

Self-Care During COVID-19

"This pandemic experience is a massive experiment in collective vulnerability. We can be our worst selves when we're afraid, or our very best, bravest selves. In the context of fear and vulnerability, there is often very little in between because when we are uncertain and afraid our default is self-protection. We don't have to be scary when we're scared. Let's choose awkward, brave, and kind. And let's choose each other."

Brené Brown

Hello!

This activity book is meant to guide your self-care practices as we get through COVID-19 together. Use all of these practices or only some of them. It is up to you.



Your Feelings are Valid

COVID-19 is unlike anything we've experienced. It's okay to feel emotions like anxiety, fear, frustration, restlessness, and confusion. Uncertainty around COVID-19 and its impacts can be scary. We can get through this with self-compassion.

Let's show ourselves empathy, kindness, understanding, and love.

Self-Compassion Exercise

Think about a time when a friend came to you feeling bad about themselves. How did you respond?

Now, think about a time you felt bad about yourself. How did you respond?

Did you notice a difference?



Establish a Rockin' Routine

Practicing social distancing can throw off the way we usually do things. Establishing a daily routine can help create predictability, a sense of control, and improve our mental health.



Ideas!

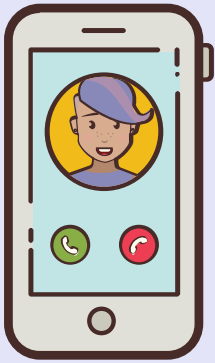
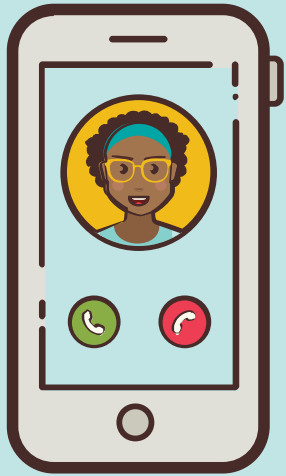
Start every day with the same activity, like a 15-minute walk or making your bed.

Eat meals around the same time every day.

Have a “bed time”.

Plan regular times to go grocery shopping, check your mail, and run errands.





Connect with Others

As humans, connection with others is essential to our well-being. Many of us are feeling the effects of social distancing.

List three people who you can call, text, videochat, or write this week:

✨ Tips on Staying Connected ✨

- Use technology, like Facetime, Zoom, or Skype! This can give us face-to-face time and can help maintain or strengthen relationships.
- Schedule times to have phone or video calls with the people in our lives.
- We can even have virtual meals or parties together!
- Apps like Houseparty or GamePigeon can be used to play games and hang out with friends or connect with coworkers.

**“Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries.
Without them humanity cannot survive.”**

The Dalai Lama

Let's get through this time together. We're doing such a great job already!



Self-compassion Check-in!

Think of a situation in your life that is difficult, that is causing you stress. Call the situation to mind (and write it down here):

See if you can actually feel the stress and emotional discomfort in your body. Where do you feel it?

Now say to yourself...



“

"This is a moment of suffering. I am feeling stress."

(This is mindfulness!)

"Suffering is part of life. I am not alone."

(This is recognizing humanity!)

(Place your hand over your heart.)


"May I give myself the compassion that I need.
May I be kind to myself."

”



Don't Forget to Breathe

During times of stress and anxiety, our bodies feel it. Our breathing often becomes shallow, our muscles become tense, and our heart rate increases. To return our bodies to a state of relaxation, try deep breathing.



Put your hand on your stomach. Inhale for 4 seconds, hold for 4 seconds, and exhale for 6 seconds. As you inhale, your stomach should expand. As you exhale, your stomach should fall. Take it slow and be kind to yourself if you aren't able to exhale for 6 seconds. It takes time.

Check out these apps!



Headspace
Insight Timer
Calm
ReWi
Shine

Stop, Breathe & Think



**Listen to
your body.**



Limit Information Intake

Having access to constant streams of information can sometimes feel overwhelming. Consider blocking off time in your day to intentionally disconnect from the media.



You can do this by:

- Putting your phone on *do not disturb*.
- Doing a social media cleanse or turning off your news alerts.
- Setting a timer for designated hours that you want to watch, read, or listen to news outlets.
- Filtering certain words and phrases on your social media.

Keep Your Mind Occupied

Keeping busy and helping others can distract from uncertainty and help you regain a sense of control.

Some things you can do during this time include:

- Organizing your cabinets and drawers.
- Doing a puzzle.
- Helping someone with their homework remotely.
- Completing the census.
- Donating blood.
- Making face masks for local organizations.



Take Care of Your Body & Mind

Staying healthy doesn't mean just practicing good hygiene. Think about some routines you can adopt to help yourself feel rejuvenated, fresh, and calm.

Need Suggestions?

- Eat foods that are high in nutrients and vitamins.
- Track your water intake.
- Reduce caffeine and/or alcohol consumption.
- Find an obscure item in your pantry and look up recipes containing that item.
- Take a relaxing bath or try a new soothing scent in your home.
- Learn or do a "hands-on" skill or craft. Sometimes keeping your hands busy helps realign your thoughts and your body.
- Play "brain games" like Sudoku, crosswords, or word-searches.
- Connect with a therapist. Many are currently offering virtual options.



List one thing you will do to care for your mind:

List one thing you will do to care for your body:





The Trauma Center Trauma Sensitive Yoga (TCTSY) is offering free online trauma sensitive yoga classes during the COVID-19 pandemic. Check out their Instagram @TCTSY

Move Your Body

Staying active helps to refocus your body and mind. Using and teaching your body new things can help reduce stress and anxiety, as well as boost energy and improve brain function.

Here are some ideas to keep moving!

- Stream online workout videos.
- Take a walk or ride your bike.
- Do some gardening.
- Watch dance instructional videos and learn a new move!
- Adopt a yoga practice. Remember this is also a good time to practice mindfulness and deep breathing.
- The healthiest way to have sex during COVID-19 is with yourself! Masturbation is a great way to explore your sexuality.



Express Yourself

The great thing about art and expression is that it can be done using all types of materials.

Get creative!

Here are some ideas!



- Start or continue a DIY project.
- Sing your favorite song!
- Practice a new cooking recipe - or create one!
- You can write, draw, paint, color, dance, play music, or however your creativity shines through!
- Start a journal! Whether you record your whole day or just jot down your feelings, this may be a good way to keep track of your thoughts.

Use this space to doodle!

