



Tips for Turning Stress and Anxiety into Peace

When things keep changing and feel out of control, it is normal to feel afraid or stressed, but there IS hope and ways to turn stress into peace! Here are some tips in no particular order:

1. **Be gracious with yourself and others!**
2. **Structure your day as much as possible, keeping routines.** For example, get up and go to bed at similar times each day, following some sort of schedule. This could look like:

9-10 am	Wake up, Read Devotional, Make Bed, Take Shower, Get Dressed
10-11 am	Exercise (outside if possible)
11-12 pm	Work/School—or Contact Needed Resources, Arrange Transportation or Childcare
12-1 pm	Lunch and Call or Text a Friend or Family Member
1-2 pm	Chores—Clean and Organize Apartment or House
2-3 pm	Creative Time—Play Music, Draw, Sew, Look at Happy Pictures, Play a game
3-6 pm	Work/School or Contact Someone in Need While on a Walk
6-7 pm	Dinner
7-9 pm	Free Time/Hobby
9-10 pm	Thankful Journal and Go to Bed

3. **Limit the amount and kind of news and media you consume.** Listen to or read as much as is necessary but turn off news alerts if needed and choose the times and amount heard. Also, make sure to watch stories of HOPE as well!

4. **Keep your mind on the Lord and the good.** This takes discipline and hard work but it is possible and one of the most important ways to combat stress. It is helpful to memorize Bible verses and THINK about what they mean. Then if sleep is difficult, for example, you can think about them at that time. There are many great verses to meditate on, here are a few:

Philippians 4:4-9 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! ⁵Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. ⁶Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.⁷ And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. ⁸Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. ⁹Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

Psalm 138:7 Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve my life.

Psalm 23 The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley,^[a] I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Psalm 46:2-3 Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging.

Romans 12—all of it. 😊

It is also helpful to continually **think of things you are thankful for**, even if they seem small. For example, *thank you that we are not always in this situation, thank you it is getting warmer, thank you that you/God love all people*, etc.

5. **Be as active as possible.** Our mind, body, spirit, and emotions are all connected, and our bodies were meant to MOVE. If you start to notice things like a headache, stomach problems, tension in your neck or shoulders, it may be stress. But the good news is, you can do something about it before it gets worse! Stretching and exercising is often helpful. For example, do 20 jumping jacks, run in place, go outside and walk fast around your block, run up and down the stairs five times—get your heart rate up, and then slow down and stretch all areas of your body, including your neck.

6. **Breathe slowly and deeply** by breathing in through your nose for five seconds while expanding your stomach, then pause for five seconds and exhale for five seconds. Do this 10 times.

7. **Help someone else**—send a text, write a note, or call.

8. **Pray to the God who loves you**, is in control, and will use bad for good!
9. **Eat balanced meals, consisting of as many whole foods as possible**. This includes vegetables, fruit, protein, plenty of water, and other foods with ingredients you know.
10. **Fill your body with healthy substances** like doctor approved vitamins or probiotics or cod liver oil, avoiding unhealthy substances like alcohol, nicotine, and more.
11. **Make a list of what you can control and what you cannot control**. Through prayer, surrender each thing you can't control and do something positive about what you can control!
12. **Stay connected with others!** When you go out to the grocery store or to get things you need, as long as you're staying six feet apart, remember it's okay and good to say hello and connect with others!
13. **Laugh!** Watch and listen to things that make you laugh.
14. **Start a project**, even when you don't feel like it—clean out a drawer, cupboard or closet or do yard work—you'll feel better when you're done.
15. **Take one day at a time**. Don't think too far into the future—it will probably change anyway. 😊
16. **Learn a new skill**. In what ways can you *grow* during this time?
17. **Listen to praise and fun music**—sing along. Dance to it!
18. **Express your emotions in helpful ways**—allow yourself to cry.
19. If you continue to be stressed to the point you are having great difficulty sleeping, eating, or doing everyday things, **contact a resource** like Love Thy Neighbor (231.941.5683), a church, Adaptive Counseling and Case Management (231.715.8466), Pine Rest (231.947.2255 or 1.866.852.4001), Community Mental Health (1.833.295.0616), or the Woman's Resource Center (1.800.554.4972 or 231.941.1210).
20. **Remember** that we all are going to eventually leave this earth someday—whether it is from health issues, an accident, or something else. If we know Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, this is not the end—**we have ETERNAL LIFE in Jesus** (John 3:16).



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