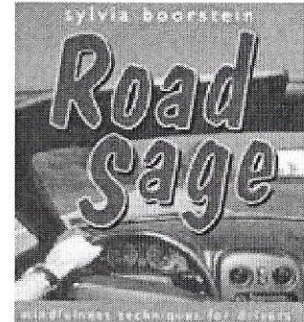


Stress Reduction While Driving

We spend so much time driving mindlessly. Or, perhaps we experience “Road Rage” – our own or another’s. *Road Sage*, an audio program available on CD or on tape, is meant to be listened to in your car as you drive. It is about meditation techniques that don’t require closing your eyes. The instructions are designed to help you stay alert and relaxed as you encounter the everyday challenges of driving: sleepiness, boredom, irritation with other drivers or agitation about perhaps being late. The instructions are presented along with entertaining stories.



Driving can be done mindfully. Some tips to do so follow.

1. Notice what is happening in your body: Are your shoulders tight or your jaw clenched? Are you gripping the steering wheel tightly or for life?
2. Take a deep breath and relax throughout your body from your head to your toes.
3. Breathe deeply and be aware of your breath. Breathe from the belly.
4. Notice your surroundings. You might even say “tree,” “bridge,” etc., identifying and naming your surroundings as a way to be more present in the moment.
5. Use positive self talk - if running late make the most of it and use the time to nurture and show compassion toward yourself so that when you arrive at your destination you will be more present and ready for your meeting, family activities or work.
6. Turn off the news if it upsets you, and turn on relaxing, peaceful music.
7. Sing! It is difficult to be uptight or upset when singing a song you like and enjoy.
8. Avoid multitasking, such as by eating, applying make-up, reading a map, fiddling with the radio, searching for a CD or using an ipod or cellphone while driving. Pull over or wait until you arrive at your destination to tend to these tasks.
9. Be non-reactive to the driver that cuts in or tailgates. Just follow the stream of traffic and let the annoyance dissolve without stoking it.

10. Besides using proper car seats and seatbelts, make sure children are settled, and that they know the rules and have something to occupy them before you start. If there is too much noise or chaotic activity, pull over to help settle things down. Plan ahead for stopping as needed to accommodate the needs of everyone in your vehicle.