

## 10 Stress Relief Tips for Times of Extreme Stress

by award-winning author and stress relief expert Susie Mantell

Following a catastrophic event, we need time to understand exactly what has happened, what has changed, and what has not. Each of us experiences any event from our unique personal perspective, so choose stress-relief techniques that feel authentic and meaningful for you. Be gentle with yourself, and others. Healing takes time...

### 1. First, a Few "One-Size-Fits-Most" Stress-Reduction Tools to Keep in Mind:

Healthy Nutrition & Hydration • Exercise • Sleep • Music & Creative Expression • Journaling  
Conversation, Laughter & Affection • Meditation & Mindfulness • Personally Meaningful Spirituality

2. After any extreme event, feeling "normal" will be different for each person. Be alone when you need to, then balance your solitude with social support. Give, and accept, comfort. Connecting can help us feel grounded.
3. Cry when you need to... laugh when you can. Smiling can send a positive message throughout the body-mind. Consider your intake of sugar, alcohol and caffeine, and avoid excesses. In uncertain times, it's important to stay factually informed, but to avoid information overload. Know when to turn off TV, radio, and Internet.
4. Before bedtime, dim the lights to help you begin to relax. Choose pre-bed activities are soothing. Try a warm bath, light reading or upbeat TV; a comforting spiritual practice, or quiet time with someone you care for.
5. Is there a safe, effective way for you to help others? Volunteer, donate time, skills, resources or finances.
6. In times of extreme stress, our concentration may be a bit off so pay extra attention to safety. Stress can also be exhausting. Rest, then get up and do something productive if you can. Rest again when you need to.
7. If you care for children or other adults, in addition to providing their care and reassurance, give yourself space to process your feelings and to heal; ensuring the strength, stability and stamina you'll need for others.
8. If you sense that you or someone else could benefit from talking with a compassionate, licensed counselor, local hospitals, physicians or clergy can be excellent sources for referrals. If you're ever concerned that someone's physical, mental or emotional safety may be at risk, err on the side of caution. Seek medical support.
9. Mindfulness and meditation are gentle, yet powerful tools for stress reduction, relaxation and resilience. As much as possible, try to stay in-the-moment, releasing thoughts of the past, and of the future. Listen to the 3 soothing meditations included in **Your Present: A Half-Hour of Peace, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition Revised and Expanded** on [www.relaxintuit.com](http://www.relaxintuit.com)
10. Routine can be a great comfort. Try to go about some normal activities as much as feels right for you.

Listen to your intuition to help regain your balance as you find respite, healing and above all, Peace.

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