

## 10 Simple Stress Relief Tips for Times of Extreme Stress

© by Award-Winning Stress Relief Expert & Audiobook Author Susie Mantell

### Stress? Sleeplessness? You're Not Alone...

In times of uncertainty or disrupted routine, it's not unusual to experience some difficulty falling asleep — or staying asleep — waking exhausted, anxious and unsettled. (*Sound familiar?*) As you balance your days with gentle self-care, I hope the following will help you find mindful relaxation, restful sleep, and renewed energy whenever you need some!

**1. Put Your Body Chemistry to Work for You.** Supporting our physical wellbeing can also enhance emotional resilience. Make your attention to wellness a daily gift to yourself, and your loved ones. Get some moderate, pleasurable exercise. Even a walk around the block can boost the "feel-good factor." If you can't go out, create ways to move indoors. Gently stretch, try an online exercise class, or crank up music you love and dance! Smiling can lift your spirits *even* when you don't feel like it—*even* when you're by yourself! In times of extreme stress our concentration may be off, so pay extra attention to everyday safety.

**2. Begin to Think of The Following as "Essential Daily Nutrients:"** Fresh Air • Time in Nature • Restful Sleep • Easy Conversation • Laughter & Fun • Acts of Kindness • Music & Creative Expression • Gratitude • Movement • Meditation & Mindfulness • Journaling • Lifelong Learning • Affection • Personally Meaningful Spirituality • Healthy Nutrition & Hydration. It's easy to forget to plan meals and drink enough water—or to reach for empty carbs when we're bored, blue or lonely. Monitor your use of sugar, alcohol and caffeine, and avoid excesses.

**3. Routine Helps Us Stay Balanced.** Very little may feel “normal” right now. Try to maintain routine activities you can perform safely. Or create *new* routines based on current circumstances. Stress can be exhausting. Rest when you need to. Then get up and do something productive. Accomplishing even small tasks can boost your spirits and lift your mood.

**4. Avoid “Information Overload.” Know When to Turn Off Media and Power Down Devices.** Get as much factual information as necessary to stay safe and informed, but disregard rumors and avoid repetitive reports. Try not to let your imagination "catastrophize" when you don't have all the facts yet. Meditation is a simple, powerful stress relief tool for reducing worry. (See #10.)

**5. Is There A Safe Way To Help Someone Else?** Each moment holds opportunities to grow, to try again, to say “*Thank you,*” or “*I'm so sorry,*” or... “*How can I help?*” Make check-in calls, donate time, skills, resources or finances in safely-distant ways. We never know when a simple act of kindness that takes us 30 seconds may echo for a lifetime in the heart of the recipient.

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**6. Do You Care for Children or Other Adults?** In addition to providing for their physical and emotional wellbeing, make time every day for your own respite and renewal to ensure the strength, stability and stamina you'll need as you care for others.

**7. Schedule at Least One Pleasurable Activity, and Learn Something New Every Day.** Read something fun, informative or spiritually meaningful for you. Play a word game or enjoy some music, take an online course, paint a room, enjoy a “virtual” lunch date with a friend. Take a nap. Organize a closet. [OK. That last one’s not so much fun until afterward!] See #1 and #2 above for more ideas.

**8. An Hour Before Bed, Dim the Lights, and Turn Off Technology to Help Your Body, Mind and Spirit Prepare for Sleep.** Try a soothing bath, some light reading or upbeat TV. Counting blessings and wishing on stars, meditation, prayers and gentle conversation are some of the ways we connect with whatever’s meaningful for us... and find restful sleep.

**9. Let Friends Know You Need Them — and That You’re There for Them, Too.** Stay connected, even if it’s via text or email. Be alone when you need to be. Then reach out and reconnect. *Safety Note: If you’re ever concerned that someone’s physical, mental or emotional safety may be at risk, always err on the side of caution and seek medical support.*

**10. Mindfulness and Meditation are Soothing, Powerful Tools for Stress Reduction, Relaxation & Resilience.** The Buddhist term: “Monkey Mind” is a very apt description of our restless thoughts and mental chatter. Many various forms of meditation have been practiced throughout history and across cultures to soothe and replenish body, mind and spirit, quiet the mind, enhance resilience and reduce stress. Mindfulness, and Guided Imagery meditation, like the 3 soothing meditations I’ve included in my new stress relief audiobook, “*Your Present: A Half-Hour of Peace, 2nd Edition Revised and Expanded,*” is a easily accessible form for beginners and seasoned meditators alike, and requires no prior training to benefit—even the very first time. Just slow down, sit back and let the soothing narration carry you in deep relaxation or effortless sleep! <https://relaxintuit.com>

Whatever your personal challenges, I wish you abiding Good Health, Hope, Patience and as always, above all, Peace...  
*Susie Mantell*

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