



Rest Stop #2 Overview

This is the second of six rest stops on your eight-week journey. You have laid the foundation for the rest of the journey in leg #1. You have now been exposed to the nature of anxiety as it has been researched for well over 20 years. This is the phase of the journey where you will be learning and implementing tools to lower your inflammation and stress hormones. This is a rest stop to take seriously. The root cause of mental and physical disease is a sustained heightened state of the nervous system that keeps your body's metabolism out of balance and causes widespread inflammation. Learning to dampen this reaction is critical in order to move forward. You will notice a lot of tools in this rest stop. You don't have to master all of them before you move on but do come back to this spot frequently to discover which ones are the best fit for you. The strategies fall under 3 categories:

- Separate your identity from anxiety – it is what you have; not who you are.
- Learn methods that directly lower your stress response
- Use tools that stimulate neuroplastic changes in your brain. Be who you want to be.

Separate your identity from anxiety

- Understand the power and necessity of it.
- Visualize a large thermometer that indicates the levels of your stress hormones and inflammation.
- Take the word, “anxiety” out of your vocabulary.
 - Substitute, “my stress chemicals are elevated” or a simpler phrase that depersonalizes it.

Directly lower your inflammation and stress hormones – calm yourself down

- Changing sensory input
- Awareness
- Breath work
- Calming activities
- Visualization
- Decrease stimulation of your nervous system

Dampen the reaction to threat – neuroplasticity

- Understand Neuroplasticity
- Expressive writing/ active meditation
- Forgiveness/ Play

There are a series of articles and videos that will teach you these tools. Choose the ones that resonate with you and practice them. You will be implementing some combination of them into your life indefinitely.