



THE STRESS RECOVERY EFFECT ACTION PLAN

Now that you've discovered the benefits of learning how to recover from stress, it's time to embark on an action plan and begin to apply these principles to your daily life. Research supports taking immediate action on an idea to ensure its success. That's where the Stress Recovery Effect Action Plan comes into play. We recommend you follow the Action Plan a minimum of 4-6 weeks, but to really ingrain these principles as habits, do it for up to 12 weeks.

On the opposite page (and in the bonus online materials), you will find a card titled "The 7 Stress Response Strategies." You will want to keep these near at hand as a reminder to practice them. Here are some ideas: photocopy the page, cut out the card and post it where you will see it regularly. You can also download it, print it, and cut it out. In addition, take a photo of the card with your smartphone, crop it, and save it on your phone, tablet, or computer. Keep it where you can refer to it frequently. This will help remind you to use the Stress Response Strategies whenever you're experiencing distress in the moment.

The Stress Recovery Effect Weekly Planner begins on page 328. You can also access the Planner in the bonus online materials. Again, you can photocopy or download these pages. This section helps you apply the Lifestyle Strategies—the longer-term strategies that help prevent you from experiencing distress in the first place. A section for practicing Interval Training with eustressors is on page 329, and another section for journaling your stress recovery begins on page 330.

We wish you great success as you apply the principles of *The Stress Recovery Effect*!

STRESS RECOVERY STRATEGIES

Make copies of this page, cut out the cards, and place them in locations that will remind you to use the Response Strategies whenever you're experiencing distress. Response Strategies are *intervention* tools that you can use immediately when you're facing high acute stressors. You may review them in chapter 4.



THE 7 STRESS RESPONSE STRATEGIES

1. **Breathe It Out:** Responding to Stressors One Breath at a Time
2. **Stretch It:** Flexing to Avoid Snapping
3. **Let It Go:** Tensing Up to Wind Down
4. **Act It Out:** Do It to Feel It
5. **Pause It:** Buying Time for Better Choices
6. **Rock It:** Swaying Away the Stressors
7. **Laugh It Up:** Laughter Is Still the Best Medicine

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THE STRESS RECOVERY EFFECT WEEKLY PLANNER

Week # _____ Starting Date: _____

RESPONSE STRATEGIES

I have placed the cards with the seven Response Strategies in places I will likely see them when I'm facing distress (page 138). I will refer to them and practice them throughout this week.

LIFESTYLE STRATEGIES

Choose one or two Lifestyle Strategies to focus on this week. Lifestyle Strategies are *prevention* tools that will keep you from the extremes of distress when they occur.

1. **Think About It:** Engaging Your Outer Brain for the Better (page 179)
2. **Sense It:** Creating Environmental Eustress (page 189)
3. **Reduce It:** Cutting Stressors Off at the Source (page 195)
4. **Forgive It:** Finding Freedom from the Past (page 201)
5. **Move It:** Exercise Always Wins the Day (page 212)
6. **Eat It Up:** Ingesting the Good Stuff (page 217)
7. **Give It a Rest:** Taking Intentional Breaks for Ultimate Performance (page 228)

Write down how you will incorporate the Lifestyle Strategies you have chosen into your life this week. Be specific.

Write down the specific lifestyle goals you want to reach by implementing the strategy you have chosen.

1. Lifestyle Goal:

2. Lifestyle Goal:

STRESS RECOVERY INTERVAL TRAINING

Pick a self-induced mental, emotional, or physical eustressor that you will use this week for your interval training and describe it below (pages 258 and 288).

Choose one of the Response Strategies below to use after each time you induce the eustressor you have chosen for this week. Repeat with five intervals each time. Practice this Eustressor/Recovery Strategy routine at least five days this week.

1. **Breathe It Out:** Responding to Stressors One Breath at a Time (page 143)
2. **Stretch It:** Flexing to Avoid Snapping (page 148)
3. **Let It Go:** Tensing Up to Wind Down (page 151)
4. **Act It Out:** Do It to Feel It (page 157)
5. **Pause It:** Buying Time for Better Choices (page 162)
6. **Rock It:** Swaying Away the Stressors (page 167)
7. **Laugh It Up:** Laughter Is Still the Best Medicine (page 170)

Check off your progress each time you complete an interval training:

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thur Fri Sat

JOURNALING YOUR STRESS RECOVERY

Using a notebook, journal, or writing software, take at least a half hour this week to answer the following questions as they relate to stress recovery. You may choose to write your thoughts in one thirty-minute session or five minutes daily.

Too Little Stress

.....
In what areas of life am I experiencing too little stress (i.e., boredom, fatigue, frustration, or dissatisfaction)?

What positive actions can I take to challenge myself to grow in these areas?

Optimum Stress

.....
In what areas of life am I experiencing optimum stress (i.e., creativity, progress, satisfaction, or performance improvement)?

What can I do to maintain, protect, and enhance those areas?

Too Much Stress

In what areas of life am I experiencing too much stress (i.e., exhaustion, illness, feeling overwhelmed, or inability to concentrate)?

Describe any experience that triggered stress symptoms this week.

Describe which strategies worked well to recover from stress and how I used them.

What actions can I take to use Response and Lifestyle Strategies in the week ahead? Be specific.

Additional Notes


