

A Checklist for De-Stressing during Covid 19

You are in a unique and very challenging time. It is natural to feel like this during the global pandemic of Covid19 and all its ramifications. Acknowledge your feelings and recognize that it is not weak or shameful to feel anxious. This is important and helps in handling these upsetting emotions.

Please realize that everyone is experiencing various degrees of anxiety and stress during this plague. You may be having a lot of overwhelm or just enough to keep you worried all day. This is normal.

1. Because this is a new place for all of us, it is best to stay aware of how it is really affecting you. Yes, I am just going to focus on you and how I can help you cope. I am assuming that you are following the CDC's guidelines for wearing a mask, practicing social distancing and washing your hands always. Centers for Disease Control website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/>
2. Stay in touch with loved ones, friends and colleagues. During this time of being home bound or socially distancing, it is more important than ever to stay in touch with others and keep your social support network strong and authentic.
3. Both the news and social media can be filled with misinformation and a constant barrage of upsetting images and words. Carefully choose where you get your news and what you scroll through on social media. These can fill your head with pictures you would rather forget and waste your time. Overexposure to the media can be detrimental. You can stop the inundating constant news feeds. Just limit your time spent on it so you can keep up to date with the news but certainly not radically depressed by it.
4. It is important to identify what is really worrying you now. Please write a list. Some of your worries may be unfounded and can be crossed off. Others may be valid and you need to find a solution. When you are in control of a situation, you feel much better. You can control the food you are eating. Be mindful that it is organic and as fresh as possible. Write out how you can be in control of those situations you can control, ie: finishing the work project before the deadline, how to keep the kids reading, where to go for a walk, what to make for dinner. There are also situations that are out of your control and you need to know how to cope with these. Meditation, journaling, exercise are excellent methods. You may also like to read, bake bread, watch tv. Recognize the coping mechanisms that work

for you and you will feel better afterwards. Whatever you choose, use them on a regular basis so that they can really help you get through this!

5. Here are some specific self-care tips to have in your toolbox and do while at home to keep your positivity up and the stress hormone cortisol down.
 - a. Start your day doing a mindful meditation with breakthrough breathing. Practice this each and every day. 5-10 minutes
 - b. Set intentions for your day before you check your phone.
 - c. Journal if you like to write and express how you truly feel.
 - d. Take extra care of yourself, ie: self-massage, good teas, aromatherapy, music you like.
 - e. Turn off your phone before you enter your bedroom to go to sleep. You can read before bed. You can even end your day with a meditation or journaling.
 - f. Do some kind of exercise each day. If you can go outside safely run, swim, walk. Inside the house you can also walk, do weights, yoga, tai chi. There are lots of workouts online. All of these can release the happy hormones of endorphins which make you feel great.
 - g. Decluttering is like destressing. Clean your home and get rid of those items, ie: clothing, books, papers you no longer need.
 - h. Keep up with a routine. This will help you feel more normal.
 - i. Get dressed each day.
 - j. Watch comedies, laugh as often as possible. Learn jokes and tell them. Do deep belly laughs.
 - k. Take advantage of all the virtual sites that offer amazing visuals and stories, ie: museums, parks, wildlife
 - l. Be grateful. Write down 3 things, emotions, ideas, people that you have gratitude about each day.