for this. What we were not designed for however is constant stress. This depletes our reserves and creates a multitude of physical and mental issues.

Meditation is not only great for relaxing our mind and body while we practice, but it has truly powerful effects afterwards too.

Once you have the ability to meditate and become present at any moment you now have a powerful tool you can use anywhere, at any time to take control of your biochemistry and therefore your health! (PS: this doesn't come from zoning in and out of a guided meditation story and requires you to train your brain and hone your focus)

- Stressed at work and feeling overwhelmed or upset? Find a quiet spot (the toilet is an easily accessible and private option) and do a few minutes of meditation to slow your breath.
- Feeling anxious in a social setting? Slow your breath rate and notice how everything seems easier to deal with. Seriously, once you practice these techniques enough, you will be able to slow your breath while sitting at a table in front of 10 people and nobody will know.

The MindbodyHQ Solution

We'd like to suggest a different approach that makes meditation easier and far more beneficial.

1)

Find a relaxing place to meditate. Great options are:

- In nature
- In quiet
- In the dark
- Away from distraction
- With relaxing music if you don't have the sounds of nature to assist
- Sitting up or lying down doesn't matter. Being in a position where you are comfortable and are not tempted to fidget or move constantly.



2)

Time how long it takes for you to breath in and out (your breath cycle). Your normal breath cycle may be around every 3 seconds or so (20 times per minute).

To begin with, start breathing in and out every 5 seconds. You can either breathe in for 2 and out for 3, or in for 2, hold for 1, out for 2. After a few minutes try slowing your breath cycle to every 6 seconds (in for 3 out for 3).

Do this for another few minutes and you will start to notice how present and in the moment you become. You will begin to feel more relaxed and maybe for the first time really experience how meditation can truly benefit you.

Clients who have never been able to meditate or stay present for more than a few seconds are surprised at how much easier it is to stay focused using this technique.

Make it Even Easier

MindbodyHQ meditations are meditations with a difference.

Relaxing music has been created with the breath cues already in it. Simply press play and follow the cues to slow your breath and quieten your mind. Unlike standard guided meditations you will not be zoned out and must still focusing your mind, concentrate on staying present and building your willpower throughout the entire track. The big difference is as the track gently slows your breathing, everything starts to become easier and easier.

By the end of every single MindbodyHQ meditation we guarantee to have slowed your breath, your heart rate and therefore your mind. As your training progresses we slow your breath cycle further and further to gain more benefits. You can achieve this without MindbodyHQ by using a stop watch and streaming free meditation music from youtube.



Hack #4: Move Your Way

Exercise can be one of our biggest stress reduction tools or one of the biggest causes of stress in our life.

The key comes down to how you view the exercise you do.

Stress Reduction Mindset

- I love doing ...
- I feel so much better when I ...
- I can't wait til Thursday so I can ...
- I feel so good for the rest of the day when I ...
- My body feels so much healthier when I ...
- I am so clear and focused when I ...

Stress Creation Mindset

- I need to do this exercise to lose weight (even though I hate it)
- I need to do this because everyone says it's the best (even though I feel worse doing it)
- I need to this ...
- I get sharp, one sided pain when I do ...
- I get dull, uneven, constant pain while I ...
- I am so tired and exhausted but I have to do ...

If you have ever tried to lose weight you will understand the above examples all too well.

There is nothing more draining then not enjoying what you do, feeling tired and exhausted but still making yourself get up and train to exhaustion because you want weight loss more than anything else.

People who find 'enjoyment' as well as 'benefit' to their movement are far more likely to be consistent and create the positive association with exercise that is needed to continue it long term.

Try this exercise hack for just 4 weeks and thank us later



Step 1:

Think about how you are going to move your body for the next 4 weeks. Write down each different activity that will be on your schedule and give each activity a rating for:

- Enjoyment
- Anticipation
- Energisation
- Benefit

With 0 being the worst rating and 10 being the best

Step 2:

Remove any activity that doesn't rate a 7 or above in at least 2 of the 4 rating criteria.

Step 3:

If there are no activities left on your list after removing the SUB 7 ratings you must try something new.

- Think about what you used to like in previous years or as a child.
- Think about what you could be interested in
- Do you like listening to podcasts/music or talking to friends. Could you do this while walking?
- How could you change a current activity to make it more enjoyable, exciting, energising or beneficial?

Step 4:

Stick to your new schedule for the next 4 weeks and you will find:

- You are enjoying being active more than ever before
- Your stress levels are lower because exercise is working 'for you', not 'against you'.
- You will have been more consistent than the previous month.

You're welcome!



Hack #5: Rest & Recovery

There are 2 main types of stress in our lives:

- Distress
- Eustress

Eustress is the term we use for beneficial stress.

Eustress is normally short term, energizing and promotes focus and increased performance. Think about when you are in the 'zone' or doing something you love. Both your mind and body respond to this stress completely differently than regular 'distress' provided one condition is met; **The stress is not constant.**

Our bodies are not meant to deal with constant long term stress. If there is no recovery or rest from stress even activities that should create eustress are depleting.

Rest and recovery are absolutely essential to optimising performance of the body and mind. **The more frequently you can be in 'low' or 'no' stress periods the healthier you will be.**

These days we work longer hours than ever before, we are accessible at all times of the day and night and we find it harder to switch off. We move less and eat food that is less nutritious so we generally feel worse.

When we feel worse, we generally chase stimulants, sugar or carbs during the day for energy and then self medicate with sedatives later in the evening to help us calm down and fall sleep.

Right now, I am positive that even though I don't know you...You are probably taking 'on' and taking 'in' too much.

You're taking on too much work, responsibility, guilt, and other peoples issues.

And you're taking in too much information from social media, news outlets and the people in your network

You are being tagged, notified, messaged, emailed, text, called, skyped, whatsapped hundreds of times per day and there unless you have put things in place there is very little time and space to just be.



All of this takes up valuable resources in your mind and body. You might not realise it, but it is draining your energy.

Think about your computer or phone. Have you noticed that the more programs open and running, the worse your computer operates?

What about a wifi network... Have you noticed the more people accessing it the slower it gets? This is just like your ability to function optimally.

I know we all need to hustle, we all need to kick ass in our work and these days being BUSY is a real BADGE to wear on your chest.

- If you're busy, you're important, you're going somewhere
- If you're busy you don't have to listen to the uncomfortable, sometimes painful thoughts in your mind.

Being 'busy' is the ultimate distraction tool, and being constantly busy is an absolute killer to your health.

So, to improve our ability to recover, we need to minimise how many people have access to our mental wifi network.

- Can you go offline more often?
- Can you minimise how many tasks you have to focus on?
- Can you turn off notifications?
- Watch less stressful tv, radio?
- Can you give yourself more down time?

Here are our top 5 MindbodyHQ Rest and Recovery tips to action immediately!

1)

Limit access to your personal wifi:

- Go offline more
- Turn off notifications
- Watch less tv or social media (and therefore hear less advertisements and less bad news)
- Turn your phone off when relaxing at home with family or friends
- Minimise how many tasks you are doing at once (multi-tasking well is a fallacy)



2)

Optimise Your Sleep Conditions:

- Dark room or black out eye masks. This is incredibly important for anyone having sleep issues
- Remove wifi and electrical devices from your bedroom or place them on aeroplane mode while sleeping.
- Set your room to a constant temperature around 19 degrees.
- Eat at least 2 hours before going to bed
- Find the right bed for your body type. Side sleepers or people with more curves normally have higher quality sleep on a softer mattress. If you're a front or back sleeper then a medium or harder bed may be more suited.

3)

Get into nature:

- Prioritise some 'blue' or 'green' time every week.
- A walk at the beach or in the forest helps lower our frequency and get us back on centre when we are wound up in stress mode.
- Add plants, gardens, trees to your house and surround yourself in nature as often as possible.
- While immersing yourself in nature use this opportunity to let that phone sit in aeroplane mode for a while. It's ok, the world will go on ok without you for 30 minutes.

4)

Distract, detach and download:

Not everything we do to improve our mindset and reduce stress needs to be educational or purposeful.

Yes, watching movies or TV series lowers our stress by distracting our mind from focusing on the events that are stressing us out. No, this isn't solving anything and the same issues will still be there after the show finishes. But... It does provide you sanctuary for the hours you are zoning out and if you are tired, exhausted and have little mental energy to do some of the other tips we've suggested, this could be the best possible course of action for you right now.

So, yes, we're telling you to turn on Netflix or Itunes and zone out! It's good for you.



5)

Restorative Movement:

The body can store stress in our muscles, joints, vertebrae, throats, stomach, heart and well, you get it... Pretty much anywhere!

The body and mind are not separate compartmentalised realities, they are one and the same.

If you have tight muscles this can be from a physical cause like strain, bad posture, overwork, poor nutrition or lack of recovery. It can also be from mental causes like stress which will reduce recovery, available nutrition and healing.

Yes, stress can be making your muscles tight. Studies show stress depletes both magnesium and zinc while raising copper and magnesium is especially essential to ensure optimal muscle function.

Just like using our physical breath helps to slow our heart rate, calm our mind and thus make meditation easier, using physical therapy can also relax our muscles and mind at the same time.

Try one of these physical therapies to help manage your stress.

- Yoga
- Massage
- Acupuncture
- Float Tanks
- Ice Baths
- Epsom Salt Baths



The MindbodyHQ TOP 5 STRESS HACKS.

1. Gratitude
2. Habits over Goals
3. Mindfulness
4. Moving Your Way
5. Recover and Regenerate

The number 1 way we know how to help people achieve more, stress less and live a happier healthier life is the MindbodyHQ program.

mindbodyHQ



mbHQ

So tell me...
What are you grateful for today?

I am grateful for my dad! |

IM GRATEFUL

IMPROVE YOUR HAPPINESS
IN JUST **10 MINUTES** PER DAY

SIGNUP NOW

Use **STRESSHACK10** to get 10% off at checkout.

www.mindbodyhq.com

