

# Tips to Reduce Stress During COVID 19

Most of us are experiencing a transition that is way out of our comfort zone. Many of us are now working and attending school from home and our kids are also home using online school. The transition to staying home 24/7 is not easy! Below are some tips that may support you and your family during this stressful time.

One of the first things you need to do is practice self-care. When you take care of yourself, you are better able to take care of your loved ones. It is like the airplane instructions for the oxygen mask. Before you help someone else, you must first put on your own oxygen mask. In the same way, during this time you have to help yourself before you can help others.

## Turn off the news

If you want updates on the Coronavirus pick certain times during the day to tune into the news to check the up to date information. Decide on one news station that you trust and only watch from that station. The rest of the day, stay off the news. The more you watch the more anxious you may become.

## Focus on the positive

The power of positive thinking is a popular concept, and sometimes it can feel a little cliché'. The benefits of positive thinking has been demonstrated by many scientific studies, but how do you do it?

You can define positive thinking as positive imagery, positive self-talk or general optimism. Below are a couple of concrete ways to focus on the positive.

*Start the day with a positive affirmation.* How you start the day can set the tone for the rest of the day. So if you consciously start your day off with a positive statement; that can go a long way towards having a more positive mind set all day long. [Affirmations for Anxiety](#)

*Focus on the good things.* However small, if you can find the positive in the situation, that will help to offset the negative. For example: normally you had to commute or drive thru slow traffic to come to school. Now with remote learning, you no longer have to spend the extra time for the commute to school and so now you get to sleep later.

## Practice moments of gratitude

People who regularly practice gratitude by taking the time to notice and reflect upon the things they are thankful for experience more positive emotions, feel more alive, sleep better and express more compassion and kindness.

The best way to reap the benefits of gratitude is to notice new things you are grateful for every day. A gratitude journal can help with this. By slowly changing the way we perceive situations we adjust what we focus on. When you use a gratitude journal it helps you to stretch yourself beyond the every day stuff right in front of you and opens your eyes to more of the world around you. This can deeply enhance your gratitude practice. You can make it a game with your family to come up with 2-5 new things every day that you are thankful for. Write them down and add to them every day and see how your perception changes.



## Move your body

Being a couch potato during this time of working and learning from home will not be helpful. You need to plan activities that will get you up and moving. Exercise can improve your mood, energy levels and sleep quality. Physical activity can be good for your psychological well-being. It decreases stress hormones and increases endorphins- your body's "feel good" chemicals- which gives your mood a natural boost.

Physical activity can help take your mind off your problems and redirects it to the activity at hand. It can also provide a buffer against stress and increases your feelings of confidence and contentment.

Below are some fun ways to increase your physical activity and put a smile on your face!

[Mr C The Slide Man - Cha-Cha Slide \(Official Video\)](#)

[Have a Blast With This Family Fun Cardio Workout!](#)

[1 Mile Happy Walk \[Walk at Home 1 Mile\]](#)

## Yoga exercises

[Yoga for Stress Relief - 7 minute Practice - Yoga With Adriene](#)

[Morning Yoga for Beginners - Gentle Morning Yoga - Yoga With Adriene](#)

[Self Quarantine Yoga: A Relaxing 30 Minute Chair Yoga for Everyone](#)

## Practice Relaxation

When you are feeling stressed your body knows it. Your muscles tense and your mind races. Take some time during the day to sit down and practice relaxing your body. It only takes 10-20 minutes, but the effects can last much longer. Remember the more you practice, the better your body will be able to relax.

[Relaxation Techniques](#)

[Guided Progressive Muscle Relaxation Meditation](#)

## Stay connected

During this time of social distancing, you can still keep in contact with others. You just have to adjust the way you stay connected.

It is important to stay connected with friends, family and co-workers during this time of stress and uncertainty. We are all feeling overwhelmed and isolated so we really need these connections even more now than ever. Here are some ways that you can stay connected while still practicing social distancing.

Phone calls- reach out to family and friends. Just pick up the phone and call to hear the sound of their voice. This would be a great time to reach out to old friends that you may not always talk to. Reach out and catch up.



Video chat- if you have internet connection and a cell phone you can connect thru Face Time, Google Chat, Zoom or Skype. In this way you can hear and see your friends and family. You could even set up a game night or meet online with your friends or family while you are cooking dinner.

App games- there are app games that you can invite other to play such as Words with Friends and Draw Something. You can explore games that allow you to interact and play with others online.

Join an online discussion group or book club- if you can't find one that you are interested in already set up, you could start your own. Invite your classmates, friends and family to discuss positive topics or find a book and invite others to read it and then discuss it online or thru video chat.

These are just a few things that you can do to help keep yourself in good mental health while we are going through this time of turmoil. If you need to talk to someone, please reach out to the Student Success Center and we will be happy to talk with you and share more resources if needed. You can reach us at 864-941-8356.

