



Simple Soothers: Simple Soothers with Something for Everyone! by award-winning author / stress-relief expert Susie Mantell

Too Many Plates Spinning?

It's time for a reality check: Not everything *important* is *urgent*. When we send that Urgent signal throughout the body-mind unnecessarily, we mobilize bio-chemical responses, releasing cortisol and other coping substances that over time, take a toll on our wellness, impact relationships and even job satisfaction. Rediscover simple relaxation amid demanding days.

Just "Plum Worn Out?"

Try Massage: Massage benefits body, mind and spirit. Listen to your body, and talk with licensed massage therapists who practice Swedish or shiatsu, reiki, reflexology or any other type of therapeutic bodywork you enjoy. Let them know about any physical conditions before you begin. A knowledgeable, experienced massage therapist can be a terrific mind/body wellness resource.

Disruptions to Your Routine?

Re-balance! When schedules are turned upside down by family illness, travel, houseguests, holidays, etc., try to maintain as much of your normal routine as possible. Get to the gym, have lunch with a friend, go to bed early enough for restful sleep. Routine helps us to keep our balance and sometimes, to keep the peace!

Big Decision?

Sleep On It. When large decisions are looming, that's not the time to make any sudden moves. Talk things over with trusted friends. Wherever possible, try to make any important decisions after a good night's sleep. If that's not possible, take a long walk and make your decision in the light of day.

Remember to "H.A.L.T.!"

Never let yourself get too H.ungry, A.ngry, L.onely or T.ired. Each of these makes us vulnerable to mood shifts, poor decisions and our bad habits.

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Muscle Tension? Aching Back?

Try Do-It-Yourself Reflexology. If you can't get to a licensed reflexology practitioner (*which is well worth the trip!*), massage some oil or lotion into your feet, working thumbs slowly up the arch. In the healing art of reflexology, this area corresponds to the lumbar, thoracic and cervical spines, respectively. Tips of the toes are sinus points, etc. Tired feet? Peppermint lotion can give you a lift. Swap with a friend and revitalize body & "sole!"

Tense Tummy?

Release Your Middle. Softly closing your eyes, exhale any old, stale air from your lungs. Now, place your hand just below your navel, inhale slowly through your nose, feeling your belly expand. On the out-breath, imagine exhaling through your rib cage all the way around. Now do the same thing, but imagine inhaling and exhaling through the kidneys (mid-low back). Deep, purposeful "belly-breathing" oxygenates the blood, helps you focus and sends a "calm" signal inside, diminishing stress so you can breathe easy.

Juggling & Struggling?

Stress is No Laughing Matter ... or is it? A case of the giggles reminds us of who we are inside when we've been acting grown up for just a little too long! Slinkys ... Silly Putty ... Remember those? Pick wildflowers, rent silly movies, color, play! A positive outlook, sense of adventure, physical activity, supportive relationships and spontaneous laughter all boost endorphins, increasing the "feel-good" factor and supporting optimal wellness of body-mind-spirit.

Got 5 Minutes and Not 1 Minute More?

R-e-l-a-x (...FAST!). First, clench your whole, entire body: fists, abs, teeth, cheeks (all four), squeeze shoulders to your ears, even curl your toes! Hold for 10 seconds. Slowly release one muscle at a time. Imagine inhaling light, peace, confidence, joy...exhaling worry, stress and tension. Repeat. (Alternate imagery: Exhale things that no longer serve you, inhaling those you'd like to bring into your life.)

Tossing & Turning?

Release Head Noise "Write Away"... Longing for the respite of deep, soothing sleep? Before bed, scribble a quick list of all that mental chatter, so you can r-e-l-e-a-s-e worries and enjoy deep, restorative sleep. Re-read it just to be sure they're all there. Place the list on your night table to address anything requiring attention tomorrow. (If worries drift back in, float them by on a raft downstream...and out of sight.) Sweet dreams!

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All Stressed Up ... And No Place To Go?

Create a "Stress-Tips Toolbox." When it comes to stress-relief, one size does not fit all. Develop a realistic personal stress-management program that works within your lifestyle, preferences and belief system. Include lots of laughter and some form of free, creative expression, healthy nutrition, pleasurable exercise, mindfulness and meditation. Gentle touch, honest relationships and personally meaningful spiritual practice can help balance tough days with something just for you.

Quick-tips for Worriers:

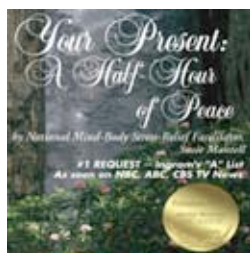
Life is short. Years ago I once met someone who releases non-essential worries by keeping a file of scribbled-down frets and obscure newspaper clippings, entitled: *"Things to Worry About When I Can Find the Time."* One day, when you find yourself with too much time on your hands, when you job's terrific, the kids are all grown, and everyone you know is healthy and happy, you can open up that file and pull out a fresh, new, genuinely far-fetched worry to keep you occupied. (source: Lisa Port-White, MA)

Bonus: On Procrastination:

"If you knew you were going to die soon and had only one phone call you could make, who would you call? What would you say? And why are you waiting?" (source: Stephen Levine)

Enjoy Lots More Free Stress-Relief Tips at www.relaxintuit.com

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