



# SUSAN DAVIES MUSIC

STUDIO NEWSLETTER

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WINTER 2021-2022

## Greetings!

I hope this newsletter finds you well and not too crazed in the midst of the winter holidays!

Caring for our bodies and voices shouldn't be a seasonal endeavor, but it's certainly easier to lose our balance during the winter months. Consider this newsletter a sampler platter. Maybe you're looking for new ways to care for your voice, or you're looking for some stress management strategies to get you through the holidays. The good news: singing is proven to boost your mood! A quick glance to the right will offer you the two studio discounts this winter, available through January 2nd. I'm looking forward to working with you in the new year!



## STEALS & Deals

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### Option 1:

Refer a friend, and you both get 10% off your next lesson!

### Option 2:

Book 4 Lessons, get 20% off the 5th Lesson!

## Caring For Your Voice

For many of us, the holiday season can mean a disruption to our usual routines. Whether you are traveling, hosting guests, talking over loud background noise, eating rich foods, or staying up late to watch the ball drop, it's still important to care for yourself at the most basic levels. For me, sleep and hydration are the first to go around the holidays, and I have to be extra attentive to make sure I'm replenishing my body.

Set reminders on your phone, or ask a trusted friend or family member to keep you accountable. Are you hydrating? Sleeping? Resting your voice between bouts of raucous merriment? Your body is the instrument you live in, and it will become stronger and more resilient through cycles of both use AND rest.

## Managing Stress

You don't need this newsletter to know that stress increases around the holidays. While we can't always eliminate *stressors* (the things that activate our stress response), we can affect our *stress* (the neurological & physiological shift in our body when we encounter a threat). I highly recommend the book "Burnout" by Emily & Amelia Nagoski for more on this subject!

1) **Investigate:** What does stress feel like to you? Where do you feel it in your body? How do you know when you are stressed? Putting words to your experience is a powerful first step to addressing stress in YOUR body.

2) **Move:** Simple movement can expel excess energy created by the fight-flight-or-freeze response and help your muscles relax. Try rolling your shoulders, gently stretching, going for a walk, dancing to your favorite song, or shaking out your hands.

3) **Nose-breathing:** Breathe in and out through your nose. Among other benefits, this helps rebalance your nervous system, filter air, and slow down your heart rate.

4) **Complete the Stress Cycle:** The Nagoski sisters name 6 evidence-based strategies that help your body (not just your brain) know that it is safe. **Breathing** (deep, slow breaths), **positive social interaction** (say hello to your cashier!), **laughter** (big belly laughs), **affection** (try the 6-second kiss or 20-second hug), **crying** (go close the door and sob), and **creative expression** (music, drawing, painting, sculpting, storytelling, etc.).

Move in ways that make your body feel good. Move your body in ways that are free from pain, strain, or compensation.

## Holidays, Reflux, and the Voice

Dietary changes around the holidays, while delicious and festive, can sometimes have an effect on the voice. An uptick in rich foods, alcohol, and late-night eating can result in acid reflux, a condition in which stomach acid moves up into the esophagus. The most common symptom of reflux is heartburn, though one doesn't need to experience heartburn in order to have reflux. Other symptoms might include changes to your voice, the sensation of something being stuck in your throat, sour stomach, or chronic throat clearing.

### Practical Ways To Manage Reflux:

1) Eat smaller meals more often throughout the day, rather than a few large meals.

2) Limit your intake of carbonated beverages, caffeine, alcohol, and spicy foods...not always possible around the holidays! Pick and choose your favorites :) The biggest reflux culprits are often tomato sauce and caffeine. Peppermint may also be a trigger for you, as it causes a relaxation of the sphincter muscle between your stomach and esophagus.

3) Avoid lying down after eating.

4) Try not to eat within 2-3 hours of going to sleep. When you do go to sleep, prop yourself up on pillows, rather than lying down flat.

**ASK YOUR QUESTIONS! WHAT MUSIC-RELATED TOPIC ARE YOU DYING TO KNOW MORE ABOUT? LET ME KNOW, AND I'LL INCLUDE IT IN THE NEXT NEWSLETTER!**