

## PRACTICING SELF-CARE DURING COVID-19

The Coronavirus has created a difficult and uncertain situation that the whole world is experiencing collectively. Many of us are feeling the impact of increased stress, adapting to major changes in our lives, and worry for ourselves and loved ones. These stressors are temporary, though we will need to manage them for an unknown period of time. Practicing good self-care during this time is important in maintaining resilience while experiencing these added stressors. However, adhering to social distancing recommendations may have you feeling limited from your usual self-care habits and feeling stuck as to how to best take care of yourself. Here are some ideas to help you think about self-care during this time!

### Start a Routine

You may be experiencing changes to many of the things that previously gave your day some structure (e.g. having to go into work or co-op, getting to class), which can make it difficult to organize your time. Try to maintain some structure by creating your own daily routine. Here's an example you can work off of!

### Stay Productive

You may be feeling a lot less busy these days, especially if your work is closed or co-op is delayed, or you're just spending less time traveling from one place to another. It's helpful for us to do something that feels productive each day, even if it's small. Here's some ideas:

- Clean/de-clutter/organize your space
- Go through your closet and sort out clothes to donate
- Go through that box of photos and make an album
- Make a list of recipes you'd like to try
- Learn a new hobby or revisit an old one
- Learn about a subject you've always been interested in
- Write a hand-written letter to someone you love
- Clean up your computer or phone
- Plan a vacation for the future

#### Example Daily Routine

##### 8 am - Wake-up

Shower, put on something that will make you feel good today

##### 9 am - Breakfast

##### 9:30 am - Meditate/Exercise

Check out some of the virtual classes being offered locally and by the Rec Center

##### 10:30 am - Reach out and connect

Check in with someone you care about

##### 11 am - Work on something productive

Studying for a class, catching up on emails, organizing your apartment, learning something for fun

##### 1 pm - Lunch

Take a walk outside, find a bench to enjoy your lunch and take in the fresh air (while practicing social distancing!)

##### 2 pm - Return to your productive work

Finish up that project or take a break and work on something else!

##### 4 pm - Catch up on news/social media.

Try to limit your news/social media consumption to a finite amount of time to avoid feeling overwhelmed and plan a positive activity for afterwards.

##### 5 pm - Watch something light

An episode of a favorite show, funny youtube videos, some stand-up comedy

##### 6 pm - Dinner

##### 7 pm - Connect socially

Plan a regular video-chat with a friend or group of friends, try watching a movie virtually with a friend or family member, play an online game with a friend.

##### 9 pm - Wind down activity

Take some time to do something relaxing and enjoyable for yourself (e.g. coloring/drawing/painting, playing or listening to music, working on a puzzle, reading, looking up recipes to try)

##### 10 pm - Start your bedtime routine.

Having a ritual before bed can help with getting a good night's sleep. Take a shower/hot bath, practice some deep breathing or gentle stretching, journal or read (avoid electronics!)

##### 11 pm - Bedtime.

Having a hard time sleeping? Try some white noise or relaxing music. If you're still awake in 20-30 minutes get out of bed and do a relaxing activity for 10 minutes and then try again.

*Committing to an entire daily routine feeling too difficult? That's ok! Try starting by brain-storming a list of positive activities you'd like to be doing more of, and just pick one thing from the list to accomplish for the day.*

### Maintain the Basics

Similar to the challenge of maintaining a daily routine, this might feel like a difficult time to maintain some basic healthy habits such as eating 3 balanced meals, getting some physical activity, and keeping a regular sleep cycle. However, focusing on these basics can be a helpful way to start structuring your day as well as making sure your basic needs are met. Try spending some time looking up recipes you'd like to learn and meal-planning, look into the different ways you can exercise while practicing social distances (take a look at some of the virtual classes being offered by the Rec Center!), try to go to bed and wake-up around the same time each day (even if you can afford to sleep in, keeping a regular sleep cycle will help your quality of sleep).

# Practice Relaxation

While maintain a healthy lifestyle will help manage stress, there are also specific exercises you can try to increase relaxation during times of increased stress. Many of these exercises take some practice in order to experience the benefits, so try not to feel discouraged if you don't notice a big difference right away. Try picking one and practicing it once a day for week. Here are some examples, but there are also many free apps and youtube videos that can teach you more!

## Deep Breathing

Inhale - Count to 4  
Hold - Count to 2  
Exhale - Count to 6  
Hold - Count to 2  
Repeat

## Progressive Muscle Relaxation

This exercise involves systematically tensing and then relaxing one muscle group at a time.

## Focusing on 5-Senses

Choose one thing you find soothing for each sense: Listen to relaxing music, smell a calming scent, look at a peaceful picture, etc.

# Disconnect

Many people are feeling glued to the news and social media during this time, but also finding that this leaves them feeling drained and overwhelmed. If it feels important to you to stay updated and informed, try to keep it to a finite amount of time per day and plan a positive activity for afterwards. If you can, avoid starting or ending your day with news/social media, as this can set a stressful tone for your day or your night.

Have scheduled time every-day that you reach out to a different friend or family member

You know that old friend you've been meaning to reach out and reconnect to - now's the time! Check in and ask how they're doing

Plan a regular group chat with some friends

Try a virtual game night

Watch a movie with friends virtually

Join an online community

Check out some virtual support groups

Reach out for support when you need it - check out [drexel.edu/7cups](https://drexel.edu/7cups)

# Connect!

Social distancing might mean keeping a physical distance from one another, but it does not have to mean socially disconnecting from others. Think creatively about ways that you can stay connected to your loved ones and your community during this time!

Schedule a telehealth session with a therapist



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Counseling Center

Reach out to [counsel@drexel.edu](mailto:counsel@drexel.edu)