



## Parent Thinking Space

### Managing Parent Stress Tip Sheet

In the video I explained that the first step in calming our young people is to calm ourselves. Below are some practical tips for how to do this.

#### **Breathing**

Breathing helps to calm our bodies by reversing the fight flight response. Slow breathing (particularly slowing down the out breath) calms our fight flight response.

It is very simple. First breath in for 4 seconds (try to fill the bottom of your lungs before the top), hold for 6 seconds and then breath out for 8 seconds. Each time you breath out relax your shoulders and tell your mind to relax. Repeat this at least 3 times until you feel more calm.

Breathing seems easy but for many this exercise can feel unusual at first. Set an alarm on your phone and practice 3 times a day to get used to using this strategy in easy situations so when you are faced with your emotional teenager it is easier for you to use because you have practiced it.

#### **Sleep**

97% of adults need at least 8 hours of sleep a night to function well. Less than this amount of sleep reduces your ability to manage emotions, increases stress, increases depression and anxiety symptoms. Sleep deprivation also affects problem solving skills and memory recall. Sleeping well helps you to solve problems better and be more efficient.

#### **Exercise**

Exercise has been proven to reduce stress levels and depression. Regular exercise will help your body to relax which will help you to have more patience when confronted with stress and calm yourself more quickly when your young person is upset.

### **Mindfulness**

There is growing scientific evidence that mindfulness can help improve sleep, anxiety and depression and reduce stress. See [www.kirstinbarchia.com](http://www.kirstinbarchia.com) under the resources tab for more information about how mindfulness works and how to do it.

### **Make a care plan for yourself**

After reading the above information and watching the video consider where you may like to make some improvements or practice some new skills to help manage your own stress levels. Write your brief plan below.

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