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## **7 Steps to Staying Cool, Calm and Collected**

In today's world, more people are finding it harder to cope with day to day stress. Regardless of occupation, seniority, or salary, we're spending more of our days feeling drained and out of control, instead of focused and calm.

While some stress is a normal part of the life, high levels of stress can reduce your productivity and have a negative effect on your physical and emotional health.

### **Signs and symptoms of excessive job and workplace stress**

Feeling anxious, irritable, or  
depressed

Apathy, loss of interest in work

Problems sleeping

Fatigue

Trouble concentrating

Muscle tension or headaches

Stomach problems

Social withdrawal

Loss of sex drive

Using alcohol or drugs to cope

Another way of thinking about stress management is "state management"

In NLP the term "state" is used to describe our way of being at any moment. It is made up of our physiology, thoughts and feelings, and is greater than the sum of its parts. States are the most immediate part of our experience; they vary in intensity, length and familiarity. There is good news, our state changes throughout the day, meaning it is impossible to stay in any stuck state for very long.

States affect our ability to perform to our best, when under stress our performance can drop by 20-30%.

Learning how to manage your state will leave you feeling more in control of the external influences that impact on our general well-being and capability to perform, experiencing both the highs and lows, whilst knowing that you have a choice of how you react to any given experience.

1. Change your thinking – think of a time when you felt the way you want to feel. Associate with the experience; be there again, seeing out of your own eyes, feel the positive feelings.
2. Change your Physiology – change your posture, adopting a positive posture will make you feel calmer. Smile, this simple act makes you feel happier, because when you smile you release the body's natural feel good chemicals in the brain.
3. Move – exercising will release the body's natural mood enhancing chemicals beta-endorphins, which are powerful mood enhancers.
4. Change your breathing – breathing more deeply and taking twice as long to breath out than breathing in will have a calming effect, breath in for a count of 6 and out for a count of 12.
5. Relax your muscles – relax the shoulders and muscles in the face and neck will help you to feel calm.
6. Eat – food is psychoactive, so eating will change your state. Be careful as this is not a long-term answer and continuous eating will lead to weight gain.
7. Use a resource anchor – these are physical anchors set up on the body and are associated with positive experiences.

***“Happiness is not something readymade.  
It comes from your own actions”  
Dalai Lama***