How do you manage stress when you can’t change the situation? Here are three strategies that will pay dividends:

1. **Visualize.**

Find a comfortable place where you won’t be disturbed for about five minutes. Sit with your eyes closed, and imagine a positive outcome for whatever problem is causing stress. Be as robust in your imagery as possible: Conjure up the sights, sounds, voices, and feelings you’ll experience as the positive result occurs. You’re programming your subconscious mind to help you solve the problem, and you’re engaging the positive emotions now that you’ll feel then.

When you envision a solution to a problem, you’re already part way to solving it. Generating the positive emotions associated with the resolution gives relief in the present moment. You can repeat this exercise a few times a day until you obtain the result you want.

2. **Breathe.**

An exercise called balanced breathing incorporates elements of yoga to balance your emotional “right brain” with your rational “left brain” so that you’re using all your resources to best advantage.

While seated, cross your left ankle over your right. Extend your arms in front of you with the backs of your hands touching each other. Cross your right arm over your left so that your palms face each other.

Now clasp your hands together and lower them to your lap. That’s the posture.

Next time you’re in a stressful situation, use a strategy called empirical reality testing.

Next, breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth. As you breathe in, touch your tongue to the roof of your mouth, and as you exhale out your mouth, relax your tongue down. Continue this exercise for two or three minutes.

3. **Shift Your Focus.**

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Instead of wringing your hands, you can channel your energy into productive activity.

Your beliefs about a situation are powerful. As Henry Ford once said, “Believe you can or believe you can’t. Either way you will be right.”

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**RESOURCES**


These resources are available at www.snpo.org/members.