

**1 Embrace the season.** The days are getting longer, so get outside. A walk in the woods, park or by the river can be a walking meditation that will not only help you leave your stress behind, but make you feel better physically. Try a morning walk, as exposure to natural blue light early in the day helps reset your circadian rhythm.

**2 Plant some seeds.** Gardening is incredibly therapeutic, so why not create a herb garden on your window ledge? If planted at intervals, you'll be rewarded with an endless supply of fresh herbs. Plus, greenery is a proven stress buster.

# Stress SOS!

Hypnotherapist Ursula James suggests some simple ways in which you can find calm as spring approaches.

**3 Have a spring sort out.** Take a look at your books, clothes, household items and the things you will never use – it's time to give them away to a good cause.

**4 Freshen up your wardrobe.** Get rid of the clothes you no longer wear or that don't fit and then look to add some bright items, even if it's just accessories. It's still chilly outside, so perhaps knit or crochet a scarf in vibrant yellow like the spring crocuses or narcissi. If you don't know how, YouTube has great videos that can help.

**5 Forgo the alarm.** Try to start waking up to the morning light, rather than a harsh alarm clock. Simply leave your curtains open and let nature's wake-up call gently rouse your brain. You will feel less tired and more in tune with yourself.

**6 Stimulate your digestion.** A mug of warm water with a slice of lemon, and some honey if you want to sweeten it slightly, will gently wake up your digestion and give a boost to your immune system.

**7 Think about volunteering.** Whether it's the National Trust, Samaritans, Anxiety UK or another charity that appeals to you, giving to others can make you feel better and reduce pent-up stress.



WORDS: URSULA JAMES. PHOTOGRAPHS: GETTY IMAGES AND SHUTTERSTOCK



Clinical hypnotherapist Ursula James was presenter of *Sex, Lies and Hypnosis* on Channel 5, where she used hypnotherapy to work with couples to help them improve their relationships. Download her *Improve your relationship* MP3 at [ursulajames.com](http://ursulajames.com).