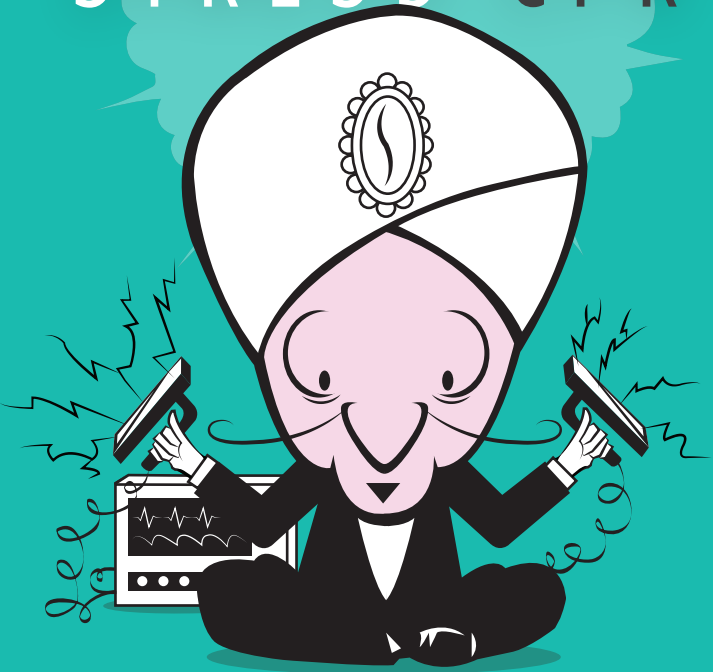


EMERGENCY STRESS CPR



Deal with immediate stress overwhelm and
recover your focus and productivity

DAVE ALGEO, THE STRESS(ED) GURU

Emergency Stress CPR

*Dealing with stress
overwhelm,
regaining focus and control*

**Dave Algeo
Stress(ed) Guru**

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For those of you receiving this book as a workshop or conference resource, you will find it will compliment the session and the resources made available to you in Stress(ed) Guru member area.

For those who have stumbled upon this book looking for ways to help cope with stress overwhelm, I am confident this book will help.

For more resources and to learn more about me – Dave Algeo, the Stress(ed) Guru – visit my website - <http://www.stressedguru.com/resources/>

How to Use this Book

This book is short and snappy.

It needs to be. We are often **'too stressed to manage our stress.'**

This is a quick read giving you knowledge, tips and tactics using a memorable strategy – **'Stress CPR'**

Retain for **'stress emergencies.'**

I strongly recommend you do read and complete the activity in the 'Spotting the signs' chapter.

Pick a tactic - such as the **'Rescue Breath'**, practice it and keep handy for when needed.

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Introduction

We all have those moments when things get on top. Feeling lost and overwhelmed. Struggling to cope.

We may freeze, shut-down, become highly emotional, say or do something we regret.

It can be a real challenge to remain rational and stay composed under pressure.

This book will equip you to self-administer '**Emergency Stress CPR.**'

Get you into the '**recovery position**' – back in the game of life and on top of stress.



The 'Must Know' Stress Facts

The 'must know' stress facts

Keep these five key facts in mind:

1. ***Stress is a response to threat or demand***

Your 'stress response,' is your mind's way of keeping you safe and well (***fight or flight***).

2. ***Anticipating a challenge can be stressful***

Humans can anticipate future threats and demands and activate the stress response. This has value, but we can overdo it – anticipating too much, too far into the future.

Anticipation

we can overdo it,
anticipating too much,
too far into the future

3. *The 'modern day recipe for stress' is:*

High *demand*, low *control*, with *reduced social support* leads to stress overload.

4. *'The Straw that breaks the Camels Back'*

It is often that 'one last thing' that pushes us into 'stress overwhelm.'

However, the real '*stress culprits*' may be amongst the other life and work demands that we routinely juggle day to day.

5. *It is possible to recognise stress*

Stress overwhelm will often provide some advance warning. Tune into those signs, and become more adept at dealing with it.

Keeping these five facts in mind will assist you when you face a '*stress emergency.*'

There is one more thing to understand before moving onto applying '**Emergency Stress CPR**':

The "Three R's" ..



The Three R's

The truth about focus

The Three R's

Do you put so much pressure on yourself to cope with everything perfectly?

Do you strive to be the perfect parent, partner, lover, boss, employee... (fill in the blank here.....).

'Happier,' author, Tal Ben Shahar states - '***permission to be human.***'

So, keep in mind the "Three R's"

R: Remaining focused

Staying composed during 'stress overwhelm' is not naturally human. It can also be unhelpful. Our focus can, under pressure, become narrow and blinkered, losing perspective. Ease up on yourself.

R: Retaining Focus

As a consequence of failing to **remain** focused, we work hard to **retain** or 'hang on' to it, desperately clinging to a rational mindset in the face of the mounting pressure and stress.

How exhausting is that?

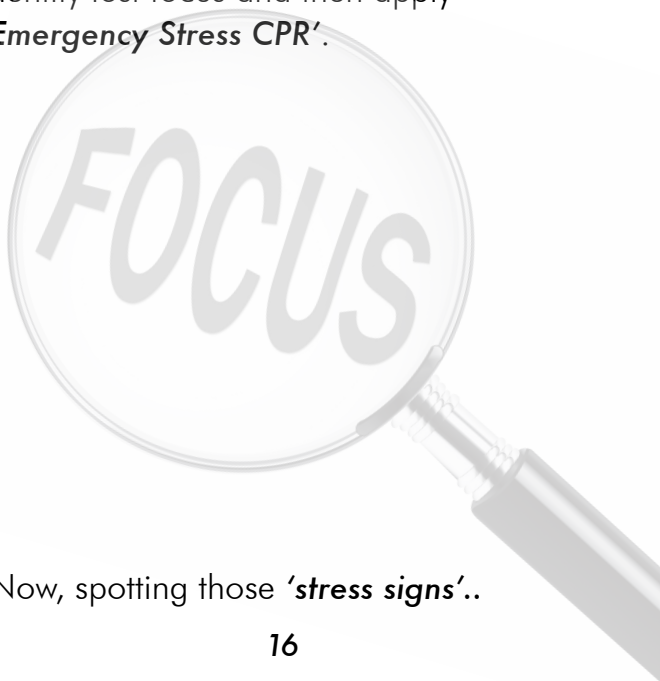
Focus under pressure

You won't remain focused, so
don't try to retain it.

Identify lost focus and work
instead to regain it.

R: Regaining Focus

Under stress, accept you are unlikely to **remain** focused. Don't fight to **retain** focus. Learn to identify lost focus and then apply '**Emergency Stress CPR**'.



Now, spotting those '**stress signs**'..



Spotting the signs

Recognising stress overwhelm

Spotting the 'Stress Signs'

Warning signs: earlier, more subtle, signals of oncoming 'stress overwhelm.'

Danger signs: More obvious & extreme signs that we are *in* 'stress overwhelm'.

Spotting warning signals **before** they become danger signs is better.

'**Overwhelm**' manifests in your..

behaviour (actions) – do you start slamming things down, shouting, crying, or growing very still and contained?

physical – experiencing headaches, muscle tension, rashes, sore throats?

emotional – becoming emotionally very cold and static, or more angry or sad?

thinking – inability to think, negative or fuzzy thinking, racing thoughts, losing ability to be creative or focused?

Discuss with trusted friends and loved ones, and personally reflect. Identify 2 or 3 warning & danger signs:

Warning

Danger

Be alert to these (**especially the warning signs**). You are now ready to commence..

'Emergency Stress CPR'

Identify your top 3:

What are your top three
stress warning signs?

1.....

2.....

3.....

Preparing for 'Stress CPR'

Any good first aider knows not to rush into a casualty situation. After all, they could make things worse, and CPR may not be needed.

Likewise with 'Emergency Stress CPR', we need to employ the following 3 preparatory steps before commencing 'Stress CPR.' It is vital to reduce our sense of overwhelm before attempting to **regain** our focus.

The 3 preparatory steps..



1. Step Away from the stress!

1. 'Step Away from the Stress!'

When attending the scene of an accident the first-aider will stop and assess

Counter-intuitive. Everything will be telling you to fight, flight or freeze.

When you feel overwhelmed, step away...

From your desk; nip to the toilet; put the kettle on; go for a walk.

Allow space for your rational mindset to return, and gain some perspective on things.



2. Ask for support
don't isolate yourself

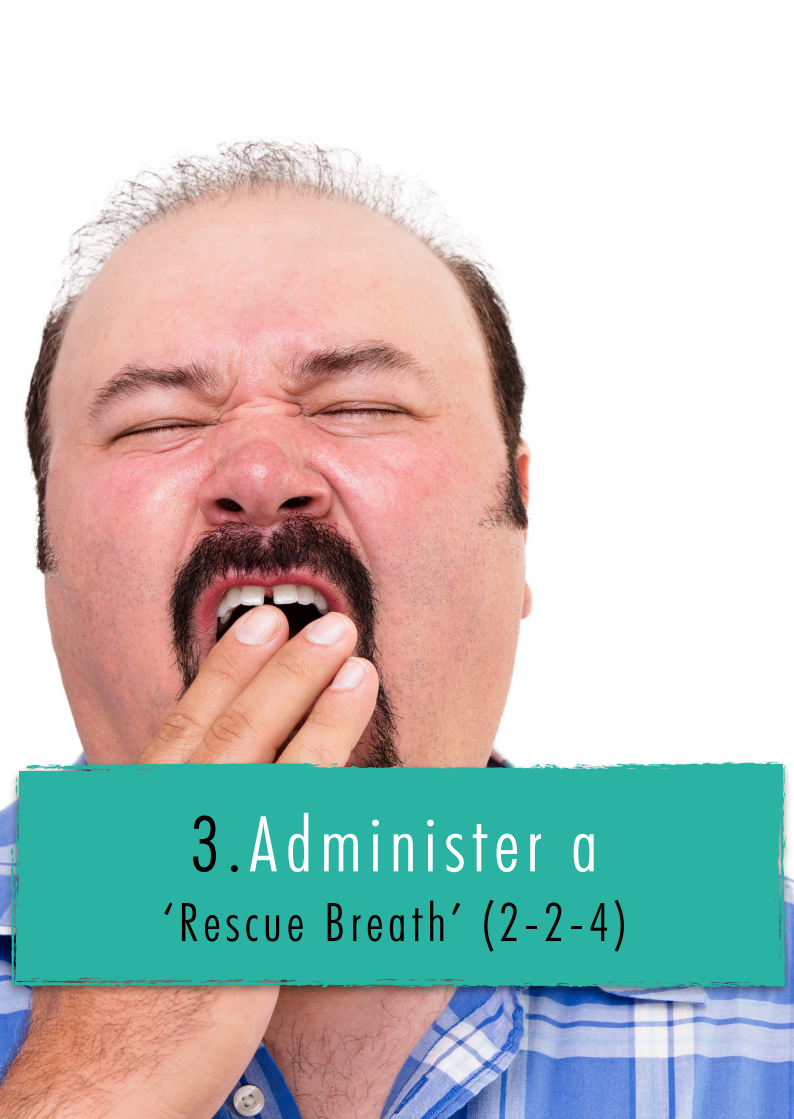
2. 'Ask For Help'

Faced with a non-breathing casualty, the first aider will shout for help.

As a 'stress casualty' ourselves, we need to do the same.

Anything from taking five minutes out with a colleague, having a chat over a cup of coffee, having a longer conversation with a friend or loved one, or even approaching your doctor or a counsellor or therapist.

Don't isolate yourself.



3. Administer a
'Rescue Breath' (2-2-4)

3. Administer a 'Rescue Breath'

That first vital breath administered by the first aider during CPR can be a life-saver.

Again, as the 'stress casualty' you can benefit greatly from a slow controlled breathing technique.

It helps to engage the relaxation mechanism in our Autonomic Nervous System and can serve to momentarily distract us from the feelings accompanying overwhelm.

Try this, sitting or standing..

(or lie down – but bear in mind you might risk being tripped over if you do this in the office).

Breathe in..

Slowly breathe in for a count of **two**
*focus on allowing your tummy to expand indicating
deeper and more abdominal breathing*

Hold..

Hold your breath for a count of **two**

Breathe out..

Breathe out slowly for a count of **four**
Relax and drop your shoulders.

Repeat several times if need be.

Administering 'Stress CPR'

Now that you have taken the edge of your 'stress overwhelm,' it is time to get rational with your stress situation.

You are now ready to start self-administering '**Emergency Stress CPR.**'

Remember to return to the preparatory steps of 'Stress CPR' if you find your stress levels rising again (this can sometimes happen as you confront the causes of your overwhelm),

Regaining focus and calm is the key - don't fight it your stress.



C: Confront and Chunk

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List your challenges (*cabbages*).

Identify the three most problematic

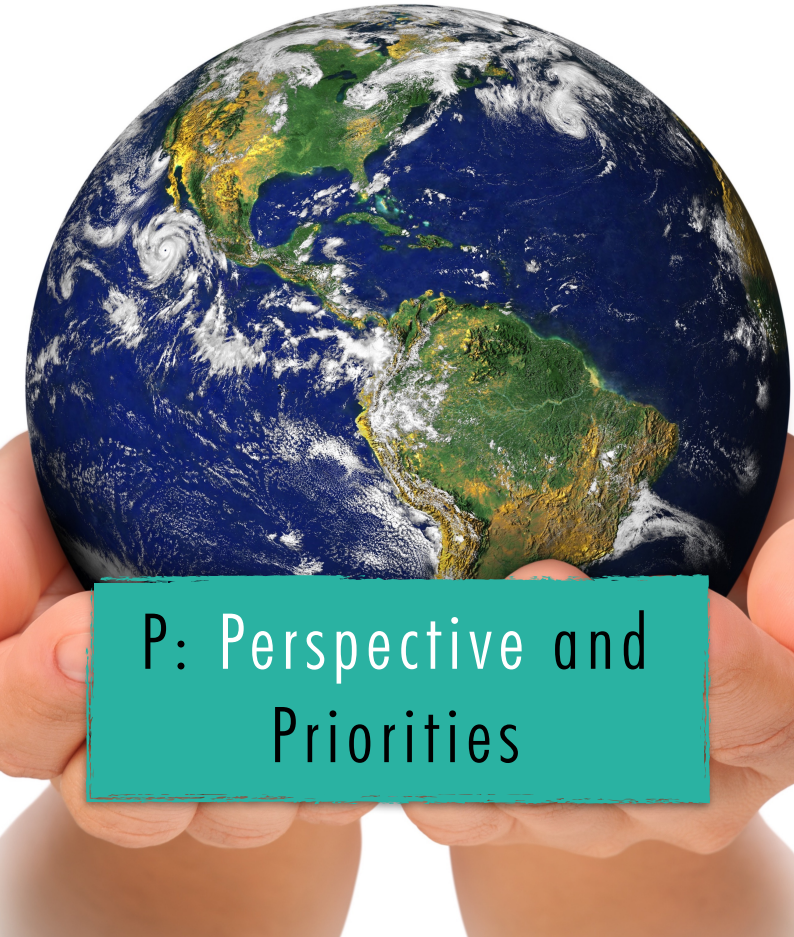
Select your number one priority.

Focus on it with a 'what can I do about this?' mindset. Identify what the ideal solution looks like.

Work back from the ideal solution.

Chunk it down. Talk it through or write it down. **Turn your cabbage into sprouts.**

Identify up to three action steps to carry out **now** to move you towards the solution.



P: Perspective and
Priorities

P: Perspective & Priorities

Before engaging in action, take a moment to get some perspective.

Is this problem really a ***cabbage or is it a sprout?*** Under stress we have a tendency to blow everything up into larger than life cabbage-sized issues (it's natural, we all do).

If it is cabbage sized, give it the attention it deserves. If sprout sized, give it less.

Move on -

'don't sweat the sprouts.'



R: Regain Focus and
Recharge the batteries

R: Regain focus & Recharge

Collect your thoughts.

Review your cabbage and the identified actions (the sprouts)

Re-focus by reminding yourself that you are sweating the cabbages (the important stuff) by chunking into sprouts - in effect you are

'sweating the right sprouts'

Re-engage by taking the first action step. We are action-oriented creatures. Taking action will take back control and will help greatly in reducing our stress and moving towards the goals we seek to achieve.

Remember that stressful situations can drain your physical and psychological reserves.

So take time out to..

Recharge

Reflect on your sleeping patterns (***a good overnight charge is invaluable***).

Remember the mini re-charge. A few minutes, several times a day can be incredibly rejuvenating:

A Mindful Moment

Step away, finding a quiet spot
alone.

Take a mindful few moments to focus
on your breathing.

Close your eyes.

Count through the '2-2-4' of the
'Rescue Breath,' paying attention to
the breathing and the counting.

To conclude

So that's 'Emergency stress CPR.'

Don't get caught up in perfectionism. Just have a go.

Getting it more right than wrong will lead to improvement.

I hope you find this a useful tool in managing your 'stress overwhelm.'

Learn more about '**Stress CPR**' & access other resources, by visiting:

stressedguru.com/resources

Or connect via
twitter - [@stressedguru](https://twitter.com/stressedguru),
facebook - facebook.com/thestressedguru,
Linked-In – uk.linkedin.com/in/davidalgeo/
email: dave@stressedguru.com

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dave@stressedguru.com

