



# 10 tips to a stress-free new year!

health and wellness

By Susan Ginsberg DC Ranch Resident



Susan Ginsberg is the founder of Stop and Breathe®, a company that provides soothing and informative stress-reduction workshops teaching breathing, relaxation, and visualization techniques. She also works privately with individuals experiencing pain, stress, and anxiety or simply wanting to adopt a healthier lifestyle. For more information please visit: [www.stopandbreathe.org](http://www.stopandbreathe.org) or call (480) 388-2780

Susan and her husband relocated from Chicago and moved into their home in the 98th St Gate of DC Ranch this summer. Susan enjoys the endless hiking and biking trails in the area, the local shops and restaurants, and the warmth and friendliness of her neighbors.

*With the holidays behind us and the new year ahead – a blank slate – now is the time to learn new techniques to keep stress at bay and adopt a healthier lifestyle. Since it is impossible to avoid stress, these tips will help you cope with the stressors you face and live a more peaceful life.*

## 1. Check Your Breath

- Check in with your breathing and develop an awareness of your breath.
- Are you holding your breath? Is your breath shallow? Where is the breath traveling within your body?

## 2. Balloon Belly

- Inflate the belly slowly as if you were expanding a balloon inside of it.
- Slow down your exhalation as you deflate this 'balloon'. This is the key to getting more relaxed and calming the nervous system.

## 3. Tense/Relax

- Hold tension in your fists and then up to your arms. Then slowly release the tension.
- Repeat with your feet, legs, buttocks, and face.

## 4. Lavender Up!

- The essential oil lavender is one of the most calming scents. Studies demonstrate how our sense of smell affects our moods.
- After inhaling, dab a few drops to your wrist and neck. Place on the bottoms of your feet to help you sleep.

## 5. Make a Statement

- Inwardly state what you want to achieve whenever you feel stressed or overwhelmed, replacing a negative thought with a positive statement.
- For example, 'I am calm, relaxed, and my life is in balance.' Remember, what we think becomes our reality so state what you want positively.

## 6. Visualize Your Outcome

- Like an athlete visualizing his golf shot or free throw even before approaching the ball, visualize a positive outcome of what you want to occur when faced with an immediate stressor.
- See the obstacle being overcome and visualize how it will feel in your life.

## 7. Have an Attitude of Gratitude

- Research shows the positive effects of having gratitude in one's life.
- Experience the healing, de-stressing benefits of gratitude as you practice this technique. Families can benefit by individually expressing gratitude at shared meals together.

## 8. Get Moving!

- Walk, dance, swim, run, bike, do yoga ... just move! Exercise is a proven way to increase endorphins and people who exercise benefit from a more positive mood and lower rate of depression.

## 9. Laughter Therapy

- Read a funny book or watch a funny TV show or comedy. Not only is it enjoyable, but it also has aerobic benefits.
- When we laugh, we release stress-relieving hormones and balance the immune system.

## 10. Pocket Journal

- Keep a notepad with you and pull it out if your thoughts are overwhelming you and you are experiencing tension.
- Write whatever comes to you at the moment in a freestyle way.

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