

# Ten Tips for a Great Quarantine

By Dr Steve Stephens

In this difficult time there is much we can do to be healthy and come through this as better people, stronger couples and more resilient families. Let's all make the best of this and see what God can do! Here are a few ideas that I use to encourage my clients:

## **Be Active:**

Too much passivity or sitting increases our stress. And high stress makes us irritable, impatient, negative and easily ticked off. Get up and move. Walk together, exercise together, explore your neighborhood. Keep moving. This calms your mind and keeps your body healthy.

## **Play a lot:**

It is easy to get bored when we feel trapped. Try new games, new activities, new binge worthy series. Start a new hobby. Novelty adds excitement and rejuvenates your relationship. Laugh together and add lightheartedness to your day. The world is far too heavy right now.

## **Keep social:**

With today's technology we can keep in contact with friends, family, church and those we have lost contact with. We need people in our lives especially in difficult times. Create Zoom or FaceTime groups for Bible Studies, book groups, accountability or just the fun of it. Also meet in backyards, patios, wherever you can maintain social distancing.

## **Be nice:**

Kindness and encouragement is especially important in times of difficulty. Give your spouse and family grace. Avoid areas of conflict until life gets back to normal. Compliment each other and recognize all we have to be thankful for. Try Shaunti Feldhahn's [30 Day Kindness Challenge](#).

## **Limit the news:**

It is easy to get sucked into watching the news and getting absorbed in collecting more data. We want to figure out what's going on. But the news is so negative, conflicting, overwhelming and redundant that it pulls us down. Check it out once a day, and then move onto something positive.

## **Watch out for addictions:**

Alcohol and cannabis purchases are up 30-40%. We are overeating and spending much more time on our screens. Binge on-line shopping, gambling

and porn are at all-time highs. Stress draws us into addictions. But these activities only increase our stress, undermine our relationships and create conflict.

## **Create a schedule:**

Many of us have lost the patterns in our lives. But we need structure and predictability. Slack of structure can lead to chaos, stress and depression. Set up a time to wake-up, eat meals, go for walks, play games, go to bed, etc. Also set up family time, couple time, fun time, neighborhood time, shopping time.

## **Build memories:**

We are going to look back on the pandemic of 2020 and consider how we survived it. We can use this to build great memories. Do special things for each other. Try something you've never tried before. Create couple and family events. Review great memories from the past.

## **Reach out to encourage other:**

Doing random acts of kindness is crucial in these times. Help out neighbors, call old friends you haven't connected with in years, give out baked goods to those you know, go grocery shopping for those who can't, send cards, give bigger tips to those who help you, say thank you a lot more. There are thousands of people you can encourage.

## **Reset our lives:**

This pandemic has forced all of us to slow down. It has given us an opportunity to reassess and reconfirm our priorities. This is our chance to build relationships, stretch our minds, manage our emotions and deepen our faith. We all need to consider what we can do to make ourselves better people, better spouses, better parents and better Christians.

As we deal with challenging times I go back to St Paul's words to the Philippians, "Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus."

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