



Places

Where you feel at home, safe or feel that you belong

Objects

Which give you a good feeling because they are beautiful or evoke happy memories

People

On whom you can rely or who play an important role in your life

Organisations

That you belong to, they give you a good feeling or sense of identity and belonging

Activities

Which are stimulating; such as hobbies and sports that you enjoy



Journal

	Any trigger situations	Rate self on scale 1-10	Body symptoms (breathing, heart etc)	Action Taken	Rate self on scale again
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Saturday					
Sunday					



How Can I Break the Cycle?

Even if everything around you is out of control there are still ways you can take responsibility and focus yourself on things under your control. It is important to start by breaking the cycle of stress and to do this you can interrupt it in any of the 4 areas, behaviour, thinking, body and feelings.

Remember just as these 4 aspects can lead to feeling stressed they can also affect each other in a positive way. Breaking the cycle usually means starting to develop new habits and finding one area that it is possible to take control of. The key is to choose small achievable ways to do this. Start by choosing only one or two areas only to begin with.

Suggestions for breaking the cycle

Here are some suggestions, remember it takes time & some perseverance to develop new habits. Ask friends or family to support you.

Stop several times a day - start the habit of breathing slowly & fully, check your body for areas that feel tight, then stretch and release them.

Switch off the TV or computer for 10 minutes & use a relaxation CD or an exercise that suits you & practise (this could be just music) Do this every day.

Before eating, make a conscious effort to breath and relax. Do not work as you eat or sit in front of a computer.

Eat regularly and do not skip meals. Avoid sugary and processed meals.

Do not drink caffeine at least 4 hours before bed and reduce caffeine intake generally with healthy alternatives.

Find a form of exercise that suits you, and make it a regular part of your life.

Talk to someone appropriate about your feelings, do not bottle them up. Seek professional help like counselling if necessary.

Before turning to alcohol try other activities inc breathing or exercise.

Make a list of things bothering you, be specific, choose one item & decide how to take control of it, breaking it down into small achievable parts.

When our stress levels are high we tend to react rather than respond to others, which can make for difficult relationships. Before reacting try stopping and waiting, breathing slowly & think about what you really need to say & communicate in an effective way.

Notice the content of your thoughts, are they spiralling or overwhelming. If so try talking to yourself rationally.

Create a bedtime routine, as sleep is a great aid to stress relief, aim for 8 hours, falling asleep to the TV may not be restful.