

[IMAGE]

Pandemic Stress Relief

By Editorial Staff

Millions of people have benefited from some form of economic relief during the COVID-19 pandemic, and more may be on the way. But what about pandemic stress relief? Unfortunately, that doesn't seem to be a congressional priority. So, let's take charge ourselves and chart a course toward a low-stress tomorrow ... starting *today* with these great tips to minimize your COVID-19 stress:

1. *Look Beyond the Moment:* Stress can come on in an instant, but it also adds up over time. A primary culprit is often a worry or fear that seems insurmountable in the short term. COVID is the perfect example. In the short term, it's kept you indoors, away from family and friends, concerned about your health and that of your loved one; perhaps out of work, locked out of the gym and almost certainly outside of your comfort zone. *The stress solution:* Very little of the above is destined to last. Before you know it, you'll be back to a near-normal existence. So why stress about *now* when you can look forward to *soon*?
2. *Make a Plan (Even If It's for Later):* COVID-19 has taken our plans away – daily plans, weekly plans and monthly plans. Vacations, nights out on the town, fitness goals and more have been pushed to the back page. Without a plan, a goal, something to fight for or look forward to, it's too easy to get stressed. *The stress solution:* Don't let COVID destroy your plans. Yes, they've been put on hold, but keep them front of mind, and as soon as a restriction eases that impacts a plan, set it in motion. In fact, keep your plan written down, in detail (much like a To Do list, except this is a "To Do When COVID Ends" list), ready to roll. Just looking at it will make you feel better.
3. *Catch Up Instead of Falling Behind:* For everything you haven't been able to do during COVID, you've hopefully been replacing that time and energy with other things that normally fall by the wayside. *The stress solution:* If you usually couldn't find time to get to the gym, no problem: your gym is just a few steps away in your garage or basement. If you struggled to rush home from work to fix meals, working from home should have cut down on commuting time considerably. Think about all the projects you've wanted to do – but always got distracted by the allure of a social life. No problem: COVID has given you a great opportunity. Make lemonade out of the world's biggest lemon of 2020 and feel your stress levels melt away.

The great benefit of these stress-reducing tips are that they're not just effective during a pandemic; they're every-day-of-the-year tips to keep stress from controlling your life! Now that's a win-win for your health and wellness, no matter what obstacles life brings.

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