

# 52 WAYS TO *Conquer Stress*

CHRISSY FRASCELLA



Stress can rear its ugly head anytime, anywhere, but it can be particularly devastating when it stands in the way of your creativity. If you're suffering from a creative block and it's making you tense, or you have a creative business and you're swamped with orders, or perhaps stressors from life outside the studio are creeping in, try one of these many ways to take a step back and reset your mood.





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1. Stepping outside and feeling the sun on my face is an instant mood-booster.  
— Suzanne Birkholz
2. I practice color observation. Sitting down and noticing everything in a particular color is an easy way for me to quiet my mind and focus my energy.  
— Rebecca Peterson
3. *I look for simple joys — a smile in a passing person, someone hugging a child, or a friend in the crowd. I think about the smell of coffee and croissants.* I also look for bright, colorful things — sweaters, scarves — anything that brings cheer.  
— Julie Salina
4. A quick trip to the gym for a 30-minute workout and 15-minute sauna session, and I am new again!  
— Bernadette Sahn
5. Water is so soothing, and I'm so blessed to live close by the river. I lie down in the water and imagine the water taking the stress and worries away.  
— Olga Gerik
6. *I have a "recharging station" that consists of a journal and some basic craft supplies.* When I need a quick reset, I head there and turn my journal to a blank page. I'm sure to write or draw something I'm grateful for to remind myself that things aren't as bad as I may think. I also have another area to write down whatever is on my mind.  
— Tanya Beaubrun
7. I work in my art journal. I throw down paint and smear it around, and I write out my thoughts until I've discovered something, often something I didn't even expect to find. It is not always a solution but some point of clarity in the chaos.  
— Darlene McLeod
8. I grab my photo gear, get in my car, and find a new place to shoot that I've never been before. I spend an hour or two just exploring and looking for the beauty in nature and in mankind. Sometimes I come home with very few results on film, but I always come home feeling refreshed and invigorated.  
— @nanettefaye











GUILIA BERTELLI

9. *The calming motion of knitting needles in my hands always soothes me.*

— @cozumelknitter

10. I roll out my yoga mat, maybe put on some music, and then create some space in my body and mind.

— Trish Fairbeard

11. I grab my keys, grab my pup, and get outside. When I get back, I put the kettle on and listen to English radio from home. It always helps.

— @vintageonathome

12. A quiet moment alone in silence is needed when things get too hectic.

— Maria Sylvia

13. Organizing my space. I am so incredibly sensitive to and affected by my environment. When I'm stressed, my room, my living room, or even my car being messy can send me overboard. Even though cleaning may be the last thing I want to do, it always makes a big difference.

— KT Stevens

14. I don't even wait for the stress to creep across my shoulders. I take some deep breaths and spend 10 minutes in half-savasana [lying flat] with my legs resting up a wall.

— Karen Appleby

15. Bare feet touching the ground. Walking barefoot grounds me, recharges me, and reminds me I am part of something bigger.

— Rara De

16. I pick up my slow stitching, which are little 4-inch squares of art. Pieces of this and that, scraps of fabric, lace, ribbon, buttons, and more. *Playing with color and texture, the steady rhythm of my fingers pushing and pulling the needle through, not worrying if the stitches are wonky or not, completely relaxes me.*

— @paulateach

17. I breathe. It's a tool that is always there and always available wherever you are. Sometimes I just observe, sometimes I count the inhales and exhales, sometimes it's Ujjayi breathing, which is especially good for relieving stress. My breath brings me back to myself, my own power, and my choices in that moment. It's simple, it's powerful, it's effective, and it brings a sense of gratitude. Breath, after all, is life.

— Krista Lee McPhee

18. Freshly ground hazelnut coffee in my favorite mug and a wet paintbrush drifting across an old piece of furniture is the perfect recharge.

— Ivy Dees

19. *I have a playlist of songs I listen to when things get stressful. I just throw on my headphones and start cleaning the house.*

— Arienne Haywood

20. I go into the garden where I feed the birds every morning and gather feathers. I have a lovely collection on the coffee table that reminds me of quiet moments of solitude.

— Kae Harris

21. *Blasting whatever song is moving me at that season of my life, turning up the bass, and dancing like a mad woman around the kitchen.* Nothing makes me feel more alive and energized than amazing music and getting my heart pumping!

— Ramona Samuels

22. I turn to cooking. It's relaxing to have my children help me slice and dice and talk about their day. There's something therapeutic about working together to fix a delicious meal.

— @jmbottorf











23. I pull my right hand to my hairline, just behind my ear. My two fingers know what to do, but my thumb simply joins to assist. The twirling begins, as naturally as the stress subsides. It is a childhood habit that remains with me. Quietly, while breathing in and out, I twist and twirl all the while a calmness falls across my mind and body.  
— Angie Lambert

24. *I stop what I am doing and start naming in my head the things I am grateful for one by one, or I hold one finger at a time and think of five things to be grateful for, and that turns my day around.*  
— Lucy Voehl

25. I know this sounds silly, but ever since I watched Amy Cuddy's Ted Talk on body posture, the first thing I do (or at least try to do) when I am feeling out of sorts is strike a Wonder Woman pose. It's amazing how quickly I begin to feel better.  
— Delian Jayce

26. Quotes or a beautiful photo can recharge me. The energy and meaning they carry lifts me up when I need more to gracefully power through.  
— Nicole Levy

27. I sit in absolute silence and make mandalas using nature and sacred objects.  
— Susan Fireside

28. *I tap into my love for hygge. I light a few candles, put on soulful acoustic music, pour hot coffee into my favorite mug, find a cozy corner where I can sit and put my feet up, wrap myself in one of my favorite afghans, and just take it all in.*  
— @the\_jems\_life

29. I close my eyes and listen to all the sounds around me without labeling or judging them, just allowing them to drop right into the moment.  
— @spiritdaughter

30. As my day becomes overwhelming, I try to stop and take three — yes, three — deep breaths. Then I look for chocolate. Then I sit down and listen to classical music.  
— @mcannon53

31. I look through the photos on my phone. They remind me that there is more to life than whatever is stressing me out.  
— Judith Nowland

32. *I take a power nap. Nothing over 20 minutes, preferably without the dogs barking at anything during that time.*  
— @cosibella

33. There is nothing like hopping in the car, turning the tunes up loud enough to drown out the world, and just driving. It cures my stress every time.  
— Lisa Kerner

34. I switch off my phone, computer — any connection to the outside world — and listen to a record. The familiar pops and mellow, soothing tones relax me instantly.  
— Whitney Napier

35. I try to watch something that makes me laugh while I drink my tea, or I text my mom-group friends in a thread and we make each other laugh.  
— @aceidra

36. If I can't get outside, I use my meditation app, which only takes 10 minutes and helps me step back from any stressful situation.  
— Sammi Brewer

37. *When I'm feeling overwhelmed, I take a quick break to browse the books at the library. It helps ground me, knowing there are so many different stories out there and mine is just a small part in a big world.*  
— Natalie Barahona Bruzon



38. I love to spend time in my garden, which I find relaxing and rewarding. There's nothing like catching a glimpse of a butterfly or a dragonfly flitting about among the flowers.  
— Gillian Norris Allen
39. Sometimes I take out a sheet of paper and write it all down. Then I rip it into little pieces, throw it in the garbage can, and put it all out of my life.  
— Susan Brown
40. Cuddling with our American bully, Ryder, does it for me. Sometimes taking him for a walk works too, but my absolute favorite is when he climbs on our couch, drapes his body over me, and rests his head on my chest. He is so content listening to my heart beat, and that's enough for me.  
— Nicole Sabol Kovalcik
41. I stop what I'm doing and focus on my breathing. I remind myself that nothing lasts forever, and this stressful moment, too, will end. *My mantra in these situations is, "It's a bad day, not a bad life."*  
— Bree Moore
42. If I cannot get the needed relief and respite by spending time writing or painting in my studio, I will at the very least go inside the space and stare up through the skylights and breathe.  
— Kolein Velvette Carlson
43. *I have scriptures and quotes on my bathroom mirror and in my closet. A quick trip to quietness, reading a couple out loud, a few deep breaths, and I am usually reset.*  
— Kay Brown
44. I have a gel mask I keep in the refrigerator. When I need a quick recharge, I put on the cool, refreshing mask, lie on the carpeted floor with my legs on the chair, and check in with my Creator. In 10 minutes I'm ready to jump back in.  
— Cyndi White Carlson
45. I call my sisters. They are 11 and 22 years older than me. They see things in a completely different perspective than me, and I just love hearing their voices.  
— Valari Dawson Canonico







JO HORSWILL,  
PAPER CLOTH STUDIO



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46. At night, I go onto my porch and let the darkness hug me. The sweet, rich scent of honeysuckle, the crickets' orchestra, and stars light my heart with gratefulness and peace.

— Patricia Ann Smith

47. Next to my favorite chair is a needlework project. The rhythm of the needle and thread going in and out of the fabric settles me right down.

— Donna Fellows

48. *I step into the shower and let the rainfall showerhead create a storm on the top of my head. Depending on the angle of my ears, I hear thunder and then rain. It's a magical escape for five sweet minutes.*

— Julie Hutt

49. I pull out my essential oils. Orange is a great one for lifting me up, or basil when I just need to take a step back and breathe.

— Kathy Wild Blaseck

50. I have two beautiful magazine pictures of favorite retreats — one of a garden path to the sea and another of a mountain porch beside a little river complete with comfortable seating and a roaring fire. It always soothes my soul just gazing at those beautiful escapes.

— Deana Taylor

51. When life is just too much, I find rest playing my piano.

— Susan Best

52. Doing something kind for someone else helps me change my mood.

— Kathleen Schrum