



Simple Soothers for Complex Times: 10 You Can Try Today!

by award-winning author / stress-relief expert Susie Mantell

These are complex times for people everywhere...but there is a lot we can do each day to reduce, release and manage the stress that comes our way. Whatever has led you to choose to read this article today, I wish you the strength and courage and help you will need to see you through to brighter days. As those familiar with my work will know, some of my very first suggestions to relieve stress are always to find ways to simplify, to find some comfort, care for oneself, extend a hand to others, and to renew your sense of Hope.

1. Identify the source of your stress and if possible, eliminate it. (Wish it were that simple, huh? Read on.)
2. Take a look at the roles of caffeine, sugar and alcohol in your life. "Sugar Blues" can be confused with being stressed-out, or with a common ailment known as "crabbiness." All three can exacerbate stress.
3. Utilize a variety of coping tools. Include pleasurable exercise, mindfulness & meditation, breath-work, gentle touch, mindful nutrition, counseling, journaling, play and laughter, creativity, personally meaningful spiritual practice, healthy relationships. Balance tough days with nice activities just for you.
4. Reassess goals: "Is this really necessary now? Is there an easier way to get the job done?" Explore options and discuss ways to diminish stress, ask for help, share responsibility.
5. If at all possible, reframe the problem from a more positive or productive perspective. Find something meaningful in your predicament or create meaning. (e.g. Snow cancellations? Cozy in, catch up on rest, magazines, organize closets and donate to a shelter. Loved one ill? Help out, but care for your own health too, contribute to a related charity.)
6. Find six funny things today. If you look, you'll find them. Still stuck? Try a rerun of a fun old TV show.
7. Even when things look bleak, do something kind for somebody else every single day. There is a cumulative, positive transformation that takes place when it becomes second nature to think about making someone else happy, rather than stewing. (When we do something nice, and don't tell anyone, there seems to be an even bigger personal benefit. Why do you suppose that is?)
8. When all else fails: Go to bed. Deep, restful sleep can work wonders.

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Simple Soothers for Challenging Times (That You Can Try Today!)
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9. Had a Long Day? Indulge in a "Non-Working" Bath...

(Definition: One that requires no washing, shaving, shampooing... unless you really, really want to!)

At the end of a long, hard, trying day, sometimes all there is worth doing are a bath... and bed. Try this for winding down when day is done, and you are too!

- Pour a nice hot cup of chamomile tea. Light some candles.
- Put on gentle music or a soothing meditation tape.
- Delight in bubbles and/or scented oils. Clear your head and soak. Enjoy. Just Be.
- Wrap yourself up in a fluffy chenille robe or maybe silk pajamas, and get a good night's sleep.

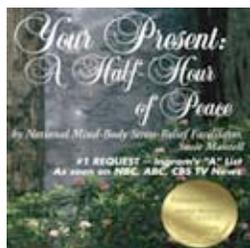
10. A Soothing Exercise to Create Inner Peace in Challenging Times

Softly closing your eyes, settle them on a far-off horizon. Inhaling gently into a soft belly, exhale as you visualize the body and home in which you would like to live. Now add symbols of the quality of life you would like to enjoy. As those images settle in... begin to visualize in your mind's eye, your community, your state, the nation and our entire planet, exactly as you would like them to be. Now imagine yourself in a comfortable, safe and happy home that you can comfortably afford, with a car in the driveway, a wardrobe and day-to-day lifestyle that allows you to live within your means. Inhale the profoundly comforting self-respect that comes with living honestly, realistically and joyfully, surrounded by people you genuinely like, and with whom you share love and laughter. In your imagery, include shared integrity and mutual goals and values that support the mental, physical and emotional health of yourselves, one another, and the greater good. Now list three steps you could take today to move closer to those ideals.

Believe in whatever it is that is good and true. Believe in yourself and in humankind, in nature and beauty and music and laughter and hope. Whether or not you practice a particular religious faith, believe in honor and goodness and the people you cherish and in the values by which you wish to live. Believe in children, and a brighter tomorrow, in possibilities beyond even your bravest dreams, and in this moment, right now. It is a gift.

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

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