

# SOS STRESS

*Kit for*

**PHOTOGRAPHERS**

**MANAGE STRESS  
WHEN IT HITS**

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# Welcome to Your SOS Stress Kit for Photographers

If you're here, it probably means you know what it's like to feel the pressure building — that tight feeling in your chest when things aren't going according to plan, or that sense of being overwhelmed by deadlines. We get it because we've been there too.

Whether you're in the middle of a photoshoot, trying to meet client expectations, or juggling post-production work, stress often shows up when you care about what you're doing. And that's not a bad thing — it's a sign that your work matters. But when stress turns into worry and frustration, it can take you out of your creative flow. That's why we created this kit.

This SOS Stress Kit is here to give you quick, effective tools to handle stress as it comes, so you can stay grounded, focused, and in control — no matter what's happening around you. These exercises are simple, designed to work in the moment, and will help you get back to what you do best: creating.

We're excited for you to dive in, and we hope you find these techniques as useful as we have in managing stress and staying on track. Let's get started.





## ABOUT US

We're Pia and Celin, the sister duo behind Lens & Mind, and we're here to help photographers like you navigate the highs and lows of creativity without losing your balance.

Pia, a certified mental trainer and life coach, and Celin, a photographer and videographer with over seven years of experience, know exactly what it's like to feel the weight of deadlines, the pressure of perfection, and the constant hustle that comes with creative work. We've felt that pressure too; the kind that makes your chest tighten and your focus scatter just when you need it most.

That's why we've made it our mission to help you stress less and create more. Because let's be real: creativity flows best when your mind is clear and your heart is calm. We've combined practical mental training techniques with mindfulness tools that actually work in real-world situations, so you can handle the chaos of this fastpaced industry and still stay grounded in your passion.

Whether it's keeping your cool during a high-stakes shoot or finding your flow when everything feels overwhelming, we're here to help you refocus, regroup, and keep moving forward. Stress doesn't have to stop you. In fact, with the right tools, it can fuel you.





# Legal Notice

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# Where to Connect with Us

We love staying connected with our community! You can find us and follow along on multiple platforms for more tips, resources, and behind-the-scenes content.



[lensandmind.com](https://lensandmind.com)



Lens & Mind



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Lens & Mind



[@lensandmindofficial](https://www.instagram.com/lensandmindofficial)

We're always happy to hear from you, so don't hesitate to reach out or connect with us on any of these platforms!



# Introduction: Stress is a Signal, Not the Enemy

Let us tell you a quick story about a photographer named Mia. She was wrapping up a photoshoot with a major client — one that could make or break her portfolio. Everything was going smoothly until, suddenly, her camera malfunctioned. The stress hit hard. Her chest tightened, her hands trembled, and her mind went blank. All the prep work, the time spent setting up perfect lighting, it felt like it was about to go to waste. But instead of spiraling, she paused, grounded herself, and remembered that stress was just a signal — a signal that what she was doing really mattered to her. It wasn't her enemy, it was a reminder of how much she cared.

Stress has been with us forever. It's what helped our ancestors survive, and today, it helps us meet deadlines, navigate tough moments, and get things done. The problem arises when stress sticks around for too long, turning into worry, putting us on autopilot, and draining our energy. This kit is designed to help you manage stress when it hits, so you can keep moving forward without letting it take control.



# 1. Acknowledge Stress: Give It Space Without a Fight

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When stress shows up, it's tempting to push it away, thinking, "I don't have time for this!" or "I need to stay focused." But fighting it only makes it dig in deeper. Instead of trying to force it out, what if you gave it some space? Stress is just your body saying, "Hey, something important is happening." It's part of the process.

## What to Do:

- **Pause for a moment.** I know it feels counterintuitive, but giving yourself a quick break is the first step. Stop what you're doing, just for a second.
- **Name what you're feeling:** Quietly say to yourself, "This is stress." That's all you need to do — no explanations, no overthinking. Just call it what it is.
- **Allow it:** Instead of wrestling with it, give yourself permission to feel it. Say, "I'm allowed to feel stressed right now." It's uncomfortable, but it's okay to feel this way.
- **Create distance:** You're not "stressed." You're feeling stress. Notice the difference. Shift your thinking to, "I'm noticing stress," rather than letting it define you. It's part of what's happening, but it doesn't have to control the moment.
- **Breathe into where you feel the tension:** Scan your body. Is the stress in your shoulders, chest, or jaw? As you take a deep breath in, imagine sending that breath directly to the tight spot. As you exhale, imagine it loosening, even just a little. You're not forcing anything; you're just giving it room to ease.
- As you breathe in, focus on breathing into your belly, letting it expand naturally without forcing it. Avoid breathing into your chest, as expanding the chest can actually increase nervousness and stress. Whenever you do breathing exercises, keep this in mind!



## Why It Helps:

When you stop battling stress, it loses its grip on you. By naming it and letting it be, you take away its power to overwhelm. Stress is part of your reality, but by giving it space, you allow yourself the ability to breathe, think, and respond more calmly. It won't vanish right away, but you'll find it easier to handle.



# 2. Ground Yourself in the Present Moment

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Stress has a sneaky way of pulling you into the future, making you worry about what could go wrong or how much still needs to get done. The key to breaking that spiral is bringing your attention back to where you are right now. By grounding yourself in the present, you pull yourself out of the stress loop and find your footing again.

## What to Do:

- **Feel your feet on the ground.** Whether you're sitting or standing, focus on the sensation of your feet pressing into the floor. Feel the solid support beneath you and let your attention settle on that connection.
- **Take three deep breaths.** As you inhale, feel your chest and belly expand. As you exhale, notice how your body naturally starts to relax. Focus entirely on the sensation of breathing — the rise and fall of your chest, the air moving in and out.
- **Look around.** Identify three things you can see. Maybe it's the way the light falls in the room, the colors of your workspace, or the small details of your camera. Let yourself really notice each thing.
- **Shift your attention to sound.** What can you hear? Try to identify two sounds — the hum of your equipment, distant voices, or the subtle noise of your own breathing. Focus on each sound in turn.
- **Engage your sense of touch.** Reach for something nearby — your desk, a chair, your camera strap. Feel its texture and temperature. Let your attention settle on that tactile sensation for a few moments.





## Why It Helps:

Grounding yourself in the present moment pulls you out of the whirlwind of stress and back into the here and now. By focusing on what's immediately around you — the things you can see, hear, and feel — you recenter your attention, helping you break free from the stress-driven future thoughts. This exercise helps create a sense of calm by reminding your mind and body that you're safe, supported, and capable right now.



# 3. Breathe to Calm the Nervous System

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Mia, the photographer juggling back-to-back shoots, felt her body tighten as the pressure built. She found herself in the middle of a shoot, her breath shallow, heart racing, feeling like she was suffocating under the weight of deadlines. Her mind raced through all the things she had to do, but her body was screaming for relief.

In that moment, Mia remembered something simple: she still had control over her breath, even if everything else felt chaotic. She took a step back, gave herself a few seconds, and focused on breathing. With each slow inhale, she could feel the tightness start to soften. Her heart slowed down, her mind cleared, and the frantic energy slowly shifted into something she could manage.

When stress takes over, your breath is usually the first thing to change. It become quick and shallow, signaling to your body that you're in danger. But by intentionally slowing your breath, you send a different message: you're safe, and it's time to calm down.



## What to Do:

- **Inhale slowly through your nose** for a count of four. Just like Mia did, let the air fill your lungs, expanding your chest and belly.
- **Hold your breath for two counts.** This short pause gives your body a moment to absorb that calming breath.
- **Exhale slowly through your mouth** for a count of six. As you breathe out, imagine releasing some of the tension that's been building up. Let the air carry away the chaos.
- **Repeat this process** for at least three full rounds, or for as long as you need. Each time you exhale, imagine the tension loosening its grip, letting your body soften and relax.

## Why It Helps:

Just like Mia experienced, slowing down your breath sends a message to your nervous system: you're okay, and it's time to relax. This activates your body's natural calming system, shifting you from stress mode into a state of calm. It's like pressing the reset button, allowing you to regain control of both your mind and body when stress is running high.



# 4. Release Physical Tension: Breathe Into Tight Spots

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Stress doesn't just live in your mind, it also shows up physically. You might notice tightness in your neck, shoulders, or jaw. Maybe your back is stiff or your stomach feels knotted. These areas of physical tension can build up over time, and the longer they stick around, the more they contribute to your overall feeling of stress. The good news is, you can release that tension through your breath.

## What to Do:

- **Start by scanning your body** from head to toe. Notice where you're holding tension. Maybe it's in your shoulders, your neck, or your lower back. Pinpoint the area that feels the tightest.
- Once you've located the tension, **focus your breath on that spot**. As you inhale, imagine you're sending your breath directly to that area, creating space around the tension.
- **As you exhale**, imagine the tension softening or loosening its grip, like a knot being untied with each breath.
- **Continue this** for a few more rounds of breathing, allowing the tension to ease more and more with each breath. If it helps, you can gently roll your shoulders or stretch your neck to release the tightness.

## Why It Helps:

Stress-related tension builds up in the body, often without us even noticing. By focusing on those tight spots and breathing into them, you're telling your body it's okay to relax. This practice helps you release both the physical and mental hold that stress can have, allowing you to reset and feel more at ease.



# 5. Reflecting on Results with Self-Compassion

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No matter how much effort you put in, things don't always go as planned. Maybe the lighting was off, or the shot didn't capture what you hoped for. It's easy to fall into self-criticism, but instead of blaming yourself, what if you took a moment to reflect with compassion? Whether things go right or wrong, each outcome is a chance to learn and grow.

## What to Do:

- **Look back at a recent decision** or action you took, whether it worked out perfectly or didn't go as expected. Both situations are worth reflecting on.
- If it didn't go well, **sit with the discomfort** for a moment. There's no need to rush past it or fix it right away. Acknowledge what happened, and let yourself feel the disappointment without judgment. **Tell yourself**, "I made a choice, and it didn't work this time. That's okay. I'm allowed to learn from it."
- **Ask yourself:** What can I learn from this? What do I know now that I didn't before? Use the experience as a way to grow instead of falling into a spiral of self-criticism.
- If things **went well**, allow yourself to **sit with that success**. We don't always take the time to appreciate our wins. **Tell yourself**, "I did this. I made it happen."
- **Celebrate the win.** Whether it's sharing the success with someone else or taking a quiet moment to feel proud, let yourself truly appreciate the effort and the result.



## Why It Helps:

Reflecting with compassion encourages you to grow from both successes and setbacks. When things don't go as planned, it helps you turn the experience into a learning opportunity without beating yourself up. When things do go well, it gives you the space to appreciate your own effort, building confidence and resilience for the future.



# 6. Checking In: A Simple Exercise to Ground Yourself

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When you're in the middle of a busy day, it's easy to get swept away by stress and lose track of what's happening inside and around you. This simple check-in exercise helps you come back to yourself, reconnect with your body, and refocus on the present.

## What to Do:

- **Sit comfortably** at your desk or wherever you are. Take a moment to settle in and find stillness.
- **Start by scanning through your body.** What sensations are already there? Are you feeling any tension, discomfort, or restlessness? Just notice what's happening inside, without trying to change anything.
- **Now, bring your attention to your surroundings.** Look around and notice what's going on. What can you see? Let yourself take in the details, one thing at a time.
- **Listen for sounds around you.** What can you hear? Focus on each sound in turn, whether it's close or far away.
- **Finally, bring your focus to your breath.** Notice the natural rhythm of your breathing as it flows in and out. There's no need to change it, just be aware of it.

## Why It Helps:

This check-in exercise helps you reconnect with both your internal world and your external environment. It grounds you in the present, calming your mind and resetting your focus so you can move forward with more clarity and calm.



## Reminder: Stress is Here to Help You, Not Control You

Remember, stress is part of the process. It shows up because what you're doing matters to you, and that's not a bad thing. The aim isn't to eliminate stress altogether, but to manage it in a way that lets you keep moving forward without feeling overwhelmed. This kit is designed to give you practical tools that can help you hit reset when stress feels like it's taking over, so you can stay grounded, keep your focus, and tap into your creativity even when the pressure is on.

These exercises are here for whenever you feel stress building. They're quick, easy to use in the moment, and meant to give you relief right when you need it. It's not about fixing everything instantly, but about finding balance again and taking control of how you respond. You've got everything you need to handle the pressure, stay on track, and thrive—even when things don't go as planned or the pressure feels intense.

## Thank You for Using the SOS Stress Kit

Thank you for taking the time to invest in yourself and your well-being with this SOS Stress Kit. We know how challenging the creative process can be, and it's our hope that these tools help you navigate the stress that comes with it. The next time stress sneaks in, remember — you have the power to reset, refocus, and keep creating from a place of calm and clarity.

We're so glad to be part of your journey, and we're always here to support you.

## Looking for More Support?

- **Join our community:** Stay connected with us for more tips, exclusive content, and support by subscribing to our Substack or following us on social media.
- **Get in touch:** We love hearing from fellow photographers! If you have questions or want to share how this kit has helped you, drop us a message at [hello@lensandmind.com](mailto:hello@lensandmind.com).

