

Wellness During Times of Crisis

This current crisis brings us an opportunity to focus on our attention on **wellness and self-care**. Self-care is a set of planned and deliberate actions that you take daily or weekly to manage your stress, and to create and re-create a feeling of wellness. Self-care is a way of being our best and managing stress. Self-care activities are what you do to get well, feel well, and stay well. Caring for yourself is as important as caring for others!

Here are some practical ideas and resources we hope are helpful for you. We encourage you to share them with your families and friends.



Pause, Breathe, Move, Nourish, & Sleep

Pausing, breathing, and moving are things you can do right now. Additionally, you can nourish your mind and body. Sleep and rest may be much harder to regulate right now but, by practicing pausing, breathing, and moving, you may find it easier to get a restful sleep during these challenging times.

The COPSA Institute here at Rutgers UBHC developed this wonderful self-care guide for professional caregivers and individuals using services that can be very useful at this time. For the website, go to <http://www.care2caregivers.com/self-care/>

For an introduction to these self-care strategies, Rutgers UBHC staff may participate in a series of four live webinars offered in April, on either Tuesdays or Thursdays from 4:00-4:30.

Emotional Wellness & Kindness

It is important to be kind to yourself and others. Take time to check in with your physical and emotional weather as you go through each day. Notice how you are feeling—don't judge it as good or bad. Just be aware. Notice your thoughts. Are you being kind to yourself?

You can find some thoughts on kindness and gratitude online. Here are some great options:

- The Mental Health Foundation is part of the national mental health response in the UK, and is providing support to address the mental health and psychosocial aspects of the Coronavirus outbreak. Visit <https://mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/looking-after-your-mental-health-during-coronavirus-outbreak>
- Start a daily gratitude list. Get a head start on your own list by watching this: Brother David Steindl-Rast at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zSt7k_q_qRU
- Find additional resources in the Emotional Wellness Kit at <https://www.nih.gov/health-information/emotional-wellness-toolkit>

Keep engaged in doing activities that are relaxing or productive. You can find many ideas (some serious and some silly) by googling “things to do while stuck at home.”

Set up your **sleep environment** to support deep and restful sleep. Organize your evening routine so you get to bed and wake up at the same time each day. Find more sleep tips at www.sleep.com and search for an online guided relaxation for sleep.

Yoga videos are becoming quite popular for people isolating at home. Try these options

- <https://www.youtube.com/user/yogawithadriene>
- Yoga for sleep (yoga nidra): <https://insighttimer.com/jenniferpiercy>

Stay **socially connected** throughout the week, with co-workers as well as friends and family.

- Contact someone you haven’t seen in a while and arrange a phone catch up
- Tell someone you know why you are thankful for them
- Arrange to watch a film at the same time as a friend and video call
- Send a motivational text to a friend or family member
- Offer support to vulnerable neighbors

Take a 5-minute **self-compassion break**. Check out www.self-compassion.org

Be kind to yourself with **wellness self-care affirmations**.

- ♥ I am filled with strength, courage, energy, and patience
- ♥ I care for myself physically, with rest, physical activity and nourishing food
- ♥ I care for myself spiritually, with a sense of purpose and peace
- ♥ I care for myself socially, with strong relationships
- ♥ I care for myself intellectually, with an openness to learning and sharing knowledge
- ♥ I care for myself emotionally, with recognition of my and others’ feelings
- ♥ I care for myself occupationally, with activities that are meaningful and rewarding
- ♥ I care for myself environmentally, with calming, and uplifting surroundings
- ♥ I care for myself financially, with knowledge and care for my financial wellbeing
- ♥ I open my heart with gratitude and compassion for myself and all others

A handwritten-style phrase in black ink that reads "be good to yourself". The text is written in a cursive, flowing script.