

RELEASE FRUSTRATIONS

Frustration is often the result of Qi not flowing properly. When emotions are stagnant over extended periods of time, one way to relieve them is through physically challenging or “aggressive” activities. In addition to vigorous exercise, here are some examples of ways you can jolt these stuck energies into moving again and release them.

1. The Big Smash

- protective eyewear
- deep cardboard box
- plates, glasses and items that make gratifying breaking sounds when smashed (easily found in resale shops, 99¢ stores, etc.)

When ready, put on your protective eye wear and begin by naming/calling out a frustration as you grab an item and then smash it inside the box. Grab the next item and repeat. Do your best to stop only when you feel the physical release/openness in your chest.

2. The Ultimate Tear

- Gather a group of old pillows, and sheet (easily found in resale shops, 99¢ stores, etc.)

Take a moment to focus your intention and truly access these frustrations without any inhibitions. Look at where your anger is coming from. As these begin to surface, grab a sheet or pillow and begin the tear and rip into pieces as you call out the name of the frustration.

3. Rip up the Ground

Weeding is another great way to “destroy” your frustration toward something without doing any harm (except to the weeds!).

4. The Pillow (or Piñata) Tantrum

- Gather a group of pillows, blankets and comforters in the center of a room (or a bed)
- Wear comfortable, loose fitting clothing
- Optional: play loud, fast music
- Or get a piñata to make it a group or family exercise

Get on the floor (or bed), in front of the pillows, etc., close your eyes and conjure up the frustrations that seem to be in the way of what you desire. Think about the walls these frustrations have built around you. Use your voice to express how you feel. When ready imagine the pillows, blankets and comforters as these walls and begin to physically punch, kick, body slam and scream them until they disappear. Do your best to stop only when you feel the physical release/openness in your chest. Make sure you are making full contact with the pillows, blankets and comforters, such that they get out of your way with your movement. BE CAREFUL to not hurt yourself: avoid hitting a wall, the floor, or other large items around you and make sure that you are acting within your physical abilities.

5. The Impact Exercise

Go to a pool and kick (use a paddle board for upper body), making sure there is a smacking sound as if you were “hitting” the water. Participate in a boxing, kickboxing, or krav-maga class. Go to a driving range or batting cages, or hit a tennis ball against a wall. Be fully present to the moment, placing your full focus and energy in every move with the intention of letting go so that you can “leave it in the ring.”

SOOTHE EMOTIONS

There are times when our emotions can wear us down. When we are fatigued, day-to-day activities seem impossible to accomplish, and the mind becomes cluttered with distracting thoughts. During these stressful times, soothing or relaxing exercises help to ground and refocus attention. Below are some ideas for recuperating your energy and settling your mind.

1. Draw.

Get out a pen or pencil and a piece of paper and draw. Do you see circles begin to appear in your doodling? You may well be creating a Mandala meditation. The word mandala comes from the ancient Sanskrit language and loosely means “circle” or “center.” It’s a simple geometric shape that has no beginning or end. Within its circular shape, the Mandala has the power to promote relaxation, balance the body’s energies, enhance creativity, and support healing. Coloring these circles, or a mandala coloring book, can be equally relaxing.

2. Stare at a newly growing shoot.

Gardening is an act of faith in the future. Dedicating a few minutes to taking in the beauty of new growth can clear the mind and help us understand the strength of growth despite adversity: like a shoot sprouting through a patch of pavement. Like the Mandala meditation, so much new growth has a spiral or circle unfurling within.

3. Lie in bed.

Hit the sack, turn everything electronic off and leave your bedside light on. Simply stare at the ceiling for 5-10 minutes. Focus on the breath. The sense of relaxation achieved by laying on a soft surface and the blank slate of your ceiling allow the mind to wander into a meditation of its own. You may drift into a semi-conscious sleep or create a mind of calm before you turn the light off.

4. See with new eyes.

Wander your part of the world, your own city or town, or even just your street. See everything anew as if you were a tourist. Notice every detail as if you had never noticed it before. Don't think. Don't judge. Just notice.

5. Bake.

The art of measuring, stirring, and whisking while following a complicated recipe can lead you into a meditative state simply by requiring 100% of your attention during this single task. For those who have "monkey brain," this can be a truly profound type of meditation.

6. Gaze at the stars.

There's nothing more wondrous to help us to realize that life is infinite, that the power of the universe is enormous, and that where we stand, our limiting behaviors and beliefs, and our worries are small and trivial. Life has bigger plans. Get lost in the night sky and breathe.

References: *Alice Nicholls, mindbodygreen.com*