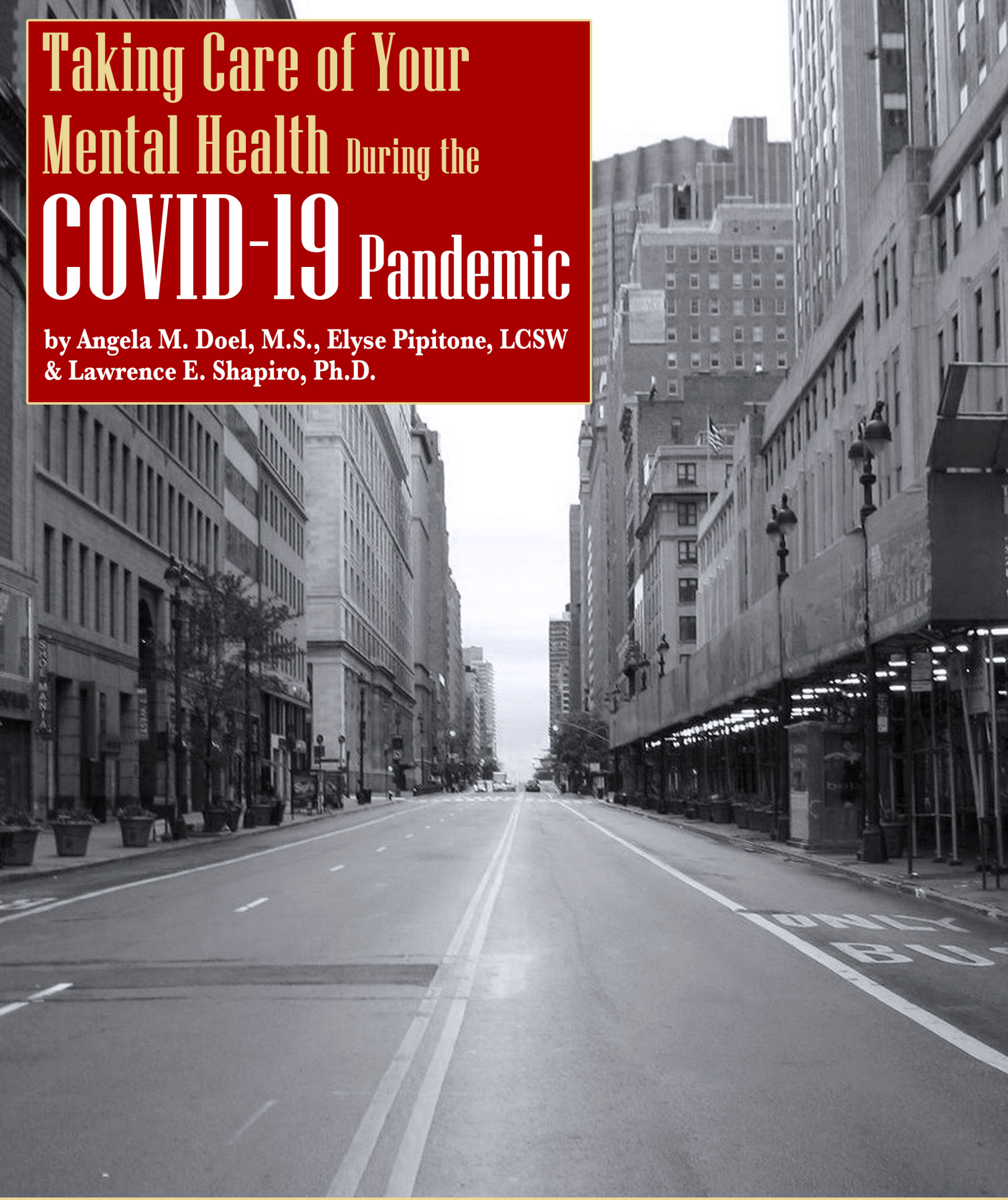
Taking Care of Your Mental Health During the COVID-19 Pandemic

by Angela M. Doel, M.S., Elyse Pipitone, LCSW
& Lawrence E. Shapiro, Ph.D.



Worksheets to Improve Your Mood and Address Problems & Symptoms
Worksheets to Increase Your Resiliency

Taking Care of Your Mental Health During the COVID-19 Pandemic

An Interactive Workbook

By Angela M. Doel, MS, Elyse Pipitone, LCSW,
& Lawrence E. Shapiro, PhD

Between Sessions Resources, Inc.
Norwalk, CT

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Disclaimer: This book is intended to be used as an adjunct to psychotherapy. If you are experiencing serious symptoms or problems in your life, seek the help of an experienced mental health professional.

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About the Series

Taking Care of Your Mental Health During the COVID-19 Pandemic is part of a series of workbooks designed to give therapists and their clients easy access to practical, evidence-based psychotherapy tools.

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Introduction

How to Use This Workbook

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a worldwide health crisis as well as a worldwide mental health crisis. Medical professionals have made clear what we need to do to protect ourselves from the health risks of the coronavirus: keep six feet away from others, wash our hands frequently, avoid touching our faces, wear face masks and gloves in public, and so forth. However, what people should do for mental health issues is not really clear. This workbook was written to help you understand the many ways the pandemic can affect your mental health, and it offers practical tools and solutions to deal with problems before they become too serious.

There are some general practices for well-being that psychologists always recommend. These include getting enough sleep, engaging in daily physical activity, having a healthy diet, and taking time every day to practice meditation or other relaxation techniques. However, when it comes to dealing with how the pandemic is affecting every aspect of our daily lives, mental health problems become much more serious for almost all of us, and we need to reach deeper into our knowledge of how best to treat them.

The first section of this workbook deals with specific problems you might be experiencing as a result of the way the pandemic has affected you. Some of these are likely issues you grappled with in the past. Psychologists know that acute or prolonged stress can reactivate long-standing problems you may have dealt with during your life, such as using alcohol to deal with upsetting thoughts and feelings, losing your temper with others, or struggling with depression and anxiety. Other issues may feel new and even catch you off guard. It would be highly unusual if you were not experiencing at least some depression and anxiety at this time. The important thing is to not let the current problems you are experiencing spiral out of control and add yet another problem area to your life.

Look through the Table of Contents and see which worksheets in Section One pertain to psychological problems you are currently experiencing. Take your time completing the relevant worksheets and applying them to your daily life. You might also find worksheets that can help your friends and family, and you should certainly consider sharing these.

The worksheets in Section One will get you started toward working on specific problems, but it is important to note that change is never easy, and this is even more true when your life has been turned upside down by something as upsetting as the COVID-19 pandemic. So, if you need more help, please reach out to a mental health professional practicing online therapy. Almost every mental health professional around the world is now working with people using video streaming, and studies have shown that this method of therapy can be just as effective as seeing a professional in an office. If you are going through a crisis or experiencing a mental health emergency, you can also find various national hotlines listed in the Appendix. Many states and communities also have hotlines set up for people experiencing mental health challenges related to the pandemic. Don’t hesitate to reach out for help if you are in crisis.

In Section Two, you’ll find worksheets that will help you develop twenty-two resiliency traits. Resiliency is defined as our capacity to survive and thrive and live a happy and fulfilling life despite

extreme stress. Some people are naturally more resilient than others, but every one of us can become more resilient with a little practice. We suggest that you fill out all the worksheets in this section carefully, thinking about which resiliency traits you already possess and which ones you can develop to help you through this difficult time.

It is my hope that this workbook will help you and those you care about get through these difficult times.

Stay safe and be well,

Lawrence E. Shapiro, PhD
President, Between Sessions Resources

Dedication

This book is dedicated to the tens of thousands of mental health professionals who devote their lives to the well-being of others.

Section One: Addressing Pandemic Problems and Symptoms

Is Coronavirus Anxiety Triggering Your Mental Health Issues?

As the coronavirus (COVID-19) continues to spread in the US, anxiety and apprehension are spreading as well. The ability to cope with overwhelming thoughts and feelings can be increasingly difficult during times of uncertainty.

Extreme stress can trigger many mental health problems—even ones you think you might have conquered. The following checklist can help you determine whether your concerns about the coronavirus are triggering emotional distress.

Check off any of the following statements that currently describe what you are experiencing.

Since learning about the coronavirus:

___ I have increased the frequency and/or intensity of my alcohol or illegal substance use.

___ I am taking more than my prescribed dosage of medication for anxiety, depression, etc.

___ I am sleeping significantly more/less than usual.

___ I am eating significantly more/less than usual.

___ I am unable to concentrate or pay attention at work or when doing tasks at home.

___ I am more worried, anxious, or depressed than usual.

___ I feel overwhelmed and hopeless.

___ I feel alone and isolated.

___ I am argumentative or confrontational with my friends and family.

___ I have increased my self-injury activities (for example, cutting or burning myself).

___ My cravings for alcohol, drugs, food, or other addictions have increased significantly.

___ I have stopped attending to my personal hygiene.

___ I am spending a significant amount of time reading or watching the news.

___ I am engaging in risky behaviors (substance use, unsafe sex, etc.).

___ I am no longer experiencing pleasure from activities that I always enjoyed.

___ I am considering suicide or seriously harming myself.

Note: If you are in immediate crisis and need help, call 9-1-1, your therapist, or the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255.

___ Other symptom or problem _____

___ Other symptom or problem _____

___ Other symptom or problem _____

___ Other symptom or problem _____

If you checked off any of these statements, your mental health might be impacted by fear and anxiety related to the coronavirus pandemic. To seek help and support, contact your therapist or other health care professional. If you need to find a therapist, try a directory like Psychology Today's 'Find a Therapist' search. If you are looking for an online therapist, try BetterHelp.

Additionally, mental health websites such as the Anxiety and Depression Association of America or the American Psychiatric Association can provide factual and accurate information and advice.

Dealing with Mental Health Problems Created by the Pandemic

You Should Know

It is normal to feel anxious when things are so uncertain and your daily routines have been dramatically altered. However, if your emotions become overwhelming and you are unable to function, it might be time to seek support.

Not only are pandemics a health care dilemma, but they also affect mental health and cause general upheaval, disruption, and fear. For instance, as increasing numbers of people panic and hoard food and supplies, you might worry about being unable to feed or protect your family. Job loss might cause financial difficulties leading to depression, hopelessness, or anger. Fears about cleanliness could lead to compulsive behavior. Anxiety about COVID-19 exposure can lead to an acute fear of leaving your home.

These are just some of the pandemic-related situations that might cause debilitating fear and worry. This worksheet will help you articulate any mental health problems you might be experiencing, and ways you can discuss your symptoms with your therapist or other health care provider.

What to Do

Check off the symptoms you are experiencing for the first time, or more intensely, since the coronavirus outbreak.

___ Intense anxiety

___ Intense fear

___ Considerably decreased or increased appetite

___ Nightmares

___ Change in sleeping habits (insomnia or sleeping all the time)

___ Shortness of breath or rapid heart rate

___ Panic attacks

___ Noticeable changes in energy and activity levels.

___ Physical reactions, such as headaches, body pains, stomach problems, or skin rashes

___ Constant worry or rumination about worst-case scenarios, including death

___ Relying on alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs to cope

___ Emotional detachment, numbness, disbelief, or disorientation

___ Hopelessness or helplessness about the future

___ Feeling a lack of purpose in school or work

___ Difficulty concentrating, focusing, or making decisions

___ Crying for what seems like no reason

___ Extreme preoccupation with information about the outbreak

___ Increased irritability, anger, or aggression

___ Thoughts of suicide or self-harm.

Note: If you are thinking of hurting yourself or killing yourself, call 9-1-1 or the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255.

Your therapist or counselor can provide support and resources to help you and your family cope with these overwhelming feelings. It might feel uncomfortable for you to ask for help and express your thoughts and emotions. These suggestions can help you prepare for a conversation:

• I have been feeling anxious/hopeless [*mention any other feelings*] recently because of the coronavirus pandemic.

• I am especially worried about [*mention your concerns/issues*] and how I am reacting to them.

• This situation has been affecting my [*health/sleep/relationships/etc.*].

• I would like to get help because: _____.

• I have never had therapy before, and I am nervous/apprehensive about: _____

_____.

• You can support me the most by: _____.

What other things would you like the therapist to know? Add them here:

_____

_____

_____

Reflections on This Exercise

What are the biggest challenges about discussing your mental health?

_____

_____

_____

What changes would you most like to see as a result of speaking to a counselor?

_____

_____

_____

Dealing with Depression

You Should Know

The coronavirus pandemic has undoubtedly caused abrupt changes in your daily life, disrupting your sense of stability, structure, and control. Even routine activities you once took for granted, such as grocery shopping, working out at the gym, or meeting a friend for coffee, have been disrupted. This time of uncertainty, combined with social distancing measures, might cause you to feel isolated, lonely, or depressed.

If you are already living with a current or past diagnosis of depression, this situation can feel even more overwhelming. The stressful life changes and losses caused by the COVID-19 pandemic can trigger or exacerbate depression symptoms like despair, helplessness, and hopelessness.

Check off any of the following symptoms of depression that have recurred or increased since the coronavirus outbreak:

___ Decreased or increased appetite

___ Changes in energy and activity levels

___ Problems sleeping, such as insomnia or nightmares

___ Difficulty staying awake during the day or the desire to stay in bed all day

___ Physical reactions, such as headaches, body pains, stomach problems, or skin rashes

___ Relying on alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs to cope

___ Emotional detachment or numbness

___ Hopelessness about the future

___ Lack of purpose

___ Restlessness or irritability

___ Difficulty concentrating or making decisions

___ Crying for what seems like no reason

___ Feeling helpless or overwhelmed

___ Thoughts of suicide or self-harm

Note: If you are thinking of hurting yourself or killing yourself, call 9-1-1 or the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255.

What to Do

Although the situation can feel overwhelming, it is important to acknowledge it is temporary and things will slowly return to normal at some point. These suggested strategies can help you manage your depression during this time:

Identify resources that can provide assistance and support. Think about the friends, family, clergy, health care providers, and others you trust who can support you when you are depressed. Reach out to the people in your life who make you laugh or smile when you are feeling down.

Write down their names and contact information here.

_____

_____

_____

Get help from a professional. If you already have a therapist, continue your treatment virtually using teletherapy. If you need to find a therapist, visit SAMHSA's National Helpline, or call 1-800-662-4357 for a local referral to low- or no-cost services. You can also text the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) crisis line 24/7 by texting 741741.

Additionally, there are several online psychotherapy providers such as BetterHelp or TalkSpace.

Connect to your social networks on Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Twitter, and other social media. Which social media platforms do you find most helpful for resources, advice, and inspiration?

_____

_____

_____

Move your body. Physical activity is important for your physical and mental health. The CDC encourages everyone who can safely go outside to enjoy fresh air (with safe distancing from others, of course). Taking a walk, going on a run, riding your bike, or walking your dog around the neighborhood can improve your mood and your energy level. If you prefer to exercise indoors, try working out to an online video, dance to music you enjoy, or use your own exercise equipment (treadmill, weights, etc.).

Which types of exercise do you enjoy, or would you like to start?

_____

_____

_____

Stay connected with video conferencing. Video conferencing using platforms like Zoom, FaceTime, or Skype have become the new way for people to socialize. While these platforms are not the same as seeing people in person, they give you the experience of interacting with people in real time. You can schedule regular meetings with friends and family, join support groups, and even have a virtual "happy hour" with coworkers.

How can you use video conferencing to connect with people?

_____

_____

_____

Center yourself. Meditation, deep breathing, and relaxation exercises can help you feel calm. There are many apps and videos to guide you through short but effective meditations and breathing exercises. Listening to music or lighting scented candles may also help soothe your body and mind. As you sit quietly, you might find that thoughts and feelings begin rising to the surface, which is normal. When this happens, it is important to acknowledge your emotions without judgment. You can say "I feel sad" or "I am lonely."

What methods have you used in the past to center yourself, or which would you like to try?

_____

_____

_____

Keep busy. Participate in activities that provide fulfillment, accomplishment, or simply distraction. These can range from projects like home repairs and decluttering a closet, to actions done for sheer enjoyment, like coloring, scrapbooking, binge-watching your favorite series, or working on the Great American Novel. Have a good laugh by watching a silly comedy, a comedian's standup routine, or some funny videos on YouTube or Facebook.

What activities are most effective in providing fulfillment, accomplishment, or distraction?

_____

_____

_____

What other strategies have you tried in the past to elevate your mood? List them:

_____

_____

_____

Now, choose three strategies to try for the next week. It may be helpful to ask one or more of the supports you identified above to offer encouragement, motivation, and accountability. List your selected strategies here:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Use this chart to rate the severity of your depression before and after you engage in your selected strategies. Use a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 = not depressed at all, and 10 = severely depressed; unable to function. Use the Notes column to share your observations about your experiences.

Date	**Depression level before (0–10)**	**Strategy**	**Depression level after (0–10)**	**Notes**

Reflections on This Exercise

Which strategies did you find most effective in reducing your depression? Explain:

_____

_____

_____

Which resources and people did you find most supportive? Explain:

_____

_____

_____

Describe any other ways you discovered to cope with your depression.

_____

_____

_____

Managing Uncertainty

You Should Know

Almost everything about the coronavirus pandemic is uncertain: how many people will be affected, how much the economy and job market will be impacted, and how soon things will return to "normal." Uncertainty can cause feelings of extreme discomfort. You might try to avoid uncertainty by watching the news for up-to-date information, but this can actually increase your level of fear and anxiety, and distract you from completing daily tasks. Uncertainty might also lead to focusing on worst-case scenarios, which will interfere with your ability to solve problems or make decisions.

While uncertainty can be frightening, panic and worry are ineffective methods of preparing for unforeseen events. And consider this—elevated levels of stress can actually compromise your immune system, making you even more vulnerable to illness.

What to Do

These suggestions can help you manage uncertainty during the coronavirus pandemic. First, think of a time you successfully handled uncertainty, and then answer these questions:

What was the situation?

_____

_____

_____

How did you react?

_____

_____

_____

What strengths and skills did you tap into?

_____

_____

_____

To whom did you reach out for support?

_____

_____

_____

What did you learn about yourself from this experience?

_____

_____

_____

Next, focus on things you can control during this pandemic, such as steps you can take to protect yourself. These include:

- washing your hands frequently
- avoiding touching your face
- staying home as much as possible, even if you feel well
- avoiding non-essential shopping and travel
- practicing social distancing by staying at least six feet away from others in public
- supporting your immune system by getting enough sleep and eating well
- following recommendations from official health agencies like the Centers for Disease Control and the World Health Organization

What other ways to protect yourself are within your control?

_____

_____

_____

Now, consider things you can address in your daily life, like helping your child with homework, creating a meal plan, organizing a group online chat with extended family, or using a mindfulness app to stay calm and focused.

What are some things you can solve, change, or control in your daily life?

_____

_____

_____

Uncertainty, like change, is one of the few things we can count on in life. While the level of uncertainty caused by the coronavirus pandemic is unprecedented in our lifetime, the reality is this situation will eventually end, and life will go on. It might be helpful to comfort yourself with statements like, “I can get through this,” or, “This is really hard, but I’ve overcome challenges before.”

What are some affirmations, meditations, or words of wisdom you can use to help you get through this difficult time?

_____

_____

_____

Write down the names of friends and family members you can count on for emotional support or a good laugh:

_____

_____

_____

Reflections on This Exercise

Which activities were most effective in helping you manage uncertainty?

_____

_____

_____

Are you better able to manage feelings or thoughts associated with uncertainty? Explain:

_____

_____

_____

What to Do When You Worry Too Much About Your Health

You Should Know

You have probably seen characters on TV and in movies who are considered hypochondriacs, or people who worry excessively about their health even though they have no actual physical problems.

But worrying about your health all the time is no laughing matter. Hypochondria affects about one in twenty Americans. This type of worrying can be part of an anxiety disorder and, paradoxically, worrying about your health can actually cause physical symptoms that can make you feel worse and cause more worry. Many people with hypochondria constantly seek reassurance from doctors that they are not dying of a fatal disease. Often, even a physician's reassurance does not diminish the worry, as chronic hypochondriacs then worry the doctor is missing something, thus creating more stress—which can become a vicious cycle. Others avoid going to the doctor at all because they want to avoid hearing bad news. But the worry persists.

Chronic worrying about your health and even about your death are just a flow of thoughts and, in reality, have no special power over you. In this worksheet, you can explore different strategies to overcome this problem.

What to Do

Review the list below and put a checkmark next to the items that apply to you. Then, describe your current experience.

___ I worry that any physical symptoms or sensations are a sign I have an illness.

___ I frequently see doctors to seek reassurance my symptoms are not serious or catastrophic, only to be told either nothing is wrong or the problem is not serious.

___ I use the Internet and social media groups to research and ask about physical symptoms.

___ I constantly check my body, wondering if something is wrong.

___ I seek other people's validation or reassurance about my health.

___ I avoid going out for fear of catching an illness or being exposed to germs or toxins.

___ I don't tell anyone about my worries because they tend to laugh at me or downplay my concerns, which makes me feel even more anxious and alone.

Describe your experience in further detail:

_____

_____

_____

When did you first start worrying about your health? _____

Do you have a family history of people with anxiety about health or physical concerns? _____

How might your family history or messages you heard growing up support your worries?

_____

_____

_____

What are the consequences of your chronic worries about your health (for example, avoiding people, irritating people, missing school or work, not fulfilling your goals, and so on)?

_____

_____

_____

Rate your level of motivation to make changes regarding worrying about your health: 0 = not motivated, 1 = somewhat motivated, 2 = moderately motivated, 3 = highly motivated: _____

If you rated yourself 0 or 1, what would help you become more motivated to change?

_____

_____

_____

Below are steps you can take to reduce worries about your health. If you find your ability to participate in normal daily activities is seriously affected by your health worries, please seek professional help.

Schedule a proper medical exam. If you tend to avoid seeing doctors, schedule a complete physical to properly assess your current health and rule out a medical reason for your symptoms.

Choose one doctor rather than jumping around to many. They can come to know you and your history and help you manage your symptoms. Be honest with your doctor about your worries and fears.

Educate yourself about physical symptoms to learn that certain bodily sensations you think are dangerous or fatal are not necessarily indications of an underlying illness.

Avoid the Internet. A minor symptom, such as a headache or stomachache, can yield scary results. If you habitually search for symptoms, consider setting a goal of cutting back over time and eventually eliminating symptom searches.

Stop checking yourself repeatedly by taking your temperature, measuring your blood pressure, or taking your pulse. Focus on something outside of yourself and your body. Give away or dispose of any medical devices that are not doctor prescribed.

Find a support group of people who share similar worries. Exchange information and coping strategies in order to feel less alone.

Exercise. Moving your body can help you manage stress, depression, or anxiety. You can keep it simple—going on a short walk or taking a bike ride—or do something more active such as rowing, swimming, hiking, or mountain climbing. Your overall health will improve as a result of regular exercise.

Practice telling yourself you are fine.

Meditate or practice deep breathing to calm yourself.

Examine the evidence for your fear. Is it actually true? Might there be another way to look at the symptom? Treat your thoughts and worries as a "habit" that are keeping you from having a pleasant day. This takes time and consistent practice to work effectively, so be patient.

Reflections on This Exercise

What did you learn from this exercise?

_____

_____

_____

Referring to the recommendations above, what are you willing to try?

_____

_____

_____

Whom can you ask for help for your health worries?

_____

_____

_____

Are You Really Sick?

You Should Know

You might get sick once in a while, whether it is a minor cold or something more serious like influenza. Usually a few days in bed is enough to feel better; sometimes you might need a trip to the doctor. But if you worry about each ache and pain and wonder if you have a serious illness, you might have something called health anxiety. For example, you might have a headache and worry it is a brain tumor. Or you might have a stomachache and wonder if it is appendicitis.

It is much more likely physical signs you experience are not symptoms of a life-threatening illness, but are normal body sensations. Ironically, the stress and worry you feel about your health can make your symptoms increase and worsen. This constant worry can also contribute to trouble sleeping, loss of appetite, and difficulty concentrating.

Put a check next to any of these signs of health anxiety that describe you:

___ I worry any physical discomfort I have is a sign of a serious illness.

___ I am always checking myself for any sign of illness.

___ I frequently visit the doctor.

___ I take my temperature every day.

___ I think about and talk about my health constantly.

___ I often find lumps no one else can feel.

___ I am afraid to be around people who are sick.

Describe any other experiences you have that may be a sign of health anxiety:

_____

_____

_____

Sometimes people develop physical symptoms because they are anxious or worried. If you are stressed, you might develop stomach issues, including nausea and diarrhea. You might experience real physical symptoms that develop from excessive worry and anxiety.

Have you ever been so worried or anxious about something it made you physically ill? Describe:

_____

_____

_____

What to Do

Your thoughts and worries about illness are just thoughts. They are not a sign something is actually wrong with you. However, if your worry actually causes you illness, or your health anxiety gets in the way of your enjoyment of life, you should ask for help. Here are suggestions for managing your worry:

- Avoid online searches based on your symptoms. The Internet will always come up with several scary "diagnoses."
- Find activities you enjoy to distract you from thinking about your symptoms all the time.
- Try stress management and relaxation techniques.

Use this chart to track your health worries. Rate how likely a diagnosis is, with 1 = least likely, to 10 = most likely.

Symptom(s)	What is the diagnosis you fear?	How likely is this to happen? (1–10)	What could be another cause of your symptom(s)?

Reflections on This Exercise

Describe the physical signs you experience that are normal body sensations, not symptoms of life-threatening illnesses.

_____

_____

_____

What activities can you engage in to reduce worry about your health?

_____

_____

_____

Whom can you ask for help for your health worries?

_____

_____

_____

Managing Anger and Irritability While Stuck at Home

You Should Know

Staying at home during the coronavirus pandemic may cause you to feel cooped up and frustrated. While it is normal to experience anger and irritability under such circumstances, you or your family members might lash out at each other as tempers flare and patience fades.

It is helpful to keep in mind that irritability and anger are common among people experiencing stress and uncertainty. Stress exacerbates irritability, and both stress and anger can negatively impact your physical and emotional health.

Here are some strategies your family can use to manage anger and reduce stress:

Exercise. The Centers for Disease Control and other experts encourage families to remain active and get outside for fresh air. Take a long walk, jog, ride bikes, or shoot hoops to burn off energy. A change of scenery can improve your mood and interrupt anxious or angry thought processes.

Journal or write down your thoughts and feelings. Express yourself on paper. Younger children can draw or paint.

Use your hands to be productive or creative. Cook, tinker with your car, make home repairs, knit, or do scrapbooking. Younger children can use building blocks or other creative toys.

Meditate or practice deep breathing to calm down. There are many apps and videos to guide your family through brief but effective meditation and breathing exercises.

Call a friend. Share your frustrations with someone you can trust to listen without judgment. Your children can FaceTime with their friends.

Take a "timeout." This can be as effective for adults as it is for children. Take short breaks away from the family during stressful moments–a short walk, hot bath, or just reading a book in a room by yourself.

Have a good laugh. Watch a lighthearted movie or play a game together as a family.

Practice relaxation skills. Listening to music can calm your body and mind, or help you "dance out" your energy. Light scented candles or other aromatherapy products with soothing properties.

Avoid getting "hangry" (angry because of hunger). When hungry, you and your family might have shorter fuses or overreact to situations that normally would not upset you. Have a snack or meal to replenish your blood sugar levels.

Add your family's ideas here:

_____

_____

_____

What to Do

Choose at least five activities from the list you and your family will do over the next week to manage anger, stress, and irritability.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Use the following chart to record your family's activities for one week. Take note of which family members participated in the activities, and their moods before and after. In the Notes column, share your observations about the experience.

Date	Activity	Participants	Mood before	Mood after	Notes

Reflections on This Exercise

What activities did you feel were most effective?

_____

_____

_____

Did you and your family notice a change in anger, stress levels, or irritability after engaging in the activities for one week? Explain:

_____

_____

_____

What other activities would your family like to try to manage anger and irritability?

_____

_____

_____

Decreasing the Strain on Your Relationship

You Should Know

Even the healthiest relationships are experiencing strain during the COVID-19 pandemic. If you are sheltered in place or quarantined, you are certainly spending more time with your partner—perhaps more than ever before. While it is great to have support and comfort when you are facing these difficult times, the stress may also increase the likelihood for arguments and confrontation. When physical and emotional space is limited, even trivial complaints and disagreements can get blown out of proportion. Your partner might bear the brunt of your anxiety, anger, and upset.

A study published in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* found that relationships exposed to high stress for long periods of time become strained, regardless of how strong each partner's relationship skills are. The study recommended that each partner identify ways to successfully manage stress so they can bring their best selves to the relationship. Additionally, you can identify the positive aspects to being cooped up with your partner. More time together means more time to focus on your relationship, reconnect, and increase intimacy—working together as a team to cope with these distressing and uncertain times.

What can you do to decrease the strain on your relationship? Here are some suggestions:

Voice your needs clearly and kindly by remaining calm and resisting the temptation to blame. Pause throughout the day to reflect on how you are feeling and what you need.

Listen with respect, patience, and kindness. Identify common ground. Reveal your vulnerability and fears to each other, and soften your stance to stay connected. Schedule thirty minutes each day to focus on your relationship—avoid talking about the pandemic or tomorrow's plans. Discussing "what ifs" can increase anxiety and fuel fear, leading to more conflict.

When things get heated, take time to calm down. Identify when you are stressed and take a step back. When you are upset, it is normal to resort to less healthy ways of coping and expressing yourself. You might become irritable, critical, short-tempered, or tearful. You might even snap at your partner or overact to minor misunderstandings. Instead, express how you are feeling and explain that you do not want to say anything you will regret later.

Express gratitude.

Take care of yourself and tend to your own needs. Nurture yourself and your body by getting enough sleep, exercising, eating well, and maintaining strong relationships with family and friends (virtually or by phone). Even incorporating small habits like meditating each morning for five minutes, doing a ten-minute stretching video before bed, or taking two minutes to write in a journal will be helpful.

Create separate workspaces. If possible, work in different rooms. Use noise-canceling headphones to focus on your tasks. If you have kids, designate "shifts" for childcare and household tasks.

Have your own time and space away from your partner and kids. You each may need to escape to a quiet spot at different times. It might be helpful to plan breaks from your partner, and time to spend together, to avoid hurt feelings.

Plan a project together. The more accomplished you feel as a team, the more connected you will feel. Identify household tasks you can tackle together.

Rekindle romance. Re-create "date night" at home with candles and soft music, savoring a quiet dinner after the kids have gone to bed.

Make small gestures to brighten your partner's day.

Respect differing coping styles. You and your partner most likely cope with stress in very different ways. You might be calm and levelheaded, while your partner is anxious or high-strung. Your differing styles can balance each other out—the more grounded partner can offer humor, while the anxious partner can ensure that health and safety guidelines are in place. View the situation from your partner's point of view and limit your judgment of how he or she copes.

Add your own ideas:

_____

_____

_____

What to Do

Referring to the list above, write down things you can do to decrease the strain on your relationship.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Now, answer the following questions and complete the chart on the following page.

What are some ways that you and your partner's coping styles complement each other?

_____

_____

_____

Where do you most enjoy spending time alone?

_____

_____

_____

What are some of your favorite self-care activities?

_____

_____

_____

What emotions do you most frequently experience when stressed?

_____

_____

_____

Write down at least three of your partner's traits or characteristics you are grateful for during this stressful time:

_____

_____

_____

What are some ways you can express gratitude to your partner with words or actions?

_____

_____

_____

For the next week, try a few of the activities to decrease the strain on your relationship, and track how they affect your ability to cope. Notice the impact on your relationship.

Activity or technique	How I felt afterward	How it affected my ability to cope with stress	Impact on our relationship
Expressed gratitude to my partner for his sense of humor	*Even more grateful*	*Put things into perspective; I felt less stress.*	*My partner appreciated it when I expressed my gratitude.*
Did some journaling about my anxiety over being cooped up at home	*Felt really good to get things off my chest*	*I included ideas for problem solving and immediately felt some relief.*	*I shared my ideas with my partner.*

Reflections on This Exercise

How did this exercise help improve your relationship with your partner?

_____

_____

_____

What did you learn about yourself or about your partner that surprised you?

_____

_____

_____

Describe any change in the strain on your romantic relationship. If it decreased, what activities will you continue to engage in to ensure you are effectively coping with stress? If it didn't, what can you do differently?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Managing Your Mood While Observing Social Distancing

You Should Know

The COVID-19 pandemic has undoubtedly caused major disruptions in your life. If you normally relieve stress by going to the gym, shopping at the mall, or getting together with friends, you might feel isolated and lonely while adhering to social distancing. Without access to your usual coping tools, it might be more difficult to manage stress and control your mood while experiencing sometimes high levels of distress.

Social distancing is counterintuitive to your basic need for connection with other people. This connection not only soothes your nervous system but also strengthens your body's defenses to stress. The forced separation due to the pandemic might increase your distress and anxiety as you become more focused on yourself and perceived threats around you.

This worksheet suggests ways to track your moods and cope with them in positive ways during social distancing. Please contact your therapist or doctor if your distress is interfering with daily functioning.

What to Do

There are a number of things you can do to cope with stress and manage your moods in healthy ways, while observing social distancing. Check off any of these activities that appeal to you:

____ Connect with friends or family members via email, by phone, or on an online platform like Zoom or FaceTime.

____ Share your concerns and feelings with someone you trust.

____ Play board games or complete a jigsaw puzzle with family.

____ Play with your pet.

____ Take advantage of free virtual fitness coaching or exercise classes.

____ Go for a walk, run, or hike.

____ Practice deep breathing or meditation using an app or online video.

____ Journal, write poetry, or express yourself through arts or crafts.

____ Cook a healthy meal or special treat.

____ Take an online class or watch an instructional video through EdX, Coursera, or YouTube.

____ Attend online virtual museum tours, live streams of concerts, and other free entertainment.

____ Start a project you have been putting off, such as reorganizing the basement, painting a room, or completing a do-it-yourself home repair.

____ Attend services at houses of worship via streaming services and online videos.

Add other ideas here:

_____

_____

Now, select at least three activities from the list you plan to do over the next week to manage your mood when feeling distress related to social distancing. Write them down here:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Use the following chart to track your mood before and after engaging in a healthy coping activity. Schedule at least one activity each day.

Healthy coping activity	**My mood** (before the activity)	**My mood** (after the activity)

Reflections on This Exercise

Which activities were most effective in positively impacting your mood?

_____

_____

_____

Describe how your moods and/or stress levels were impacted by scheduling daily activities:

_____

_____

_____

Describe any obstacles or challenges you faced while doing those activities:

_____

_____

_____

What can you do to overcome those challenges?

_____

_____

_____

Protecting Yourself from Anxiety Contagion

You Should Know

It is normal to experience anxiety during the coronavirus pandemic, especially when there are still so many unknowns and our lives seem to change day-to-day. However, many people find their anxiety levels are getting out of hand, and they have a difficult time dealing with anything else.

Studies suggest that negative emotional states are contagious, much like the virus. The more you are exposed to panicky and anxious people, the more anxiety you are likely to experience. Fortunately, studies also find that positive emotional states are also contagious. Being in the presence people who are calm, confident, and positive can reduce your fear and anxiety. This is especially true when you are around positive people who are authority figures, or people you depend on and respect.

What to Do

You can fight the effects of anxiety contagion by spending more time with people in your life who make you feel comforted, safe, and calm—or just make you laugh.

Write in the names of people like this below, and also note how you will communicate with them (for example, face-to-face, by phone, or by video chat).

My supports	How I will communicate with them

If you cannot name any personal supports, consider watching webinars and videos that offer encouragement, calmness, and reassurance. Personal development websites and apps like Sounds True, Shambhala Publications, Head Space, and Simple Habit are all offering free courses and meditations to help people navigate through fear and anxiety.

Write down some resources you plan to explore:

_____

_____

_____

Additionally, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that you limit the time you spend watching the news, reading headlines online, and visiting social media sites. Hearing about the pandemic constantly will serve to increase your anxiety, fear, and feelings of helplessness. Here are some suggestions for reducing your exposure to news and screen time featuring pandemic-related information:

- Limit your viewing time of coronavirus pandemic news. For instance, if you usually watch the news or read headlines several hours a day, try reducing that to one or two scheduled times a day—and ideally, not at bedtime.
- Unsubscribe from media alerts and "breaking news" on your phone and email.
- Pick a single news source you trust.
- Turn your phone off while sleeping.
- Look for "feel good" stories that highlight the kindness, creativity, and problem-solving abilities of people around the world. For example, you might follow "Tanks Good News" or "The Good Life Project" on Instagram.

Add other ideas here:

_____

_____

_____

Reflections on This Exercise

Which activities were most effective in dealing with anxiety contagion?

_____

_____

_____

After one week of limiting news related to the pandemic and exposing yourself to positive people or online resources, what improvements have you noticed in your anxiety level and mood?

_____

_____

_____

What else can you to do to reduce your anxiety related to the pandemic?

_____

_____

_____

Creating a Family Schedule to Maintain Structure and Routine

You Should Know

Families are currently experiencing drastic disruption to their normal routines and activities because of the coronavirus pandemic. Children are staying home from school, and some parents are working remotely, while others are temporarily laid off. Creating a household schedule can be an effective way to maintain structure and routine during this time.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, one effective way to help children learn from home is to create structure through consistent routines and rules. Routines teach children what to expect throughout the day. Consistent routines help family members reduce their stress and anxiety by providing predictability during a highly unpredictable time.

What to Do

Create a household schedule along with your family. This schedule will be most effective if all family members are involved and engaged in its creation, including suggesting activities and diversions. A family schedule might include a regular learning schedule for kids and teens, as well as a consistent daily routine for adults working remotely or staying home. Break your day into sections for work/school, exercise, household chores, creativity, TV/screen time, and bedtime. For example, for a family with two children (ages ten and thirteen) with one parent working from home, a schedule might look like this:

Time	Activity for kids	Activity for adults
8:00 a.m.	Wake up	Wake up
9:00–9:30 a.m.	Breakfast	Exercise (jog, walk, fitness video online)
9:30–10:00 a.m.	Exercise (walk dog, ride bike)	Breakfast
10:00–Noon	Schoolwork	Work remotely
Noon–12:30 p.m.	Lunch together as a family	Lunch together as a family
12:30–1:00 p.m.	Chores (laundry, wiping down surfaces)	Work
1:00–2:00 p.m.	Schoolwork	Work
2:00–2:30 p.m.	Afternoon break (walk dog, ride bike, take walk)	Afternoon break (walk dog, ride bike, take walk)
2:30–5:00 p.m.	Schoolwork	Work

5:00–5:30 p.m.	Creative time (writing, drawing, crafts, baking)	Dinner prep
5:30–6:30 p.m.	Family dinner and cleanup	Family dinner and cleanup
6:30–8:00 p.m.	TV/electronics	TV/electronics
8:00–10:00 p.m.	Wind down for bedtime (no electronics); read, puzzles	Wind down for bedtime (no electronics); read, puzzles

Now, create your own schedule.

Time	Activity for kids	Activity for adults

Try this schedule for a week or so, and keep track of feedback from family members. Some elements of the schedule may need to be tweaked.

Reflections on This Exercise

Does the schedule fit everyone's needs? Explain:

_____

_____

_____

What parts of the schedule work best? Why?

_____

_____

_____

What parts of the schedule need to be changed? What changes can you make?

_____

_____

_____

In what ways did the creation of a family schedule provide routine and consistency in your home?

_____

_____

_____

What other steps can you and your family take to maintain structure and routine at home?

_____

_____

_____

Keeping a Schedule

You Should Know

You might be experiencing drastic disruptions in your normal routines and activities because of the coronavirus pandemic. You might be working remotely for the first time, or have temporarily or permanently lost your job. During uncertain times, new routines create familiarity and help you rediscover your sense of self—regardless of the changes and unpredictability around you. Establishing a schedule is also an effective way to create a routine and provide a sense of calm and order.

As you create a schedule, it might be helpful to break down your daily activities into segments. Consider these daily tasks:

Sleep. Aim to go to sleep and wake up at the same times you did before the pandemic.

Work. If working from home, build in time for breaks away from your desk or workspace.

Meals. Eat meals at regular times, and create plans to help you eat healthy, well-balanced meals. If you regularly dined at restaurants in the past, consider takeout or delivery.

Exercise. It is important to maintain your exercise regimen as much as possible. If you previously went to the gym, investigate online workouts. Get outside for a walk or run. If you have not exercised regularly in the past, now is a great time to start moving your body to relieve stress.

Clean. The CDC recommends cleaning and disinfecting your home's surfaces and door knobs regularly during the pandemic, especially after returning from the grocery store or pharmacy.

Recharge. Make time for enjoyable activities, such as writing projects, crafting, listening to music, streaming movies, gardening, or baking.

To balance your responsibilities and your self-care activities, consider the following:

- Engage in activities that make you feel like yourself—especially any elements of your pre-pandemic routine. For instance, if you typically exercised and showered before leaving for work, continue to do that while working from home.
- Add activities that make you feel useful and productive—such as volunteering at a food pantry to deliver food. Reach out to friends and family who feel lonely and vulnerable. Make household repairs, declutter, or "spring-clean" your home.
- Schedule leisurely activities—such as reading books (consider joining a virtual book club), learning a new skill (the Boston Symphony Orchestra offers free online music lessons), taking a class, or catching up on a TV series.

What to Do

Review this example of a weekday schedule for someone who is working remotely, and someone who is not currently working.

Time	Activity (Person working from home)	Activity (Person not currently working)
8:00 a.m.	Wake up	Wake up
9:00 a.m.	Exercise (jog, walk, fitness video online)	Exercise (jog, walk, fitness video online)
9-9:30 a.m.	Breakfast	Breakfast
9:30-Noon	Work remotely	Household projects and errands (grocery store, pharmacy)
Noon–1:00 p.m.	Lunch	Lunch
1:00–2:30 p.m.	Work	Reach out to friends and family by email, phone, text, or online chat; engage in supportive and uplifting social media activities.
2:30–3:00 p.m.	Afternoon break (take a walk, answer personal emails)	Take a walk
3:00–5:00 p.m.	Work	Volunteer, hobbies, or art projects
5:00–6:00 p.m.	Dinner, cleanup	Dinner, cleanup
6:00–8:00 p.m.	TV and electronics; communicating with friends/family	TV and electronics; communicating with friends and family
8:00–10:00 p.m.	Wind down for bedtime (avoid watching/reading the news); TV, reading, puzzles, hobbies	Wind down for bedtime (avoid watching/reading the news); TV, reading, puzzles, hobbies

Make copies of the following blank chart for each day of the week to create your own schedule.

Time	Activity

Try your schedule for a week or so, and keep track of how you feel at the end of each day.

Reflections on This Exercise

What was the easiest part about maintaining this schedule?

_____

_____

_____

What was the most challenging part?

_____

_____

_____

What parts of the schedule need to be adjusted? What changes can you make?

_____

_____

_____

How did you feel after following your schedule for a week?

_____

_____

_____

What changes did you notice in your mood or productivity?

_____

_____

_____

In what ways did the creation of a schedule provide routine and consistency in your life?

_____

_____

_____

Exercising at Home

You Should Know

As the coronavirus continues to spread throughout the US, many fitness facilities have closed. Even if your gym remains open and takes extra precautions by disinfecting equipment and surfaces or reducing class sizes to help members practice social distancing, you might not feel comfortable going to a public place to exercise.

Cabin fever and inactivity tends to exacerbate fear, worry, and anxiety. You might even begin to feel depressed. Regular exercise can help you feel better in a number of ways. During exercise, your brain increases the production of chemicals that lift your mood and regulate your emotions. With regular exercise, you will feel stronger and more confident. Exercise will also increase the oxygen flow to your brain, which may help you think more clearly, rationally, and positively. Your immune system will also benefit.

Please note: If you are feeling sick, avoid working out. Get better first, and then add exercise back into your routine.

How do you stay fit if you can't—or don't want to—leave your home? Whether you are using your smart TV, tablet, or cell phone, there are a number of options. Here are a few free or inexpensive ideas to consider:

- Check if your local gym is streaming regular studio classes online.
- Fitness Blender—free cardio, strength, and stretch videos: https://www.fitnessblender.com/videos
- Obé Fitness—live fitness and dance classes (30-day free trial; use code ATHOME): https://www.obefitness.com/
- CrossFit—free workout videos, including single exercises and drills: https://www.crossfit.com/at-home
- NEOU—live and on-demand workouts (30-day free trial): https://www.neoufitness.com/
- P.volve—streamed functional movement workouts (30-day free trial; use code ONEPVOLVE): https://www.pvolve.com/
- Daily Burn—strength training programs; most workouts involve using only your body as your equipment (60-day free trial): https://lp.dailyburn.com/workoutathome/index.html
- Bulldog Yoga—streaming yoga classes (60-day free trial; use code EXTEND60): https://www.bulldogyoga.com/
- Peloton— a free 90-day trial that includes bike, treadmill, strength, yoga, and stretching: https://www.onepeloton.com/app

- The Bar Method—online barre classes (14-day free trail plus free workouts via Instagram): https://barmethod.com/
- Blogilate—free workout videos, challenges, and plans: https://www.blogilates.com/workout/
- YouTube—free workout videos; simply type in a keyword in the search box (for example, boxing, HIIT, core exercise, etc.). You will find videos that include treadmills, hand weights, kettlebells, fitness bands, or other equipment you might have at home.
- Take a walk or hike—getting fresh air and spending time in nature can be uplifting and improve your physical and mental health.

Write down other at-home physical activities that aren't listed above:

_____

_____

What to Do

Refer to the list, and choose three you would like to explore further.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

How much time you are willing to spend each day? Fifteen minutes? An hour? _____

What time of day is most realistic? _____

Keep track of your physical activity for two weeks, making a copy of the following chart for the second week. Record the type of exercise and the time you spend exercising. Take note of your mood before physical activity, and how you feel after exercising. In the Notes column, reflect on how you feel physically and anything else that is relevant to your experience.

Day	Type of exercise	Time spent	Mood before	Mood after	Notes
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Saturday					
Sunday					

Reflections on This Exercise

After two weeks of consistent exercise, how did you feel?

_____

_____

_____

Describe any obstacles or challenges you faced working out at home:

_____

_____

_____

What can you do to overcome those challenges?

_____

_____

_____

Staying Motivated While “Sheltering-in-Place”

You Should Know

You might have low energy and feel less than productive while staying home during the COVID-19 pandemic. You might be grieving the loss of your normal routine and experiencing a lack of direction and motivation. This can make it challenging to maintain healthy habits or adhere to a daily schedule. You might be working remotely, helping your children with schoolwork, or creating a long to-do list of household projects—yet you might find it particularly difficult to stay productive and proactive.

As you struggle to accomplish tasks and address responsibilities, you might be frustrated that you are not doing things as efficiently or effectively as you think you “should.” It is normal to experience ebbs and flows in energy and productivity during such an unpredictable time.

Here are some suggestions to increase your motivation during this pandemic:

Stick to a routine. Establishing a routine during this time is one of the most important things you can do to stay motivated. Too much downtime can be detrimental when times are uncertain, and sticking to a routine will help you maintain a sense of control. Wake up and go to sleep at consistent times, eat healthy meals, manage your work hours, and find time to relax.

Avoid electronics when first you wake up. You might normally check your phone, review email, or look at social media first thing in the morning. Instead, take a few moments to meditate or engage in physical activity upon waking. Focusing on your physical and mental health when you wake up positively impacts your mindset and enhances well-being.

Get dressed. It might be tempting to stay in pajamas all day but getting dressed allows you to create structure and stick to your schedule.

Take breaks. Make time for breaks. Throughout the day you will inevitably get bored or distracted, and it is a good idea to take breaks every ninety minutes to two hours if you are working from home. If you need to remind yourself to take breaks, set a timer.

Have a dedicated workspace. If you do not have a separate office space in your home, let your family members know when you are working on your computer or sitting at your desk and that you should not be disturbed. Even if you are not working from home, you will still need to set aside time to pay expenses, plan meals, and do other household tasks. You might want to wear headphones to send a clear message that you do not want to be disturbed. Avoid lounging around on the couch or lying in bed with your laptop. The goal is to create a routine, and part of maintaining your motivation is to have a dedicated place and time for work. This also helps you mentally separate yourself from work at the end of the day.

Take turns. If you have kids, keeping them entertained and following a routine can be like a second job. Balance is important. If you have a partner or other adult in your home, share household, child-, and pet-related responsibilities; for example, while one adult works, the other does childcare, walks the dog, or mops the kitchen.

Plan your day. Take just five to ten minutes each morning (or the night before) to plan your day, and you will get significantly more out of each day.

What to Do

Referring to the list above, list five of the suggestions or activities you can add to your day to stay motivated.

1._____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Now, plan a typical day. Remember to schedule breaks and include items from your to-do list, meals, and pleasurable activities. It might be helpful to use a planner app (Google Calendar, ZenDay, AwesomeCalendar, or Any.do), whiteboard calendar, or other personal planner.

Time	Task	Amount of time	Notes
6:00			
7:00			
8:00			
9:00			
10:00			
11:00			
Noon			
1:00			
2:00			
3:00			
4:00			
5:00			
6:00			
7:00			
8:00			
9:00			
10:00			
11:00			

Next, use the following chart as a to-do list. Write down your goals, priorities, intentions, and targets. Track your progress, including how you feel after completing each item on your list. If you are unable to complete a task on your list, carry it over to the next day's agenda. Remember to include each task in your daily planner.

Day	What I'd like to complete	Why is this important?	Completed? (yes/no)	Carryover to tomorrow? (yes/no)	How I felt once the task was completed
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Saturday					
Sunday					

Now, on the following chart, make a list of projects and tasks you have been putting off, including completing household repairs, decluttering a closet, shredding old credit card statements, or reorganizing your pantry. Be sure to add each task or project to your planner.

Project or task	What do I need to get started?	Who can support or motivate me?	Completio n date	Check off when added to planner	How did I feel once completed?

Reflections on This Exercise

Was it easier to complete the tasks/projects when you scheduled them and came up with a plan for completion? Explain:

_____

_____

_____

Which strategies were most effective in increasing your motivation?

_____

_____

_____

What changes did you notice in your energy and productivity? Describe:

_____

_____

_____

Which activities would you like to continue after the pandemic ends?

_____

_____

_____

Staying Connected to Others

You Should Know

Social connection is essential to health and well-being. Lack of connection has been linked to numerous medical problems, accelerated aging, depression, and suicide. Socializing and gathering in groups to share experiences contributes to our overall sense of well-being. Unfortunately, the coronavirus pandemic has led to what the *Atlantic* calls a social recession: a disconnection of social bonds marked by increased loneliness and isolation.

This lack of connection can have harmful effects on your mental health, your ability to work and learn, and even your physical health. This worksheet provides suggestions to help you stay connected to others during the pandemic, enhancing your physical and emotional health.

What to Do

Here are some ways to stay connected. As you review them, think of what you would like to add to your life in order to stay connected to other people.

Use your phone or computer to call, text, email, or have video chats with your friends, family, and other meaningful connections. Fortunately, we live during a time where the internet and smartphones make virtual communication easy and convenient. Online platforms like Facetime, Google Hangouts, and Zoom enable virtual face-to-face conversations. Zoom is quickly becoming the most popular platform because it allows a large group of people to join in on a meeting to chat, celebrate birthdays, and even sing or play instruments together.

Additionally, people are finding ways to virtually gather in groups on a variety of pastimes, including playing board games online, holding Netflix viewing parties, hosting virtual potluck meals, and participating in online knitting circles and book clubs.

Connect to your social networks on Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Twitter, and other social media. Social media platforms can be beneficial for finding resources, advice, and inspiration, even when you don't want to communicate directly with others. You can post questions to other users for their feedback and support, or link to websites, articles, and videos that others might find helpful. You might belong to supportive Facebook groups. This type of interaction can offer a sense of community and belonging, without engaging in "live" conversation.

Take advantage of online self-care resources for inspiration, reassurance, and motivation. There are numerous apps and videos—a number of which are offered free during the pandemic—to guide you through mindfulness meditations, breathing exercises, and muscle relaxation techniques.

- Personal development websites and apps like Sounds True, Kripalu, Shambhala Publications, Head Space, and Simple Habit offer free online courses to help people navigate through fear and anxiety caused by the pandemic.
- Many churches, synagogues, and mosques are live streaming their worship services via Facebook or on their own websites.

- You can view soothing online content on YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook, such as nature videos, streaming music concerts, virtual museum tours, and humorous stand-up comedy and pet videos.
- YouTube channels like Fitness Blender feature a variety of free at-home workouts, and many local fitness studios offer live-streaming classes for yoga, dance, and other activities.

Help others. When we reach out to others who may be even more isolated than we are, it is psychologically healing and calming. Even while social distancing, you can help others and connect with your community.

- Help deliver food and supplies to elderly or quarantined individuals, or collect medical supplies for local hospitals (following rules for social distancing and health protection).
- Donate blood to the American Red Cross, or make a financial contribution to a charity serving populations most impacted by the coronavirus.
- Make wellness phone calls to friends and neighbors who are homebound or in quarantine.
- Try virtual volunteering. Visit volunteermatch.org, idealist.org, and catchafire.org for lists of charities and nonprofits seeking virtual help, including ones located in your community.

  Examples of opportunities:

  - The United Nations runs a virtual program connecting volunteers to organizations worldwide. There are opportunities including writing and editing, translation, technology services, research, advocacy, and more.
  - The Red Cross uses digital volunteers to monitor online discussions to find people who need help, and to share important updates on social media.
  - The Smithsonian Institute has virtual opportunities for those interested in history, science, or anthropology. Volunteers help transcribe historical documents and update relevant Wikipedia pages.
  - Get political by following and tagging your local representatives on Twitter and Facebook. With Facebook's new Town Hall function, you can find, follow, and contact your elected officials and government services.
  - Volunteer for the Crisis Text Line, which offers free 24/7 support to those in crisis. Apply to be trained for free if you can commit to four hours a week.

Share your creativity. Make gifts to cheer someone up, based on your creative talents: write, paint, knit, make jewelry, decorate cards, or sew pillows or blankets. Create a Google document to share community resources, movie and book reviews, inspiring videos, and more with friends.

Ask for help. If you are finding it difficult to cope with overwhelming stress and anxiety from the pandemic, ask your doctor or therapist about telehealth options. If you do not already work with a therapist, contact your insurance company for referrals, visit Psychology Today's 'Find a Therapist' webpage, or call SAMHSA's National Helpline at 1-800-662-4357 for a local referral to low- or no-cost services. You can also text the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) crisis line 24/7 by texting NAMI to 741741, or explore online psychotherapy platforms such as BetterHelp or TalkSpace.

What additional resources or activities would you like to explore to stay connected?

_____

_____

_____

Of all the activities and resources listed above, which would you like to try or use more frequently?

_____

_____

_____

Use the following chart to record your activities for staying connected for the next week. Track how you feel emotionally and physically before engaging in the activity or project, note the people or groups with whom you connected, and describe how you feel afterward.

Day	Activity	People/groups I connected with	How I felt before the activity	How I felt after the activity
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				

Thursday				
Friday				
Saturday				
Sunday				

Reflections on This Exercise

Which activities were most effective in helping you stay connected?

_____

_____

_____

What were the most useful tools or resources you discovered from those activities?

_____

_____

_____

Describe any improvements in your mental health associated with your efforts to stay connected:

_____

_____

_____

Controlling Your Drinking

You Should Know

Drinking can be an easy escape from fears and anxiety caused by the coronavirus pandemic. You may find that you are drinking more than usual since the outbreak started, but this is not a good way to deal with stress, and we all know that drinking can lead to many other physical and mental health problems. Obviously, this will be more of a concern for people who have had a problem with alcohol or drugs in the past.

This worksheet will help you keep track of your drinking habits and offer healthier ways to cope with stress and anxiety.

What to Do

Use the following chart to track your drinking habits, including when you drink, what stressful situation or thought causes you to drink, and the type and amount of alcohol you drink. Make copies of this chart if necessary.

Date and time	Stressful situation or thought	Type and amount of drink
3:00 Saturday afternoon	*Watched Facebook video about people dying—will this happen to us?*	*3 bottles of beer in one hour*

Review your completed chart. Is the amount of drinking you tracked more than you expected, less than you expected, or equal to what you expected? Explain:

_____

_____

_____

Note: Contact your therapist or doctor if you find that stress is interfering with your daily functioning. If you are in recovery, consider attending a virtual AA meeting.

There are number of things you can do to cope with your anxiety and stress in healthier ways:

- Connect with friends and family by phone or email. Share your concerns and feelings with people you trust.
- Journal, write poetry, or express yourself through arts or crafts project.
- Play with your pet.
- Practice deep breathing or meditation, using an app or online video.
- Cook or bake.
- Take an online class or watch an instructional video.
- Attend free virtual museum tours, concerts, and other online entertainment.
- Enjoy leisurely activities, such as streaming TV shows or movies, or reading a book.
- Listen to music that makes you relaxed or happy.
- Start a project you have been putting off: reorganizing the basement, painting a room, or do-it-yourself home repairs.
- Relax in a warm bath or shower.
- Take breaks from pandemic news and social media and watch funny videos on YouTube instead.

Add your own ideas here:

_____

_____

_____

Now, select at least three activities from the list above that you plan to do to manage your stress and anxiety. Write them down here:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Reflections on This Exercise

Which activities were most effective in managing your stress and anxiety?

_____

_____

_____

How easy or difficult was it to replace drinking with healthier coping activities? Explain:

_____

_____

_____

Were you able to reduce your drinking? Describe your experience:

_____

_____

_____

Conducting Positive Family Meetings

You Should Know

Families are adjusting to being home together because of the coronavirus pandemic. Parents and children are sharing space and resources, possibly resulting in stress, irritability, and frustration. Conducting positive family meetings can bring everyone together for open communication and enhanced connection during this uncertain time.

Family meetings have several benefits. They enable family members to discuss problems before they escalate. They teach children how to negotiate, compromise, and express themselves. Because everyone's voice is heard and valued, family meetings can build children's self-esteem. Perhaps most importantly, during times of change, family meetings are an effective way to check in and see how everyone is doing. Here are some guidelines:

- If you are introducing family meetings for the first time, expect some pushback from older children and teens. Explain why these meetings will be important for your family and how they can benefit everyone.
- Family meetings are most effective when they are held regularly, usually once a week. For instance, if Sunday dinners have always been a consistent way to bring your family together, consider holding the meeting immediately after dinner.
- Be flexible. Take into account the ages and attention spans of your children when determining how long a meeting should be. You might also need to change the agenda and plan of action to address new issues and concerns that arise during the week.
- Be creative. Start or end the meeting with a fun activity, game, or project to make it more enjoyable and interactive, and less like a requirement.
- Family meetings are ineffective when used to lecture family members or point out mistakes. Instead, for example, if your children are not picking up after themselves, you could say, "The house is messier than usual this week. What can we all do about that?"
- When discussing issues and agenda items, give everyone a chance to speak. Rotate the responsibility of leading the meeting among family members who are old enough, so that each can take ownership.
- Agree on ground rules, which can be written down and updated as needed. Here are some examples:
    - Each family member can speak without judgment or interruption.
    - Meetings are a technology-free zone.
    - When solving problems, majority rules. If a difficult issue cannot be solved, parents have the final word.

- Each family member has input in determining the meeting's agenda.
- To avoid blame or argument, each speaker will use "I" statements to express feelings and thoughts. For example, say "I feel [sad, angry, happy] when [family member] does [action or behavior]."

What ground rules would be most effective for your family? Write them down here:

_____

_____

_____

Develop a rough outline for the weekly agenda, and be flexible in order to address last-minute issues or concerns. Here are some suggestions:

- Name one good thing that happened this week, something you are proud of, or something nice you did for a family member.
- What topics or issues would you like to discuss today?
- Coronavirus-related topics:
    - What are you most concerned about?
    - Are you having any problems with your online schooling or remote work that you want to share?
    - What can you do to help someone else in the family or the neighborhood next week?
- What worked well for our family this week?
- What didn't work well for our family this week? What could we do better?
- Assignments of chores and meal planning
- What will we work on in the coming week, and who will be responsible?
- Activity: baking [family member's] favorite dessert.

Add your own ideas for your agenda outline here:

_____

_____

_____

Finally, record your family's plan of action. Make a list of which family member will do what, and when, including tasks and chores that have been delegated. You can post this list on the refrigerator as a reminder, or hang a whiteboard in a common area. Also, keep track of decisions that were made during the meeting in case you need to refer back to them.

What to Do

Use the following chart to record your family meetings, including what was discussed, what worked well, what did not work well, and what you would like to change for the next meeting.

Date	What was discussed	What worked well	What didn't work well	What to change for the next meeting

Reflections on This Exercise

In what ways did having family meetings effectively address problems and concerns?

_____

_____

_____

What family meeting conversations were most beneficial for you and your family?

_____

_____

_____

What family meeting conversations were most surprising?

_____

_____

_____

What were the greatest challenges? Explain:

_____

_____

_____

Finding Meaning

You Should Know

During the coronavirus pandemic, it might be difficult to stay positive and proactive–especially if you are quarantined and housebound. When confronted with constant change and unpredictability, it can be easy to develop a "why bother?" mindset. This makes it challenging to care about things that used to bring joy or satisfaction, or to find new sources of fulfillment and purpose.

This worksheet provides suggestions to help you find meaning during this frightening—but temporary—experience.

What to Do

Here are several strategies for improving your mindset and finding meaning in your present situation:

Appreciate the present moment. Concentrate on the present instead of what has already happened or what might happen in the future. You are okay in this moment. Breathe. You have food. You are not sick. You can go outside and take a walk.

Write down the sights, sounds, and smells that you are experiencing at this very moment. Is your chair soft and comfortable? Do you hear birds tweeting outside? Do you smell coffee brewing or dinner cooking?

_____

_____

_____

Express gratitude each day. Think of at least one thing you are grateful for each day. This is an important practice for yourself, as well as your loved ones, and it has a positive impact on your emotional health. What things are you grateful for today: Your family's health? Your ability to connect with old friends online? A safe place to live? Write them down:

_____

_____

_____

Master a new skill. You can find meaning when you use your talents and abilities to learn something new. Now is a great time to learn something that may have been too time-consuming in the past. What new skill or hobby would you like to learn or practice?

_____

_____

_____

Help others. Volunteering your time and energy is an effective way to give your life meaning. Even during social distancing, there are ways you can support individuals and organizations: make financial donations, deliver food to homebound seniors, send thank-you cards to health care workers, or make check-in phone calls to sick friends and neighbors. What are some ways that you can share your time or talent to help others?

_____

_____

_____

What other activities give your life meaning? List them here.

_____

_____

_____

What to Do

Choose three activities from the list above that you will do over the next week to create meaning in your life.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Reflections on This Exercise

Which strategies were most effective in creating a sense of meaning in your life? Describe:

_____

_____

_____

Which people in your life can support you in identifying and engaging in meaningful activities?

_____

_____

_____

Which strategies would you most like to continue once the pandemic is over? Why?

_____

_____

_____

Coping with Trauma

You Should Know

The COVID-19 pandemic is considered a crisis, and it has been a significant stressor on everyone's lives —for some, it is traumatizing or may trigger symptoms associated with past trauma. For those who are directly exposed to the coronavirus (for example, medical professionals, people who become ill or have loved ones who become ill), or those who are exposed to the changes in life associated with the pandemic (for example, job loss, financial instability), the upheaval, uncertainty, and fear can trigger acute stress symptoms. Constant news stories describing the risks, and "shelter in place" and social distancing rules that limit social contact, disrupt coping strategies that allow for healthy stress management.

During a traumatic event, your nervous system becomes overwhelmed as it attempts to process the experience, impairing your ability to grasp or cope with what is happening. This often leads to reactions including despair, grief, panic, confusion, hopelessness, anxiety, or depression. Researchers have noted additional consequences, including dramatic increases in stress, upset, and post-traumatic stress disorder.

In reaction to the pandemic, you made a rapid shift from "normal" life to extreme uncertainty—within a matter of days, giving you little time to adjust to the dramatic changes. It is worth remembering that trauma isn't about weakness, but rather it often comes from us trying to do the right things in challenging times.

If you have a history of trauma, the uncertainty and powerlessness might be especially difficult, triggering trauma-related memories. Check off trauma-related symptoms you are experiencing since the pandemic began:

____ I am easily startled, jumpy, or hypervigilant.

____ Disturbing memories frequently come up for me.

____ I find myself ruminating on disturbing thoughts.

____ I have a hard time concentrating.

____ I am frequently irritable or angry.

____ I have repeated disturbing dreams or nightmares.

____ I am having flashbacks.

____ I have trouble falling and/or remaining asleep.

____ I feel hopeless.

____ I feel emotionally numb.

____ I have strong physical reactions (for example, pounding heart, dizziness, sweating, nausea).

____ I feel distant and cut off from people.

____ I am uninterested in activities I used to enjoy.

____ I am taking risks that might cause harm to myself or others.

____ I find myself harshly criticizing, self-blaming, or judging myself.

____ I have intrusive and upsetting thoughts.

____ I feel disoriented or confused.

____ I feel exhausted or fatigued.

____ I am eating significantly more or less than usual.

____ I have overwhelming fear.

____ I feel sad, blue, or depressed most days.

____ I am on edge and feeling tense and agitated

Count how many statements you checked off, and write the number here: _____

If you checked off three or more statements, you are probably experiencing an acute stress reaction. It is important to support yourself through this challenging time by establishing a plan for responding to your mental health needs.

These tips can help you take care of your mental health during the pandemic:

Stay connected. Even if the times require sheltering in place, quarantine, or social distancing, get creative in ways to connect with others. Technology is a great resource when physical contact is not an option.

Remember the basics. Get enough sleep, eat well, and exercise. Stick to your usual routine as much as possible. Research demonstrates that these basic daily tasks support your brain in effective coping, information processing, and stress regulation, as well as decreasing symptoms of depression and anxiety.

Create a coping toolkit. Create a list or kit of activities and objects that help you feel safe and grounded, and increase your quality of life.

Minimize your media exposure about the pandemic. Exposure to trauma-filled media has been linked with an increase in vicarious traumatization and acute stress symptoms.

Seek out mental telehealth services. Multiple platforms offer virtual counseling services or 24/7 crisis lines.

Be kind to yourself and others. Kindness and compassion go a long way.

Be aware of your emotions. Recognize and track when you are overriding or "stuffing" your emotions. Share this information with someone you trust.

Accept and allow your emotions and feelings. Avoid downplaying your own intense emotions or telling yourself you shouldn't have them. Allowing and accepting your emotions decreases the likelihood they will negatively impact you in the future.

Support others. Being supportive to other people builds your own resilience to trauma.

Reach out for help. While everyone is encouraged to stay home, you might be in an unsafe situation, isolated from friends and family. If you are a victim or survivor who needs support, contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline, 24/7. Call 1-800-799-7233 or 1-800-787-3224 for TTY, or if you're unable to speak safely, you can log onto thehotline.org or text LOVEIS to 22522.

Write down any other ideas here:

_____

_____

_____

What to Do

Choose six activities from the list above that you are willing to try when you are experiencing trauma-related symptoms.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

Who are some of the people in your life that can support your coping efforts (friends, family, therapist, clergy)?

_____

_____

_____

What else has helped you to cope in the past?

_____

_____

_____

Using the following chart, track what triggers your symptoms and rate the severity of the symptoms from 1 to 10, with 1 = least severe, and 10 = most severe. Using the list, describe the activity you used to cope with your symptoms. Then rate how you felt after engaging in the coping activity.

Date	**Trigger**	**Symptom**	**Severity of symptoms (1–10)**	**What you did to cope**	**How did you feel after? (1–10)**
4/1	*Watching the news.*	*I felt very anxious and my heart started pounding.*	*8*	*I turned off the news and practiced yoga for 30 minutes.*	*4*

Reflections on This Exercise

What activities helped you manage trauma-related stress or symptoms? Explain:

_____

_____

_____

What else can you do to manage trauma-related symptoms?

_____

_____

_____

After completing this exercise, did your trauma-related symptoms subside? Describe:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Establishing Boundaries When You Are “Sheltered-in-Place”

You Should Know

You might be sheltering-in-place or quarantined in your home because of the COVID-19 pandemic, possibly spending all of your time with family members or roommates. If you value space and time alone, it might be challenging to cope with spending extended periods of time with others during this uncertain and stressful time. To preserve your mental health and well-being, it is important to establish clear boundaries, focusing on shared space and resources, household responsibilities, and technology use.

Boundaries are essential when coping with highly stressful situations. You might be overwhelmed with media coverage, to-do lists, and remote work—as well as attempting to remain socially connected during this time of social distancing. Not only is it important to establish boundaries with the people you are living with, but it is important to have boundaries around how you spend your time.

Setting boundaries involves an awareness of your needs and clearly, directly, and openly communicating those needs. First, mindfully explore your expectations and requirements. Ask yourself these questions:

Describe your space/time/resource needs. For example, do you value an hour of quiet time alone each evening?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Are your expectations creating pressure to be overly productive in any way? Describe:

_____

_____

_____

What can you do to lessen the pressure you are placing on yourself?

_____

_____

_____

What are some ways you can self-soothe right now? Where do you require validation or self-compassion?

_____

_____

_____

Once you are clearly aware of your needs, how can you communicate them to others?

_____

_____

_____

You can set boundaries around media exposure *and* stay informed. You can be productive *and* prioritize rest. How can you find balance during this uncertain time?

_____

_____

_____

Next, review these suggestions for establishing boundaries during the pandemic:

- Once you understand what your own limitations and boundaries are, schedule a family or house meeting to discuss guidelines. It might be helpful to schedule weekly meetings.
- Proactively communicate your needs and offer to help others. Discuss what each person has scheduled for the day (remote work, schoolwork, household tasks, and so forth), and how they can best accomplish their tasks. You might ask, “What would be helpful for you today?”
- When problems arise, communicate in a direct and unemotional manner to help defuse situations quickly. Use "I" statements to describe concerns or annoyances. For example, you might say, “I felt frustrated when you left a sink full of dirty dishes.”
- Encourage everyone to speak directly with one another, immediately sitting down to share concerns. Remember, it is okay to feel stressed or upset sometimes. Addressing problems quickly will allow you to avoid major conflict.
- If you are upset, take a break and go for a walk; if that is not possible, use headphones to disengage from the household.
- Be open to adjusting your communication style and learning how other people operate. Add humor, be flexible and patient, and speak with kindness.
- Stick to your routine as much as possible to lessen your stress. To stay on track, make a schedule that accounts for every activity, not just work tasks, and remember to include “alone” time.

- Create visual cues to let others know when you are busy. For example, if you have children, ask them to make a creative sign to hang on your home office door. Or, if you do not have dedicated office space, set a timer for the period you need to be left alone.
- Create a designated workstation if you do not have a home office.
- Each day, schedule time to be alone, even if that means waking up early to go for a walk.
- Journaling can help. If worries or anxious thoughts crop up, write them down and then return to what you've written later if necessary.
- When you turn off the news, make it a true disconnect. Though it is important to pay attention to the news to stay informed, it is also important to unplug from it. Limiting news consumption allows you to stay relatively positive and avoid overwhelm.
- Be willing to learn what works—and what does not work so well. You might be feeling impatient, and boundaries are much different now than they were six months ago.
- Set boundaries with your devices to prioritize your well-being:
    - Adopt a screen-free morning routine.
    - Block notifications before bed.
    - Include nontechnology-related activities in your routine.
    - Put your available working hours on your calendar—and stick to them. You can also include your work hours in your email signature.
    - Meditate, read a print book, or go for a walk first thing in the morning—before you look at your phone.
    - Take an afternoon nap or schedule brief breaks away from your computer throughout the day.
    - Limit or eliminate screen time on the weekends.

What to Do

Review the above list and come up with ideas for establishing boundaries. List four ideas you can implement right away:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Now you can practice implementing these activities to establish boundaries. For the next week, document times when you experienced problems related to boundaries. Describe the boundary problem, how you managed, what happened, and the outcome. In the Notes column, share your observations.

Date	Boundary problem	How did you manage it?	What happened?	Outcome	Notes

Reflections on This Exercise

Describe how establishing boundaries impacted you in positive and/or negative ways. Include how family/household members reacted.

_____

_____

_____

What did you learn about yourself while completing this exercise?

_____

_____

_____

What was the most surprising reaction you got from household members when you began to establish boundaries?

_____

_____

_____

Is there anything you could have done differently?

_____

_____

_____

Curbing Overeating

You Should Know

You are undoubtedly feeling stressed because of the fear, anxiety, and uncertainty related to the coronavirus pandemic—not to mention social distancing requirements and the increasingly challenging economic reality. When a stressful situation like this occurs, people typically experience changes in their eating habits. Emotional or stress eating refers to eating in an effort to suppress or soothe unpleasant or uncomfortable emotions. These changes might include overeating or binge eating.

To cope with strong emotions or stress, some people might eat large amounts of food in a short period of time while feeling unable to stop. Other people might graze, eating constantly throughout the day or night. Eating serves as a welcome distraction from reality. You might crave food higher in fat and sugar when stressed, in part because your body requires more energy to function when stressed—simple carbohydrates do the trick.

Unfortunately, emotional overeating can lead to regret, physical discomfort, and weight gain. Here are some ways to curb emotional overeating:

Be aware of your feelings and let yourself feel them. Take time each day to reflect on how you feel. Ask yourself: How am I feeling? When do I feel most stressed? What is most worrisome to me about my life? How are my feelings prompting me to eat in order to feel better? Am I actually physically hungry? Am I upset or distressed? Am I stressed or frustrated?

Recognize your triggers for overeating. When are you most likely to want to overeat? Sometimes people or situations trigger you. If you are aware of your triggers, you will recognize when you are vulnerable to eating for emotional reasons. Triggers could be external, like having your children home and cooped up or watching upsetting news stories. Triggers can also be internal, like thinking about how hard it is to work remotely or worrying about your financial situation. Ask yourself: When am I most likely to eat because I am stressed? What circumstances make it hardest for me to control my eating? What foods do I crave, and when?

Make conscious eating choices. Choose what you will eat and when. Challenge yourself to cope with uncomfortable emotions and stress without using food to self-soothe. Ask yourself: Will I feel better after eating this? Is this something I am going to regret eating? What do I need to change to avoid overeating? Will this food nourish my body?

Get support. You are probably isolated from your community, friends, and social networks right now; yet social connectedness is a core way you cope with stress. Ask yourself: Who can I call or text today that will help me remain emotionally grounded? What can I do to feel connected to my community? Overeaters Anonymous (www.oa.org) offers online meetings.

Each day, start fresh. If you overate because of unpleasant feelings, start again. Beating yourself up about past eating is not helpful. Instead, encourage yourself to start fresh right now—without judgment, guilt, or shame—and reestablish healthy eating while you acknowledge how you feel and encourage yourself moving forward.

Practice deliberate eating that promotes physical and emotional health. Eating when you are not hungry is one way of coping with discomfort or upset. You might also overeat to avoid boredom, depression, anxiety, loneliness, stress, or other uncomfortable emotions. An important way to decrease overeating is to recognize when you have automatic reactions, and identify the difference between the need to eat because you are hungry and the desire to eat because you are upset. You can then choose alternatives to overeating.

Here are some practical strategies to overcome your urge to overeat.

- Before you eat, drink a glass of water and wait ten minutes.
- Avoid eating while watching TV.
- Have healthy food on hand at home. You might be tempted to stock up; just limit the junk food you have on hand.
- Plan healthy snacks for times when you are vulnerable to overeating.
- Decide what you can do other than eating; for example, walk your dog, watch a movie, garden, or ride your bike around the block. If you distract yourself, the urge to eat will often pass.
- Engage in physical activity before dinner to relieve stress.

Add any other ideas here:

_____

_____

_____

What to Do

Choose five activities you will engage in when you have the urge to overeat:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Use the chart to track your urges to overeat. Describe the coping skill you used, and rate your level of distress on a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 = not at all upset (relaxed and calm), to 10 = very upset (you feel like you might explode), before and after engaging in the coping activity. Use to Notes column to Include comments about how you were feeling when you had the urge to overeat.

Date	**Coping skills**	**Distress rating before practicing skill (0–10)**	**Distress rating after practicing skill (0–10)**	**Situation**	**Notes**
4/1	*Call a friend to chat.*	*8*	*5*	*Urge to binge on ice cream after watching the news.*	*Watching the news stresses me out.*

Reflections on This Exercise

What did you learn about yourself during this exercise?

_____

_____

_____

What are your triggers for overeating or bingeing?

_____

_____

_____

What are the best coping strategies to avoid overeating you identified during this exercise?

_____

_____

_____

What can you do differently to make coping with stress while avoiding overeating easier? Are there other tools or resources you can use to delay or eliminate overeating?

_____

_____

_____

Section Two: Building Resiliency to Thrive in a Time of Crisis

Maintaining Your Sense of Humor

You Should Know

Using coping techniques, eliminating stressors from your life, and surrounding yourself with social support are all great ways to build resilience, deal with stress, and improve your physical and emotional health. But sometimes you probably feel stressed despite your best efforts.

Developing and maintaining a sense of humor can be an effective way to reduce stress and strengthen resiliency. According to the journal *Therapeutic Humor*, a sense of humor strengthens both your physical and psychological immune systems. When you laugh, your body experiences an increase in immunoglobulin A, which strengthens your body's immunity—promoting healing, lowering blood pressure, and increasing pain tolerance. Aside from the health benefits of laughter, having a sense of humor provides a way to connect with other people, perceive things in a different way, normalize your experiences, and keep things from becoming overwhelming or scary. A sense of humor strengthens your resilience, allowing you to better manage the ups and downs of life.

What to Do

Describe a time you were able to find the humor in a problem or stressful situation. What happened? Was your stress reduced when you were able to find humor in the situation?

_____

_____

_____

Suggestions for adding humor into your daily life include:

Smile. Studies indicate smiling releases endorphins, which make you feel better and actually leads to feeling happy. If you put a smile on your face, laughter comes more easily and stress melts more readily.

See your situation as an observer. If you are distressed and dealing with challenging experiences, it can seem overwhelming or scary. If you step back and view your experience as an observer, it is sometimes easier to recognize the humor in a situation. Seeing your situation through a new lens is known as reframing, and it works. You might imagine yourself as a character in a sitcom to find humor in a situation.

Look to the "extreme." If a situation is extremely stressful, recognize the potential humor in just how frustrating and annoying it is. Imagine the most ridiculous outcome until you are amused. For example, if you are on the phone with a debt collector and you are placed on a lengthy hold, imagine that hours pass, then days. Visualize yourself eating meals, getting dressed, and conducting your life—all while you are waiting on hold.

Have funny buddies. Think of friends you can laugh with, and spend time with them. Share your frustrations with each other, and find humor in stressful situations. If you are in the middle of an upsetting situation, imagine the retelling and laughing with a friend.

Be a humor detective. Make everyday annoyances amusing by finding humor in unavoidable or repetitive stressors. This works well for predictable, annoying situations you can't control.

Watch funny movies, TV shows, or standup comedy routines. Watching a show or movie that takes situations many people find stressful helps you recognize that some universally stressful situations are actually funny.

Watch a brief online video. If you have very little time to shift your mood, watch a short video on YouTube, www.hahaha.com, or www.funnyordie.com. There are also humorous cartoon websites like The Onion or The Oatmeal.

Read funny books. Reading humorous essays or books that include amusing interpretations of life can help you find your own style of managing and coping with stress.

Join "funny" clubs. Take part in laughter yoga, for example.

Add your own ideas here:

_____

_____

_____

Next, refer back to the list and select several activities that you will do for the next two weeks. Complete the chart on the next page. Plan one activity a day to add humor to your life. Rate your stress level from 0 to 10, with 0 = completely calm and stress-free, and 10 = extreme distress. Track your stress level before and after engaging in the humorous activity. Include any relevant notes.

Day	Stress level before (0–10)	Activity	Stress level after (0–10)	Notes
Monday	*7*	*Went to a comedy club with friends.*	*3*	*Had so much fun and laughed for hours.*

Reflections on This Exercise

Which activities were most effective in relieving stress?

_____

_____

_____

Describe the last time you had a good laugh. What were you doing at the time? How did it feel?

_____

_____

_____

After practicing a daily humor-inducing activity, did you notice any differences in your distress and ability to manage stress? Have you "lightened up" and increased your ability to laugh and find humor in normally stressful situations? Describe:

_____

_____

_____

Fostering Wellness

You Should Know

When times are challenging, stress can take a toll on your physical health as well as your emotional health. Without proper sleep, nutrition, and exercise, it can be difficult to cope, stay focused, and solve problems. According to numerous scientific studies, developing healthy wellness habits strengthens your body's resilience and reduces the impact of stress on your ability to cope.

The following strategies can build your resilience by enhancing your physical wellness:

Physical activity. Regular physical activity is essential to overall health and resilience. Active people are less likely to be depressed or anxious, and they have lower stress levels because exercise increases mood-boosting chemicals like endorphins and dopamine. Exercise also improves information processing and memory. Aim for two-and-a-half hours of physical activity each week, or thirty minutes most days of the week. The thirty-minute segments can be broken up into increments throughout the day (three ten-minute walks, for example). Consider taking virtual fitness classes, going for a swim, or hiking out in nature.

Posture. Some studies show that shifting your posture can change your mood. If you are feeling nervous or anxious, try striking a pose that expresses the opposite, such has putting your hands on your hips and holding your head high (sometimes called the "power" or "superhero" pose). Additionally, certain yoga poses increase confidence and well-being.

Sleep. Adequate sleep increases mood stability and cognitive function. When you get enough sleep, you are better able to process new information, avoid overreacting, and make better decisions. For optimal energy and functioning, the Centers for Disease Control recommend adults sleep from seven to nine hours a night to recharge mentally and physically. Avoid consuming caffeine and eating heavy meals at least three hours before bedtime. It is also important to eliminate screen use at least an hour before you fall asleep. Go to bed and wake up at the same time each day.

Diet. Several studies found a link between poor diet (processed foods or other junk foods) and the worsening of anxiety, depression, and insomnia. There is growing evidence that the Mediterranean diet lowers the risk of depression and improves cognition. Avoid skipping meals, eat less junk food, and limit your intake of stimulants to decrease your irritability and anxiety.

Meditation and mindfulness. Research indicates meditation, yoga, and practicing mindfulness are effective in increasing your capacity to tolerate change and stress, while focusing your attention on more positive aspects of life. Your problems are put into perspective, and you gain clarity to solve them. Try integrating five minutes of a mindfulness practice into your day. Follow a guided breathing exercise on YouTube, or use an app such as Headspace or Calm. Or, take a moment to focus your attention on the sensations you experience (touch, smell, sight, sound) while washing dishes or taking a shower.

Limiting intake of alcohol and drugs. While using substances may dull uncomfortable emotions caused by stress, they will not help you manage your reactions to the problems or allow you to solve them.

What to Do

Write down your own ideas for increasing your physical wellness:

_____

_____

_____

Of the strategies listed above, what small changes can you make now to increase your physical wellness and your resilience? Write down those activities or actions:

_____

_____

_____

Where do you usually feel stress in your body?

_____

_____

_____

Which healthy habits are most challenging to maintain when you feel stressed?

_____

_____

_____

Next, use the following chart to track your activities/actions for one week. Note their effectiveness in reducing your stress. Rate your stress level from 0 to 10, with 0 = completely calm and stress-free, and 10 = extreme distress and unable to function.

Date	Stress level before (0–10)	Healthy activity or action	Stress level after (0–10)

Reflections on This Exercise

When you feel good physically, how do you feel emotionally? How does it affect your moods?

_____

_____

_____

When you feel good physically, how does it affect your ability to solve problems and cope with stress?

_____

_____

_____

Calming Your Body with Progressive Muscle Relaxation

You Should Know

Progressive muscle relaxation is a technique that involves tensing specific muscle groups and then relaxing them. It is termed "progressive" because you relax all the major muscle groups—starting with your head and working your way down to your feet, tensing and then relaxing them one at a time. In only ten to fifteen minutes, you can achieve total body relaxation.

Progressive muscle relaxation is a particularly effective technique because it enables you to focus on your body tension. Although there are many other relaxation techniques that can help you reduce your anxiety, this technique may be most helpful for people who have body complaints that often accompany high levels of stress and anxiety, such as headaches, stomach problems, or muscle pain.

When you are ready to try this technique, find a place where you won't be disturbed or distracted for at least fifteen minutes. Recline in a comfortable chair or on a mat, and take a few deep breaths to begin the exercise. Use the following audio to help you learn this technique: https://www.betweensessions.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/BS-Progressive-Relaxation.mp3. The transcript of the audio is provided on the next page.

After listening for a few times, you can practice this relaxation technique without the audio if you wish, but remember to relax for at least ten minutes.

Relaxation techniques, such as progressive muscle relaxation, can be very effective in reducing anxiety but only when practiced regularly. Engaging in intentional relaxation practice for at least ten minutes a day trains your brain and body to calm down on demand. As soon as you start to feel anxious, you can take a few deep breaths and think about how it feels to be calm, which automatically sends a message to your brain telling it to calm down, and to your muscles to release tension.

When you regularly practice relaxation techniques, not only does it help you control your anxiety, but it may also have other health benefits on the mind and body. For example, some research suggests that relaxation techniques can aid the body in the healing process and help in controlling high blood pressure, coping with chronic pain, controlling asthma, and aiding with sleep problems. Many medical professionals also believe that daily relaxation exercises aid in preventing disease, reducing elevated levels of cortisol (the stress hormone), and bolstering the immune system. Use the chart that follows to help you create a habit of engaging in progressive muscle relaxation every day.

What to Do

In this exercise, you will travel up your entire body, from your feet to your head, bringing awareness to each muscle group, first tensing, then relaxing—tensing and relaxing. As you tense your muscles, do not strain or exert yourself. Just notice the tension—gently squeezing, then harder, then hold, then release all the tension, letting go fully.

Find a comfortable, quiet place to sit or lie down, a place where you won't be interrupted and where you can relax completely. Turn off your phone. Lower the lights. You deserve this time—a time to calm your body and your mind. When you are ready, close your eyes.

Now allow yourself to come to a place of stillness, releasing any tension you are aware of. Let the floor or the seat support you fully.

Begin to notice the in-out rhythm of your breath. Notice your belly or chest rising and falling softly, as you gently inhale and exhale. In, out, in, out. No need to force or control the breathing. Just let it happen naturally.

When you are breathing in a steady rhythm, bring your attention to your feet and toes. Notice any tension. Now create more tension by gently scrunching your toes and contracting the soles of your feet. Now squeeze hard, as hard as you can without discomfort. Hold for a few seconds.

Now release. Breathe deeply, in and out. Notice the difference between the tension and relaxation. Enjoy the relaxation. Tense again. Now release. Notice the relaxation. Let go. Breathe.

Now bring your attention to your lower legs, your calf muscles. Notice any tension. Now create more tension by gently contracting the muscles in your lower legs. Now squeeze hard, as hard as you can without discomfort. Hold for a few seconds. Now release. Breathe deeply, in and out. Notice the difference between the tension and relaxation. Enjoy the relaxation. Tense again. Now release. Notice the relaxation. Let go. Breathe.

Now bring your attention to your thighs. Notice any tension. Now create more tension by gently contracting the muscles in your lower legs. Now squeeze hard, as hard as you can without discomfort. Hold for a few seconds. Now release. Breathe deeply, in and out. Notice the difference between the tension and relaxation. Enjoy the relaxation. Tense again. Now release. Notice the relaxation. Let go. Breathe.

Now focus on the muscles in your buttocks. Again, notice any tension. Now create more tension by gently contracting the muscles in your buttocks. Now squeeze hard, as hard as you can without discomfort. Hold for a few seconds. Now release. Breathe deeply, in and out. Notice the difference between the tension and relaxation. Enjoy the relaxation. Tense again. Now release. Notice the relaxation. Let go. Breathe.

Next, bring your attention to the muscles in your abdomen. Once again, notice any tension. Now create more tension by gently contracting the muscles in your abdomen. Now squeeze hard, as if you're pushing your abdomen into the back of your chair or onto the surface of the floor. Squeeze as hard as you can without discomfort. Hold for a few seconds. Now release. Breathe deeply, in and out. Notice the difference between the tension and relaxation. Enjoy the relaxation. Tense again. Now release. Notice the relaxation. Let go. Breathe.

Now focus on the muscles in your back. Notice any tension. Now create more tension by gently contracting the muscles in your back—now you might want to arch gently and tighten your back muscles as hard as you can without discomfort. Hold for a few seconds. Now release. Breathe deeply,

in and out. Notice the difference between the tension and relaxation. Enjoy the relaxation. Tense again. Now release. Notice the relaxation. Let go. Breathe.

Now focus on the muscles in your shoulders and neck. Notice any tension. Now create more tension by gently contracting the muscles in your shoulders and neck, perhaps lifting them up toward your ears. Now squeeze hard, as hard as you can without discomfort. Hold for a few seconds. Now release. Breathe deeply, in and out. Notice the difference between the tension and relaxation. Enjoy the relaxation. Tense again. Now release. Notice the relaxation. Let go. Breathe.

Relax. Take a few more deep breaths and feel the weight of your body against the floor or chair. See if you can let go even a little more. Good.

Now focus on the muscles in your hands and wrists. Notice any tension. Now create more tension by gently contracting the muscles in your hands and wrists, curling them into a loose fist. Now squeeze hard, as hard as you can without discomfort. Hold for a few seconds. Now release. Breathe deeply, in and out. Notice the difference between the tension and relaxation. Enjoy the relaxation.

Now open your hands and extend your wrists in the opposite direction, without hyperextending them. Now tense them hard as you can without discomfort. Hold for a few seconds. Now release. Breathe deeply, in and out. Notice the difference between the tension and relaxation. Enjoy the relaxation. Tense again. Now release. Notice the relaxation. Let go. Breathe.

Now focus on the muscles in your arms. Notice any tension. Now create more tension by gently contracting the muscles in your arms. Now squeeze hard, as hard as you can without discomfort. Hold for a few seconds. Now release. Breathe deeply, in and out. Notice the difference between the tension and relaxation. Enjoy the relaxation. Tense again. Now release. Notice the relaxation. Let go. Breathe.

Now focus on the muscles in your face, starting with your eyes. Notice any tension. Now create more tension by gently contracting the muscles around your eyes. Now squeeze hard, as hard as you can without discomfort. Hold for a few seconds. Now release. Breathe deeply, in and out. Notice the difference between the tension and relaxation. Enjoy the relaxation. Tense again. Now release. Notice the relaxation. Let go. Breathe.

Now bring your attention to the muscles in your lips and mouth. Notice any tension. Now create more tension by gently contracting the muscles of your lips and mouth. Now squeeze hard, as hard as you can without discomfort. Hold for a few seconds. Now release. Breathe deeply, in and out. Notice the difference between the tension and relaxation. Enjoy the relaxation. Tense again. Now release. Notice the relaxation. Let go. Breathe.

Now bring your attention to the muscles in your jaw. So many of us carry a lot of tension in our jaw. Notice any tension. Now create more tension by gently contracting the muscles of your jaw, from the mouth and position of the teeth to the hinge near the ears. Squeeze hard, as hard as you can without discomfort. Hold for a few seconds. Now release. Now open your mouth and stretch out your jaw completely, creating tension. Hold for a few seconds and release. Breathe deeply, in and out. Notice the difference between the tension and relaxation. Enjoy the relaxation. Tense again. Now release. Notice the relaxation. Let go. Breathe.

When you are ready, slowly come back to the present moment. Wake up your feet and hands, shaking them out if you wish. Wiggle your body and move around slowly at whatever pace is comfortable for you. Before you resume regular activity, take a few moments just to rest and breathe. You may use this recording at any time to help bring awareness to your muscles and to release tension in a safe, mindful way.

Use the following chart to record your daily progressive muscle relaxation practice. Make several copies of this chart, and keep a record of the time you spend practicing this relaxation technique until it is truly a habit. You want it to become routine—something you do without thinking, like brushing your teeth. It is also useful to note your general mood, both before and after, your daily relaxation exercise. Use the Notes column for any observations about your experience.

Day	**Time of day**	**Mood before relaxation**	**Mood after relaxation**	**Notes**
Sunday				
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				
Saturday				

Reflections on This Exercise

After practicing progressive muscle relaxation for one week, describe how you feel physically and emotionally.

_____

_____

_____

Describe any challenges or obstacles to practicing this technique daily.

_____

_____

_____

What did you do to overcome those obstacles?

_____

_____

_____

Developing Problem-Solving Skills

You Should Know

When you are facing challenging and stressful situations, it can be easy to spend more of your energy coping with your emotions, rather than addressing the problems themselves. Waiting for the problem to resolve or go away on its own can amplify the negative impact on your well-being.

If you actively work on solutions, you are better able to emotionally cope with problems; you will also feel more in control. Life will seem more manageable and less stressful. Developing problem-solving skills is an effective way to strengthen your resilience so you are better able to address—and cope with—problems during times of adversity.

Check off the statements that describe you:

___ My fears about making mistakes affect my decision-making ability.

___ When faced with a problem, I feel hopeless and helpless. It's hard for me to look at the problem from different angles to come up with the best solution.

___ I have little faith in my capabilities and skills.

___ If I could, I would ask other people to make difficult decisions for me.

___ When others get stuck, I am unable to think of solutions to problems.

___ I am fearful of what life will "throw" at me because I don't think I can handle it.

___ I have a hard time asking for other people's ideas or advice.

___ Once I've found a solution that I think will work, I stop looking for other options.

___ It's impossible for me to think "outside the box" to address problems.

___ When faced with a difficult problem, I tend to get discouraged easily.

If you checked off three or more statements, you probably have a difficult time solving problems. Your well-being is probably negatively affected by your lack of problem-solving skills.

What to Do

There are five basic steps to problem solving:

1. **Identify and understand the actual problem.** Be specific and objective.
2. **Break the problem down** into smaller, more manageable parts.
3. **Consider possible solutions.** Make a list of potential ways to solve your current problem. Be as open-minded as you can.

4. **Weigh the options** to decide which solution should be applied to the problem.

5. **Choose the best strategy and put your solution into action.**

These strategies can help you develop problem-solving skills:

Ask for help. When you feel overwhelmed by a situation, your emotions might make it difficult to see the problem objectively. Identify people you trust who can provide an unbiased point of view and provide suggestions to your dilemma.

Who are some of the people in your life that can support you in solving problems?

_____

_____

_____

Try a brainstorming session. Sometimes, the best way to solve a problem is to think creatively. The idea of brainstorming is to think of as many solutions as possible, without judging them on how realistic or silly they may seem. Make a list of all the possible solutions, and then review the list to find a solution that is most practical and most likely to succeed. Brainstorming sessions are most effective when done with other people so that you gather a variety of ideas.

Write down a problem you are currently facing:

_____

_____

_____

Write down your brainstorming ideas:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Then, write down the two best solutions:

1. _____

2. _____

Challenge your assumptions. It can be difficult to find solutions to your problems when you are unable to see past your assumptions and judgments. You may believe your problems are unsolvable, or that you are incapable of finding the answers.

Write down the assumptions you have about your problem, including reasons you believe your problems are unsolvable. Next, ask someone you trust to help you determine which of these statements are based in fact.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

What other problem-solving strategies have you tried, or which strategies have you seen others use successfully?

_____

_____

_____

Now, practice your problem-solving strategies for the next two weeks. Use the following chart to track the situation and the outcome.

As you practice solving problems, remember the following:

- Be optimistic. The problem is temporary, and you have what it takes to get through it.
- Start the exercise with small problems, and gradually build up to problems that you may have struggled with for some time.

Situation	Problem to solve	Strategy used	Outcome
My dog is not eating.	*Determine if dog is sick.*	*Asked for help—called vet to explain symptoms and get suggestions.*	*Vet asked me to bring in my dog. Turns out he had a rotten tooth that needed to be pulled.*

Reflections on This Exercise

Which strategies were most effective in solving your problems and relieving your stress?

_____

_____

_____

Which people in your life were most helpful and supportive in solving your problems?

_____

_____

_____

Maintaining Strong Social Connections

You Should Know

During times of suffering, it can be a natural impulse to reach out to others for support. However, the quality of your social connections matter. The stronger your social connections—the people who know you well and will care for you during difficult times—the more resilient you will be when facing an emotional or physical crisis.

In its resilience report, the American Psychological Association wrote, “Many studies show that the primary factor in resilience is having caring and supportive relationships within and outside the family. Relationships that create love and trust, provide role models and offer encouragement and reassurance, help bolster a person’s resilience.”

Additionally, strong social connections reduce loneliness while providing a sense of belonging. If you have superficial connections to a large number of people, you might still feel lonely. On the other hand, if you have a limited number of quality connections, you can be alone yet not experience loneliness.

What to Do

Identify the quality relationships in your life. When you think of your quality relationships, consider not only your romantic partner but also other important people in your life: family members, friends, coworkers, classmates, fellow members of worship centers, clubs, or groups, etc. These are people who are committed to you and the relationship you share; they are not just acquaintances.

Who are the quality relationships in your life?

_____

_____

_____

How do they support you during challenging times?

_____

_____

_____

Identify other sources of social connection. Social connections include professional relationships and community groups that are positive and supportive. Belonging to a professional or social group can increase your sense of value and belonging as you share common experiences, interests, or talents. Some examples include professional networking groups or an online book club. These groups can share helpful resources.

To what professional and social groups do you belong?

_____

_____

_____

How do these groups or members help you cope during challenging times?

_____

_____

_____

Identify sources of emotional support. A therapist, counselor, or support group can be effective in providing social and emotional connection during tough times. Social media support groups and virtual chats can also be a source of compassion, empathy, and nonjudgmental support, as members share experiences and stories of resilience.

Who are the emotional supports in your life?

_____

_____

_____

How do they support you and provide resources during challenging times?

_____

_____

_____

What can you do to build strong social connections?

_____

_____

_____

Select one or two activities that you will try for the next two to three weeks to build strong social connections and increase your coping skills. Complete the following chart, tracking the level of social support and coping skills you experience before and after your activities.

Rate your levels on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 = I feel totally unsupported, stressed out, and lonely, and 10 = I feel supported, experience a strong sense of belonging, and am able to cope. Add notes about your experiences.

Level of social support before (1–10)	Activity	Level of social support after (1–10)	Notes

Reflections on This Exercise

After completing this exercise, did you feel a stronger sense of belonging and experience an easier time coping with challenges? Describe your experience:

_____

_____

_____

What are some other ways you can improve your connections?

_____

_____

_____

Understanding What You Can Control in Your Life

You Should Know

You might feel you have little or no control over what happens to you, no matter how hard you work or how careful you are. Sometimes things go wrong in spite of your best efforts. However, the belief that all your experiences, both good and bad, are caused by luck or fate can lead to feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, anxiety, or depression.

What to Do

Rate these statements on a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 = this does not apply to me at all, to 10 = this always applies to me:

____ I feel I have very little control over my life and what happens to me.

____ I rarely get what I deserve.

____ I avoid setting goals or making plans because there are too many bad things that can happen along the way.

____ I am often pressured into doing things or making decisions I later regret.

____ Bad luck has caused many of the disappointments in my life.

____ In spite of my hard work and effort, my accomplishments go unnoticed.

____ Getting a good job depends mainly on being in the right place at the right time.

____ I often feel hopeless and powerless about situations in my life.

____ I make my decisions by flipping a coin.

Add up your total score: _____

If you scored 50 or more, you probably feel you have little control in your life, and you might experience depression, anxiety or feelings of hopelessness or helplessness.

Can you think of situations where your beliefs about control impacted your decision to change or improve your life? Describe:

_____

_____

_____

Next, you will focus on things you can control. Describe a time when you accomplished a task you set out to complete (for example, completing a home improvement or creative project). What skills and strengths did you use to accomplish it? How did you feel about yourself afterward?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Describe an accomplishment you are proud of that required your planning, motivation, and/or problem-solving skills (for example, completing a degree or certification program, quitting smoking, or planting a garden). What skills and strengths did you use to accomplish this task? What goals and intentions did you set for yourself? How much effort did it require? How did you feel about yourself afterward?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Describe a time when your efforts made you feel valuable, effective, and successful (for example, volunteering at a food pantry or running a 5K race). What did you do? How did you feel during the activity? How did you feel afterward?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Next, identify three small, achievable goals that are important or interesting to you. Include your desired date of completion. Then, answer the questions that follow each goal.

Goal #1 _____ Desired date of completion _____

Steps I need to take to make this happen:

_____

_____

_____

The things I can control within those steps are:

_____

_____

_____

The strengths and skills I can use to address those steps are:

_____

_____

_____

People and resources that can support me in achieving this goal are:

_____

_____

_____

Goal #2 _____ Desired date of completion _____

Steps I need to take to make this happen:

_____

_____

_____

The things I can control within those steps are:

_____

_____

_____

The strengths and skills I can use to address those steps are:

_____

_____

_____

People and resources that can support me in achieving this goal are:

_____

_____

_____

Goal #3 _____ Desired date of completion _____

Steps I need to take to make this happen:

_____

_____

_____

The things I can control within those steps are:

_____

_____

_____

The strengths and skills I can use to address those steps are:

_____

_____

_____

People and resources that can support me in achieving this goal are:

_____

_____

_____

Of course, things do not always go as planned. It is important to use self-compassion instead of beating yourself up or blaming other people/circumstances.

Who can you count on for support and help if you are unable to meet your goals, in spite of your best efforts?

_____

_____

_____

Reflections on This Exercise

Did this exercise increase the sense of control you have in your life? Explain:

_____

_____

_____

Did this exercise change the way you see the role of luck and chance in your past successes or lack of success? Explain:

_____

_____

_____

Pausing During a Distressing Situation

You Should Know

When confronted with distressing situations, it can be challenging to remember healthy coping strategies you have learned. It might seem easier and feel more natural to return to unhealthy habits than to identify helpful techniques to manage your emotions. Taking a step back from an emotionally upsetting situation gives you the opportunity to examine the situation more objectively. As a result, you are more likely to choose healthier solutions and coping techniques.

Think of a recent situation when you experienced upsetting emotions and responded by acting impulsively or resorted to harmful urges. Then, answer these questions:

What happened?

_____

_____

_____

What were your emotions during this situation?

_____

_____

_____

How did you react?

_____

_____

_____

How did you feel afterward?

_____

_____

_____

What to Do

The following strategy, which uses the acronym REST, lays out the steps to help you pause, clear your head, and then determine a helpful plan of action to address the situation. By encouraging you to briefly shift your attention from emotions and urges to facts and solutions, REST can be used as the first step in changing your unhealthy habits.

***R*elax.** Take a "time out" from the situation to focus on your well-being. Go for a walk, take a hot bath, call a supportive friend, or even just take some deep breaths or count to ten.

***E*valuate.** Identify the facts within the distressing situation. Notice how you feel physically and emotionally. Observe what other people are doing and how they are reacting. Identify any threats to your safety.

***S*et an intention.** Create a goal or plan to address the situation; for example, by choosing a coping skill, asking someone for help, calling a family meeting, or negotiating with others.

***T*ake action.** Put your plan into action with intention and awareness. While you may not necessarily resolve the situation, this action will be more effective than the impulsive behavior you would have otherwise carried out.

You might need to repeat some or all of the REST steps during a particularly overwhelming or upsetting situation. But with practice, it can become a new habit to help you manage your emotions and cope in healthier ways.

Using the distressing situation you described earlier, imagine how you could have responded differently using REST.

What could you have done to relax during this situation?

_____

_____

_____

If you had evaluated the facts of this situation, what could you have noticed or learned?

_____

_____

_____

What set intention, or plan, could you have used?

_____

_____

_____

If you had taken action based on that intention, what could have happened?

_____

_____

_____

How would your response or reaction have been different?

_____

_____

_____

The key to the REST strategy is to identify the moment when you will choose how to react to an upsetting situation: with harmful habits or with healthier coping skills. These indicators can help you identify that moment:

- You feel an intense negative emotion that usually results in avoidance or becoming confrontational.
- You are suddenly in physical or emotional pain.
- You notice the urge to act impulsively with a harmful behavior, even if there is no obvious reason.

Now, think of a recurring situation that causes you overwhelming or distressing emotions and harmful urges (for example, a confrontational family member, an unreasonably demanding boss, an overdue mortgage, etc.). Describe the situation:

_____

_____

_____

How can you use REST to address this situation next time it happens?

R:_____

E:_____

S:_____

T:_____

During what other recurring situations could the REST technique be helpful?

_____

_____

_____

Reflections on This Exercise

Did this exercise increase your ability to identify healthier coping skills and solutions to distressing situations? Explain:

_____

_____

_____

Which of the REST steps did you find easiest to do? Explain:

_____

_____

_____

Which of the REST steps did you find most challenging? Explain:

_____

_____

_____

Self-Soothing to Tolerate Distress

You Should Know

Tolerating distress can be very challenging for many people—worry, fear, anxiety, sadness, anger, and other difficult emotions can be overwhelming. When you feel overwhelmed, it is often hard to remember that you have the capacity to do nice things for yourself, comfort yourself, or otherwise lower your emotional reactivity and distress by self-soothing.

What to Do

When you experience distress, it can be hard to relax your mind and body. Learning how to do this is important for your mental and physical health. Your body need not be in a constant state of agitation or stress. Your mind need not be in constant state of fear, anger, or exhaustion. The more you learn how to soothe yourself, the more in control of your life and your experiences you can be. You deserve peace and serenity. You deserve to feel calm and comfortable.

Write about the primary problems you are experiencing in your ability to soothe yourself:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

A key approach to learning to self-soothe is to explore activities that use the five senses. Here are some things you can do to self-soothe using each sense.

Vision

- Go to a park, a beach, a river, or somewhere outside where you can keep a safe distance. Observe the water, the sky, the trees, the birds or animals.
- Create a soothing collage by cutting out pictures from magazines or and arranging them on a board or piece of paper to look at.

- Do an internet search for pleasing images from nature. Print them out or store them on your phone to look at whenever you want.
- Paint, color, or draw a picture of something that brings you pleasure—a flower, an animal, whatever you choose is fine.
- Look at pictures of loved ones or people who care about you.
- Play soothing nature videos or gentle animal scenes on YouTube.

Add your ideas here:

_____

_____

Smell

- Light a scented candle or incense, if you feel safe with handling matches or a lighter.
- Put on a dab of scented oil or perfume you like.
- Buy a sachet of lavender or another herb to smell whenever you want to.
- Walk in your neighborhood and smell the plants and flowering bushes.
- Bake or cook something whose smell you really enjoy.

Add your ideas here:

_____

_____

Hearing

- Listen to calming music—whatever suits you, whether it's classical or jazz or country or world music, whether it has vocals or not.
- Listen to audio books or podcasts on subjects that are relaxing to you.
- Listen to guided meditations, visualizations, or relaxation exercises from the internet.
- Go for a walk and simply listen to all the sounds you can identify—birds, cars, motors, airplanes, whatever is in your environment. Pay close attention to each sound.
- Download recordings of pleasing sounds in nature such as running water, birds cheeping, crickets chirping, and so on.

Add your ideas here:

_____

_____

Touch

- Find a soft, smooth piece of fabric (velvet, satin, microfiber) and keep it in your pocket or purse so you can touch it any time you want.
- Take a soothing shower and really feel the pleasant sensations of water on your body.
- Take a long, luxurious bath with a scented oil or bath salts.
- Give yourself a foot rub; put lotion all over your body, gently and slowly.
- Hug your pet.
- Wear your favorite “comfort” clothes (sweats, flannel shirt, and so on).

Add your ideas here:

_____

_____

Taste

- Make yourself or ask someone to make you your favorite food. Eat it mindfully; that is, chew slowly and enjoy every sensation. Focus only on your food, without distraction.
- Eat a sweet piece of fruit and taste it fully.
- Drink soothing or calming tea or hot chocolate.
- Suck on a juicy Popsicle or eat an ice cream bar. Notice and enjoy the cold sensation.
- Enjoy a big bowl of hearty soup. Eat it slowly, savoring the salty, creaminess, or different flavors.

Add your ideas here:

_____

_____

Reflections on This Exercise

Which of the self-soothing activities did you try? What was the experience like for you?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

What was the main obstacle you encountered in this exercise, if any? Explain:

_____

_____

_____

What are you willing to try in the near future that might be out of your comfort zone?

_____

_____

_____

Creating a Crisis Survival Plan

You Should Know

For many people who struggle with tolerating distress, even healthy coping skills and strategies might not always work effectively. It is a sign of strength to ask for help when you need it. It is also a sign of strength to plan what to do, whom to call, and how to manage a crisis if or when it happens again.

You can create a toolkit of skills and strategies to keep at the ready at any time you are distressed. A crisis survival plan can be a vital tool to add to your toolkit.

What to Do

What are the typical ways you respond to distress? Do you tend to engage in unhealthy or self-destructive behaviors? Explain:

_____

_____

_____

To start your crisis survival plan, make a list of people you can turn to—think about family, friends, neighbors, counselors, coworkers, therapists, religious leaders, community leaders, sponsors, teacher, mentors, or acquaintances.

Name _____ Contact info _____

Name _____ Contact info _____

Name _____ Contact info _____

Name _____ Contact info _____

Name _____ Contact info _____

Next, write down the specific situation or circumstances in which you would use this plan, such as when you are overwhelmed, suicidal, about to self-harm, feeling scared or trapped, and so on.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

If you are in a crisis, you can also do the following:

- Find a support group or virtual self-help meeting.
- Call, FaceTime, or text a friend or supportive family member.
- Engage in an activity to distract yourself.

Add other ideas here:

_____

_____

Complete the following chart to keep track of when you used your crisis survival plan. Describe the crisis, as well as how you felt. Describe your actions and the outcome.

Crisis situation	How did you feel?	What did you do?	Outcome

Reflections on This Exercise

Describe your experiences using your crisis survival plan:

_____

_____

_____

What was hard about using your plan?

_____

_____

_____

What are two or three other things that you can put into place to expand your plan?

_____

_____

_____

Using “I” Statements to Communicate Effectively

You Should Know

You might have trouble communicating what you want and need to those who are important to you. If you are not communicating clearly, you might blame the person you are talking to for the problem, saying things like: “You never pay attention to me when I talk,” or “You just don’t understand me.”

These “you” statements blame the communication problem on the other person. Unfortunately, “you” statements likely make the listener feel defensive, and your communication breaks down further. What if you were to take responsibility for your communication by making “I” statements? This exercise is designed to show you how to do this.

What to Do

It is possible to express yourself, resolve conflicts, and get what you want in your relationships by using “I” statements. When you use “I” statements, you are speaking assertively from your own experience and taking responsibility for your own thoughts and feelings.

When you revise your “you” statements into “I” statements, you can accurately describe what you want, or how the other person’s behavior affects you. For example:

Instead of: “You’re always yelling at me!”

You could say: “I feel upset when you yell at me. Can we talk calmly, please?”

Instead of: “You’re always spending time with your friends. Don’t you care about me?”

You could say: “I’m concerned that we don’t spend any time together anymore. I miss you.”

Instead of: “You make me so mad!”

You could say: “I’m frustrated that you won’t take the doctor’s advice. I want you to be healthy.”

Write down some “you” statements that you frequently make when talking to others.

_____

_____

_____

Now, change these into “I” statements.

_____

_____

_____

Next, track situations where you normally use a “you” statement to express yourself or ask for what you need. Try using “I” statements, and then record the outcomes. Pay particular attention to how the other person responds.

Situation	Your thoughts and feelings	“I” statement you used	Outcome

Reflections on This Exercise

Did your communication improve when you shifted from “you” statements to “I” statements? Give an example and describe what happened:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Did anyone notice you were communicating in a different way? What did they say or do?

_____

_____

_____

What can you do to remind yourself to use “I” statements instead of “you” statements?

_____

_____

_____

Regulating Your Emotions

You Should Know

Most of us go through the day experiencing a range of emotions from pleasant to unpleasant. Some of these feelings are in our awareness and others are not. Sometimes the emotions that happen outside our awareness can cause us to make poor decisions, say things we regret, or take actions that cause us or others harm.

You can learn specific skills that can help with emotion regulation; that is, controlling your emotions and keeping them more in balance rather than shifting between extremes. In this worksheet, you will learn about the range of emotions and then practice simply observing and naming your own.

What to Do

In order to manage an emotion, you need to know what it is. The first step in learning emotion regulation is to become familiar with the range of emotions you can experience. Read the following list of pleasant and unpleasant emotions.

Pleasant

affectionate	friendly	relaxed
amused	fulfilled	relieved
appreciative	grateful	rested
calm	hopeful	safe
caring	joyful	satisfied
comfortable	loving	secure
confident	mellow	strong
curious	open	surprised
delighted	optimistic	thrilled
empowered	passionate	trusting
encouraged	peaceful	warm
excited	pleased	

Unpleasant

aggravated
agitated
ambivalent
angry
annoyed
anxious
apprehensive
ashamed
bad
bored
confused
contempt
depressed
disappointed
disconnected
discouraged
disgusted
disheartened
edgy
embarrassed
enraged
exasperated
exhausted
frightened
frustrated
furious
guarded
guilty
helpless
impatient
insecure
irritated
lonely
needy
nervous
overwhelmed
remorseful
resentful
restless
sad
scared
self-conscious
suspicious
tense
terrified
tired
discomfort
unhappy
upset
vulnerable

Are all of these feelings familiar to you? Which ones are? Which ones aren't? Write some reflections on the lines below:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

In the following chart, describe situations or experiences in which you notice your feelings in the coming week. By labeling your feelings, you can take a step back and mindfully assess them, learning how to make good choices about what to do next.

Start with PLEASANT or UNPLEASANT. Next, try to identify the general feeling you notice, such as HAPPY, SAD, ANGRY, SCARED. If you feel ready, try to be more specific. Use the above list of feelings as a guide, but feel free to use other words that come to mind.

Date	**Situation**	**Pleasant or unpleasant?**	**Label the GENERAL feeling**	**Specific feelings and reactions**

Reflections on This Exercise

What emotions did you become aware of that you weren't previously aware of?

_____

_____

_____

What was the main obstacle you encountered in identifying your emotions?

_____

_____

_____

What was easy about it? What would you like to do to continue the practice of naming and noticing your emotions? Be specific.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Controlling Your Urges

You Should Know

Controlling urges can be very difficult for most of us. Whether you are trying to control your substance use, your gambling, or other self-defeating or self-destructive behaviors, you already know that it is much more than just a matter of willpower.

When you have an urge to do something, even if it is something that you know is self-destructive, the pleasure centers in your brain take a shortcut past the thinking part of your brain and send a “do it now” signal to the parts of your brain that control your actions. This happens within a split second.

You can help control your urges and resist temptations by activating the thinking part of your brain. When you do this repeatedly it becomes a habit, and eventually you will find that you are able to resist the temptation to do things that are self-defeating and harmful.

A little preparation will help:

- Stay away from situations or things that trigger you.
- When you feel you are going to be overwhelmed by your urges, call someone and talk it out.
- Remove temptations from your home.
- Get enough sleep.
- Exercise at least thirty minutes every day.
- Eat a balanced and nutritious diet.
- Use deep breathing and relaxation techniques when you start thinking about your urges.

This worksheet can also help you control your urges. Make copies and keep them handy so that you can fill one out each time you feel yourself losing self-control.

What to Do

Complete this worksheet when you feel the urge to do something that you know is self-defeating or harmful.

Date: _____ Time: _____

Describe your urge.

_____

_____

_____

What triggered this urge?

_____

_____

_____

What are the negative consequences of giving in to this urge?

_____

_____

_____

What are the positive consequences of controlling your urges?

_____

_____

_____

What can you do instead of giving in to your urges?

_____

_____

_____

Who can you call or contact that can give you support to control your urges?

_____

_____

After completing this worksheet, rate your urges from 0 to 10, with 0 = My urges are gone, to 10 = My urges are still as strong as ever: _____

Reflections on This Exercise

What is the most effective thing you can you do to distract yourself when you have the urge to do something self-destructive or unhealthy? Describe:

_____

_____

_____

What did you learn about yourself when you were completing this exercise?

_____

_____

_____

What was the most difficult thing about controlling your urges?

_____

_____

_____

Welcoming Mindfulness into Your Life

You Should Know

Have you ever driven your car along a familiar route only to arrive not remembering how you got there? Have you ever promised yourself just a few pretzels only to suddenly realize that somehow you have eaten the whole bag? This is what it means to be mindless, to travel though life on autopilot, never stopping to recognize what is really important to you.

Mindfulness means being attentive and aware of the thoughts, feelings, and physical sensations that are happening in your immediate environment. It means accepting all this information without judging it as right or wrong, bad or good. Being mindful allows you to function and grow along with the moment instead of flailing about in a past that you cannot change or a future impossible to predict. If you are mindful, you take your time and allow yourself to appreciate every moment of your present.

Practicing mindfulness meditations will help when you

- need to turn your attention away from worrisome fears and what-ifs and instead become attuned to the sensations, sights, sounds, and smells of what is taking place right in front of you;
- are at your wits' end with the realization that you cannot escape the relentless disturbing images that are flashing through your mind;
- find yourself criticizing your past mistakes;
- find yourself agonizing over a potential future calamity;
- find yourself desperately trying to stop yourself from engaging in some kind of unhealthy behavior.

You don't need to buy lots of fancy equipment or learn complicated words. You can sit, stand, or lie down with or without a yoga mat or cushion. You just need to commit to a set amount of time every day. To introduce mindfulness meditation into your life:

Understand that your breath is important. The focus is often on the breath because the physical sensation of breathing is universal and natural to everyone. It is the center of life. Always come back to focusing on your breath, no matter what else your thoughts, emotions, and physical sensations tell you to do.

Know that the goal is not relaxation. Mindfulness meditation does not equal relaxation. The goal is not to escape or avoid your pain but to observe it without attaching any meaning to it and move on from it by turning your attention to the present moment.

Return and repeat. It is natural for your mind to wander at first but simply recognize what is happening and return to your practice until you can focus for a longer period of time.

Be nice to yourself. Don't criticize your abilities. This is not a contest, and you don't win or lose by being the best or the worst. You win by becoming one with yourself and leaning in to your world as it currently is.

What to Do

The 4 7 8 method of meditation will help you focus on what is taking place around you instead of mindlessly rushing through life. It can help you better cope with the difficult thoughts and feelings that cause you stress and anxiety in your everyday life.

This meditation suggests sitting because that is where many people feel most comfortable as a beginning step. However, you can also lie down. Practice this exercise daily.

Sit restfully. Sit in a comfortable but firm chair that supports your arms and legs.

Observe your legs. Rest the bottoms of your feet on the floor. Feel the pressure of the floor pressing first against your heels, and then your toes.

Straighten your upper body. Sit straight but naturally. Don't force yourself.

Observe your arms. Rest your hands and arms where they feel the most comfortable and stretch your hands out, feeling the stretch in each finger.

Rest your eyes. You can close your eyes, or if you don't feel comfortable doing that, simply allow them to wander where they want to without force.

Begin to breathe in and out.

- Exhale through your mouth.
- Close your mouth and inhale for four seconds through your nose.
- Hold your breath for seven seconds.
- Exhale through your mouth for eight seconds.
- Repeat least four times in a row.

When you're finished, slowly relax your focus and take a moment to notice any sounds in your environment, your thoughts, and your emotions.

The following activities represent a variety of ways to integrate mindfulness into your everyday life. Experiment with them to find the ones that appeal to you the most.

Mindful Eating

Take a small amount of food and eat it very slowly, taking time to see the food, paying attention to every detail, line, bump, or ripple; smell the food in order to build your awareness of what it might taste like; taste the food by chewing it slowly so that you experience the entire flavor; listen to the sound of yourself chewing or crunching to draw your attention to yourself and the power of your physical presence.

Mindful Observation

Take the time to become aware of your surroundings, to notice and appreciate the simple beauty of what is in plain sight, in a way you might not usually do. This exercise is particularly helpful when you find yourself beginning to worry about the future in an open-ended and non-purposeful way.

Choose a natural object from your present environment (for example, a flower, rock, or puddle) and focus on it for a minute or two.

Look at the object as if it were completely unknown to you, as if you were a young child seeing it for the first time. Be completely still and simply notice the details that make up the object. Watch for at least five minutes, or longer if your concentration allows. Try to increase the length of time each time you do the exercise.

Mindful Immersion

Choose a thoughtless, mundane, even tedious task that you complete regularly, and take the time to observe it carefully and with purpose. This practice is designed to promote an increased awareness and appreciation of simple daily tasks and the results they achieve.

Select a task you do daily (for example, opening or locking doors, shutting off lights, turning off a faucet) or frequently (for example, laundry, washing dishes, washing the car).

At the very moment you engage in this task—putting your hands in the dishwater or folding one towel—take the time to be mindful of each individual step and to consider where and how the task will eventually end.

Notice your surroundings, the feel of the object in your hands, and your emotional state.

Immersion is particularly helpful when you are engaging in a compulsive act that you usually mindlessly complete in a haze of frenzied activity.

Mindful Appreciation

Commit to noticing five things in your day that usually go unappreciated (for example, a coffee pot, dishwasher, mail delivery, a bird outside your window). Notice its process, the way it looks, the sounds it makes, and its role in making your life easier.

Reflections on This Exercise

How did it feel to integrate meditation into your life?

_____

_____

_____

Which practice did you like best, and why?

_____

_____

_____

Which practice did you like least, and why?

_____

_____

_____

How can you continue to bring more meditation practice into your life?

_____

_____

_____

Is there anything in particular you learned from this exercise?

_____

_____

_____

What Has Helped You?

You Should Know

Personal change can be a long and sometimes unexpected process. You can find solutions to your problems and conflicts from sudden insight or by following a carefully crafted plan. You can find help from working with a counselor, and also from books, friends, information you see on the internet and social media, and much more.

Whatever your process in discovering solutions to your problems, writing down what you have learned will be an important part of making lasting changes.

This worksheet is designed to help you think about what has helped you along your journey to overcome your problems.

What to Do

Take some time, at least once a month, to fill in this worksheet. You will likely find added benefit from sharing it with your therapist, family member, or a close friend. Of course, you can also use this worksheet more frequently. Using it more frequently may be helpful in times of stress and during difficult life transitions

Today's date: _____

Specific skills I have that helped me in the past:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Specific books or resources that have helped me:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Things that have inspired and motivated me (for example, quotes, people, events, activities):

_____

_____

_____

_____

Decisions I made that could help me with future choices:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Spiritual practices or spiritual moments that have guided or inspired me:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Changes in my habits that have made a difference:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Other things that have helped me:

_____

_____

_____

After reflecting on what has helped you, what is the one thing you think made the most important positive impact?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Improving Self-Efficacy

You Should Know

Self-efficacy refers to the strong sense of trust in your abilities and competencies, and it determines how you think and feel about yourself. It influences your thoughts, emotions, actions, and motivation, and enhances self-control. It is a way of understanding and acknowledging what you are truly capable of. An important component of resilience, self-efficacy supports you in achieving goals, feeling accomplished, and enhancing overall well-being.

There are four sources of self-efficacy:

Mastery experiences. Success directly impacts the way you think about yourself, boosting your confidence and increasing the likelihood you will achieve similar tasks again. Building self-efficacy through mastery requires resilience to manage expectations and accept inevitable failures.

Vicarious experiences. Observing others around you, especially people you can relate to, motivates you to believe that if they can do it, you can too.

Modeling experiences. Role models are the people you follow, admire, and want to replicate. Their actions, principles, and achievements teach you and motivate you. You are more likely to put in the effort and believe you can be successful.

Positive emotional experiences. Your mental and physical well-being influences self-efficacy. Self-efficacy improves with when you have experiences that bring you a sense of happiness and fulfillment.

Check off any of the following statements that apply to you:

____ I avoid accepting challenges because I think I will fail.

____ I strongly believe I am incapable of performing complicated tasks.

____ I tend to focus on my failures or shortcomings.

____ I am not confident.

____ I have a hard time making commitments.

____ It is hard for me to recover from setbacks or failures.

____ I quickly lose interest in activities, projects, or work.

____ I want results without putting in the effort.

____ I am very anxious about failing.

____ I feel depressed thinking about past failures.

____ I tend to focus more on my weaknesses and less on my strengths.

____ I lose motivation and feel helpless when my efforts fail or are not appreciated.

____ I don't trust myself.

____ Total you've checked

If you checked off more than three statements, you can work to improve your self-efficacy. People with low self-efficacy may experience more disappointment and feel less fulfilled.

What can you do to increase your self-efficacy? Here are some ways that can help you:

Set simple goals. Goal setting is crucial to building and sustaining self-efficacy. Set reasonable goals and break them into smaller goals, working on achieving them one at a time. You can celebrate small successes, avoid stressing about the results, and more easily manage your goals—one step at a time.

Stay in the "stretch zone." If you want to be highly productive, spend more time in the "stretch zone," where you take reasonable risks and bounce back from failures and setbacks. Try new things outside your comfort zone, face challenges, and accept failures and criticism with grace.

View the big picture. Look beyond short-term loss, sort your priorities, plan, stick to your goals, and focus.

Reframe obstacles. Redefine the way you view obstacles to effectively cope with and understand life's inevitable challenges.

What to Do

These four exercises will help you build and improve your self-efficacy.

The Three Things Exercise. This activity allows you to track daily activities and how they make you feel.

List three things you did within the past week that went well.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

How did you feel after doing these three things successfully?

_____

_____

_____

What are three things you want to accomplish within the next few weeks/months?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Are there potential obstacles? List them and try to reframe them.

_____

_____

_____

How will you feel after you have accomplished them all?

_____

_____

_____

Positive Self-Talk. Set aside ten minutes every day to talk to yourself in front of the mirror. Say whatever you would like to say. You can compliment yourself, motivate yourself, or ask yourself what is making you happy or sad. Remember to respond and note what your inner voice says. Use a journal to write about your self-talk. Refer back to the list of ways to increase self-efficacy as a reminder to view the big picture and reframe.

Reviewing Your Achievements. It is easy to focus on failure, but if you have high self-efficacy, you will more likely focus on your successes and achievements. Recalling achievements and past successes reignites your self-confidence and makes you feel optimistic that you can be successful in the future. Make a list of past accomplishments and successes, small or large. Refer back to the “stretch zone” way of improving self-efficacy, and see if you can come up with ways to stretch outside your comfort zone.

List your past achievements and successes here:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

What can you do to stretch outside of your comfort zone? Successfully accomplishing tasks that make you slightly uncomfortable will increase self-efficacy.

_____

_____

_____

Self-Awareness. Author Gretchen Rubin stated, "Self-awareness is a key to self-mastery," and self-mastery is the direct path to self-efficacy. You can practice self-awareness in a journal by recording your thoughts and feelings each day. Include physical cues to help you understand your feelings.

Reflections on This Exercise

After completing the four exercises to improve self-efficacy, describe your experiences:

_____

_____

_____

What did you learn about yourself while completing this activity?

_____

_____

_____

Giving Up Judging People Negatively

You Should Know

Many people have a difficult time relating to others without being highly judgmental. Some people divide the world into “good” and “bad” with no room to see that the people around them have many different qualities. Other people are overly critical. They focus most of their energy on the things people do that they think are wrong, and so they are often angry, unhappy, and lonely.

Do any of these thoughts sound like ones you have?

- My _____ is so mean, I can’t stand to be with her.
- _____ is not a good friend, because I keep inviting her out, and she never invites me to go with her.
- My boss is incompetent and my work is miserable.
- My _____ thinks about everyone but me.
- My _____ is really a loser. No wonder they are having problems.

Write down three negative judgments you have:

_____

_____

_____

If you are prone to negatively judge others, it is probably detracting from your own happiness and life satisfaction. This worksheet can help. You don’t have to “change” the way you think or feel, but rather just observe and acknowledge your negative and critical thoughts as if they are clouds floating by in the sky. In other words, don’t react to these thoughts with any particular emotion. Just let them come and go.

What to Do

Use the following chart to keep track of your negative judgments about the people in your life. As soon as you have each thought, take a deep breath and let the thought float away. Record your negative judgments for three consecutive days. Use additional pages if you need them.

Day	Time	Negative judgment
Day	Time	Negative judgment

What can you do to turn your judgments into positive statements? Choose four negative judgments and rewrite them as positive statements. For example, instead of saying, “My sister is such a loser. No wonder she can’t find a job,” switch it to, “My sister is going through a rough time. What can I do to support her in her job search?”

1. Negative judgment: _____

Positive statement: _____

2. Negative judgment: _____

Positive statement: _____

3. Negative judgment: _____

Positive statement: _____

4. Negative judgment: _____

Positive statement: _____

Reflections on this Exercise

Did you easily catch yourself making negative judgments? If not, what can you do to become more aware of when you are negatively judging others?

_____

_____

_____

After completing this exercise, do you think you will be less judgmental in the future? Explain:

_____

_____

_____

Developing Self-Compassion

You Should Know

You might have something about yourself that you do not like—something that causes you to feel shame, to feel insecure, or to feel not "good enough." Everyone does; even people who seem to have everything (beauty, wealth, intelligence, and more) are often living with a sense of great inadequacy.

Do you think you are self-critical? Do you often feel you are not as good as the people around you or that there is something really wrong with you? Ask yourself if you really need to suffer from your sense of not being "good enough." Suffering is part of the human experience, and we all will have times of pain, failure, and loss. But do you really have to add to your suffering? Do you have to make yourself suffer more?

Kristin Neff, a psychologist who has dedicated her life to teaching the importance of self-compassion, notes that self-compassion is not self-pity. She explains: "When individuals feel self-pity, they become immersed in their own problems and forget that others have similar problems. They ignore their interconnections with others and instead feel that they are the only ones in the world who are suffering."

Self-compassion is also very different from self-indulgence. Self-indulgence is merely giving yourself short-term pleasure, which may actually get in the way of your happiness and well-being. You may indulge yourself with a big bowl of ice cream, or buying something special, or binge-watching your favorite show. These indulgences are fine once in a while, but as you can see, they have little to do with self-compassion.

This worksheet is designed to help you bring self-compassion into your life. It will help you show the same compassion to yourself that you would show to someone you care about very much.

What to Do

Begin by writing something about yourself you don't like. Write down one issue or thought that often makes you feel inadequate or bad about yourself, such as your physical appearance, your work, a relationship issue, a mistake you made, and so on. Describe that issue below by completing the sentence.

I feel bad about myself because:

_____

_____

_____

_____

What emotions come up for you when you think about this aspect of yourself? Write down as many emotions as you can:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Now take a moment to sit with these emotions even though they may make you uncomfortable. Just feel them without judging them. You might have some images or words come to mind. Don't judge them or try to get rid of them. Just observe them. They are not you, but rather only thoughts and images you have in your mind.

Write down any images or words that come to mind:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Now that you are in touch with your self-critical thoughts and feelings, think about an imaginary friend who is unconditionally loving, accepting, kind, and compassionate. Imagine that this friend can see all your strengths and all your weaknesses, including the aspects of yourself you wish you could hide from others.

Reflect on what this friend feels toward you and how they love and accept you exactly as you are, with all your very human imperfections. This friend has a profound understanding of what it means to be human. This friend is kind and forgiving toward you. This friend loves you unconditionally in spite of what you think of as your problems and faults.

This friend wisely understands your life history and the millions of things that have happened in your life to create you as you are in this moment.

This friend understands that the things that make you feel bad about yourself are connected to many aspects of your life you didn't choose: your genes, your family history, the place where you were born, and many other things outside your control.

Write a letter to yourself from the perspective of this imaginary friend, focusing on the perceived inadequacy you tend to judge yourself for. What would this friend say to you about your flaws from the perspective of unlimited compassion?

In the words of this friend, express the deep compassion they feel for you, especially for the pain you feel when you judge yourself so harshly.

Write down what else this friend would say to alleviate some of your pain.

Write down what this friend would say to help you feel that you are only human, that all people have both strengths and weaknesses.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

If you think this friend would suggest possible changes you should make, write them down. Make sure these suggestions would embody feelings of unconditional understanding and compassion.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

What else would your friend say to you to express acceptance, kindness, and caring for you?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

What would this friend say to express their desire for your health and happiness?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Take a few minutes to feel this compassion. Feel the compassion from your imaginary friend as it soothes and comforts you. Sit back and close your eyes and feel what it is like to experience unconditional love from someone who accepts you exactly as you are, without thinking for a moment even the slightest critical thought.

Hold on to this feeling for another minute or two.

Now, imagine that your friend wants to leave you with one important thought to carry with you. Just reading this one thought pours soothing compassion into you and comforts you like a cool breeze on a hot day or a warm blanket on a cold night.

Write down this one thought.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Now, write down this thought again very slowly. With each word, see if you can feel the compassion and acceptance behind this thought.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Developing Empathy

You Should Know

Do people often say to you that you do not understand them? Do people often refer to you as "uncaring"?

Empathy is the ability to not only see another person's point of view but also to understand their feelings. Most people assume that everyone is born with the same capacity for empathy, but that is not really the case. Some people have a high degree of empathy, and some people do not seem to have a great deal of empathy at all. Most scientists think that the degree of empathy a person has is a combination of their genetic makeup and their experience.

People brought up in a home where there was physical or emotional abuse, or where their parents had mental health problems like drug or alcohol abuse, may have more difficulty in feeling empathy for others when they are adults.

Whether or not you naturally feel empathy for others, it is still important to note that understanding the point of view of other people is important to having good relationships, whether they are with family, friends, or colleagues at work. Empathy is essential to developing any kind of intimate relationship with a spouse or partner.

This worksheet is designed to help you pay more attention to the needs of others by observing at least five people and performing an act that helps them without being asked.

What to Do

In the next week, look for opportunities to help others. Perform at least five acts for five different people that reflect your understanding of what each person needs. You might cook a surprise dinner for someone you care about who is busy and stressed.

Record what you saw that triggered your desire to help each person, what you actually did, and how they reacted.

You might want to make copies of this worksheet and increase your empathic behavior on an ongoing basis. If you practice this, you will likely find that you will have closer and more positive relationships with the people in your life.

Date	What triggered your empathy?	How did you express your empathy?	How did the person react to your good deed?

Reflections on this Exercise

Did you find it difficult to pay more attention to the needs of others? How did you remind yourself to do this?

_____

_____

_____

What was the most surprising reaction you got from the people you helped?

_____

_____

_____

Was there anything you would have done differently?

_____

_____

_____

Asking for What You Want and Need

You Should Know

You might have a difficult time effectively communicating your wants and needs. You might be shy about asking for what you want. Or, you might feel you don't deserve to get what you want, even though it might be important to you. You might have a difficult time being assertive without the fear of making someone angry.

This worksheet is designed to help you think about how you typically ask for what you want and need to communicate more effectively in certain situations.

What to Do

Put a check next to each statement that describes what you did at a specific time when you wanted something from someone. Then, describe what happened under the statements you have checked.

_____ I did not ask for what I wanted, even though it was important.

What happened?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____ I hinted at what I wanted, but I did not expect to get it.

What happened?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____ I asked tentatively for what I wanted, but I did not expect to get it.

What happened?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____ I asked gracefully for what I wanted, but I did not expect to get it.

What happened?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____ I asked confidently for what I wanted, while accepting the fact that I might get “no” for an answer.

What happened?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____ I asked confidently for what I wanted and pursued getting it, even though I knew I might get “no” for an answer.

What happened?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____ I asked firmly for what I wanted, conveying that I would not take “no” for an answer.

What happened?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____ I asked firmly for what I wanted, I negotiated with the person, and I eventually got something close to what I wanted.

What happened?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____ I would not take "no" for an answer and I got what I wanted.

What happened?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Reflections on This Exercise

Write about a time you asked for what you wanted but did not get it. What could you have done or said differently? Be specific.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Did this worksheet allow you to think of ways you can effectively ask for what you want and need in the future? Explain:

_____

_____

_____

Increasing Flow Experiences

You Should Know

In psychological terms, “flow” is a mental state in which a person is fully immersed in a feeling of energized focus while performing a challenging activity. People more commonly call this “being in the zone.” Many psychologists feel that when people have frequent experiences of flow, preferably several times a day, they experience more positive emotions, as well as a sense of well-being and purpose.

Flow is a feeling in which even difficult tasks become easy. You lose track of time because you are so involved in the activity. Runners often talk about a runner’s high, when running even long distances becomes almost effortless. Some people experience flow while doing a hobby, like gardening or restoring their car. Some people are lucky enough to experience flow doing their work.

Sonja Lyubomirsky, in her book *The How of Happiness*, writes: “The experience of flow leads us to be involved in life (rather than be alienated from it), to enjoy activities (rather than to find them dreary), to have a sense of control (rather than helplessness), and to feel a strong sense of self (rather than unworthiness). All these factors imbue life with meaning and lend it a richness and intensity. And happiness.”

You will know you are experiencing a flow activity when:

- You are completely involved in and focused on what you are doing.
- There is a sense of great pleasure as you perform a task and you feel outside of everyday reality.
- There is a sense of inner clarity; you know what needs to be done and you get immediate feedback on how well you are doing.
- You know that the activity is doable, even though it may be difficult. You are confident that you have the necessary skills to successfully complete the task.
- You lose your sense of self, and your worries and concerns drift away. You lose track of time, and you are completely focused on the present moment.
- There is intrinsic motivation—whatever you are doing to produce flow becomes its own reward.

The feelings of flow are a natural high, and, in fact, your brain does produce chemicals that make you feel high, including endorphins and endocannabinoids, which are a naturally synthesized version of THC. This is the chemical responsible for the buzz that marijuana produces.

What to Do

This worksheet will help you examine how you can have more periods of flow in your life. Think about activities that create flow for you. Then, use the chart to record your success at creating flow activities each day.

List hobbies that you feel produce a sense of flow.

_____

_____

List challenging activities that produce flow, such as crossword puzzles, Scrabble, and so on.

_____

_____

List exercise or other physical activities that produce flow.

_____

_____

List cleaning and organizing activities that produce flow.

_____

_____

List other activities that produce flow.

_____

_____

Write down the flow activities you do each day and rate your overall mood on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 = neutral mood, and 10 = very positive mood.

Day	Flow activities	Time spent	Rating of overall mood
Sunday			
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			

Reflections on This Exercise

After completing this exercise, can you more easily include flow activities in your day? Explain:

_____

_____

_____

Developing the Habit of Gratitude

You Should Know

Research suggests an "attitude of gratitude" will contribute to your happiness. Expressing gratitude encourages you to savor life's positive experiences, instead of focusing on obstacles or negative events and emotions.

A consistent gratitude practice offers the following benefits:

- Improved sleep quality
- Fewer medical visits
- Fewer depressive symptoms
- Increased ability to cope with stress and trauma
- Improved relationships and stronger social bonds
- Improved empathy toward others
- Reduced aggression and irritability
- Improved self-esteem and self-worth
- Increased mental strength and resilience
- Progress toward goals

It can be challenging to go from focusing on obstacles in your life to consistently appreciating what has helped you. This is especially true if you are depressed or anxious, have past trauma, or experience poor self-esteem. If you are stressed and focusing on the problems in your life, it might be hard to suddenly develop the habit of gratitude.

First, begin to notice less negative or even neutral circumstances in your life. For example, you may not be able to shift from "I'm a total failure," to "I'm grateful for the opportunities I'm offered." However, you can start small and begin to notice the positive things in the world around you.

Gratitude is a sincere and heartfelt appreciation of what you have in your life, and habitually engaging in actions that help you feel this emotion takes practice. To make your gratitude practice meaningful and less forced, try different activities to express your gratitude rather than repeatedly doing the same thing to successfully integrate gratitude into your daily life.

What to Do

Identify ten things/people/circumstances you are grateful for. Be sure to consider intangible things such as access to clean water or access to technology. Start by simply acknowledging what there is to be grateful for.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

Each day, spend five minutes simply being quiet and still. Ask for guidance for the day. This is similar to a mindfulness exercise, which has been shown to have many benefits, including stress reduction, reduced rumination, improved working memory, and enhanced focus.

Send positive thoughts to three people you might not particularly like. This activity reduces unwanted emotional responses and increases positive emotions. For example, you can begin to replace an unwanted emotion (disgust or repulsion) with the opposite emotion (caring or kindness). You begin to shift your mindset, and you are more likely to maintain a positive frame of mind.

Here are some additional suggestions of things you can do:

- Write down your feelings of gratitude in a journal.
- Write a note or email someone who has gone out of their way for you.
- Make a call to someone who has made a difference in your life.
- Give a donation to a charity to honor something you appreciate.
- Meditate on something that has made you feel particularly grateful.

Add other ideas here:

_____

_____

_____

Experiencing gratitude might seem simple, but you will only reap the benefits if it actually becomes a practice. This means more than just occasionally thinking grateful thoughts, but actually acknowledging

your gratitude each day, followed by positive actions to affirm the people and resources you appreciate. You can do this at the end of the day to acknowledge what has gone well and to support restful sleep, or at the beginning of the day to set positive intentions and lessen anticipatory stress.

On the following chart, write down what you are grateful for, what you did, and how it affected your mood or behavior.

Date	I am grateful for…	Activity	Effect on mood/behavior

Reflections on This Exercise

After practicing these exercises, did you develop a habit of gratitude? Describe your experiences:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

What did you learn about yourself during this activity?

_____

_____

_____

What else can you do to cultivate gratitude?

_____

_____

_____

Recognizing and Appreciating Your Resilience

You Should Know

Resilience is the ability to recover quickly from difficulties. It is an inner strength that people who persevere under the most difficult circumstances exhibit. Resilient people tend to maintain a more positive outlook, effectively cope with stress, and solve seemingly insurmountable problems.

In order for you to develop your resilience, it is important to focus on your strengths instead of your weaknesses by reminding yourself of the ways you have coped with difficulties in the past. Ask yourself, “How can I identify and appreciate my strengths?” or “How have I managed to carry on during the toughest times?” or “How did I manage to prevent things from becoming worse?”

Research has demonstrated that your self-esteem plays an important role in coping with stress and recovering from difficult events. Remind yourself of your strengths and accomplishments. When you make negative statements to yourself, immediately replace them with positive ones, such as, "I can do this," "I'm a great friend/mother/partner," or "I'm good at my job."

Becoming more confident in your own abilities, including your ability to respond to and deal with a crisis, is a great way to build resilience.

What to Do

This activity will help you identify your strengths and abilities so you can recognize and appreciate your resilience.

First, write down your strengths and skills. You might want to ask a friend or family member to add to the list.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Using the chart, write down things you have accomplished, including ordeals, dilemmas, or problems you have overcome. Reflect on what personal strengths were required for you to achieve each one. For example, completing a certification program might take determination and resolve. Refer to your list of strengths and skills. Include how you felt. Share your chart with someone who is supportive; they might think of an accomplishment you have not included, perhaps because you forgot about it or didn't even think of it as an accomplishment.

Accomplishment	Strengths	Feelings and emotions

Reflections on This Exercise

How did it feel to focus on what you are successful at rather than what is wrong in your life?

_____

_____

_____

In what ways were you surprised to learn how resilient you actually are in the face of adversity?

_____

_____

_____

Appendix

Helpful Hotlines

If you feel that you or someone you know is in a crisis, do not hesitate to reach out for help. The hotlines on this page can provide immediate phone support and most can help you find someone in your area to help with an ongoing problem.

NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE

PHONE: 1-800-273-273-8255

WEBSITE: www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

HOURS: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

With the understanding that every struggle is unique, this lifeline provides free, confidential support for people, and their loved ones, in crisis or emotional distress.

NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE HOTLINE

PHONE: 1-800-422-4453

WEBSITE: https://www.childhelp.org/hotline/

HOURS: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Professional crisis counselors serve as confidential resources, offer referrals, and provide support in 170 languages.

NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE

PHONE: 1-800-799-7233

WEBSITE: www.thehotline.org

HOURS: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Anyone experiencing domestic violence, seeking resources or information, or questioning unhealthy aspects of their relationship can talk with highly trained advocates on the phone or through an online chat service.

NATIONAL RUNAWAY SAFELINE

PHONE: 1-800-786-2929

WEBSITE: www.1800runaway.org

HOURS: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

This is a confidential and nonjudgmental safeline designed to help anyone who is considering running away or already has.

NATIONAL SEXUAL ASSAULT HOTLINE

PHONE: 1-800-656-4673

WEBSITE: www.rainn.org/get-help

HOURS: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

This hotline offers individual, confidential support for rape, sexual assault and incest victims and their loved ones.

THE TREVOR PROJECT

PHONE: 1-866-488-7386

TEXT: Text "Trevor" to 1-202-304-1200

WEBSITE: www.thetrevorproject.org

HOURS: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

LGBTQ youth (ages 13–24) in crisis, feeling suicidal, or just needing a nonjudgmental ear can talk to trained counselors.

NATIONAL CENTER ON ELDER ABUSE

PHONE: 1-855-500- 3537

WEBSITE: https://ncea.acl.gov/

HOURS: Monday to Friday, 9 a.m.–5 p.m., PT

The NCEA offers up-to-date information regarding research, training, best practices, news and resources on elder abuse, neglect and exploitation. The hotline offers support for anyone who suspects a friend or family member is being abused.

BOYS TOWN NATIONAL HOTLINE

PHONE: 1-800-448-3000

WEBSITE: www.boystown.org

HOURS: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

The organization aims to improve the circumstances of those suffering from abuse, addiction, abandonment, or violence. They help find foster homes for children in need, reunite families, provide intervention and assessment services, and treatment options for children with severe mental health and behavioral issues.

THE DOUGY CENTER (THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR GRIEVING CHILDREN AND FAMILIES)

PHONE: 1-866-775-5683

WEBSITE: www.dougy.org

HOURS: Monday to Friday, 9 a.m.–5 p.m., PT

Nationwide and local centers provide support and a safe place where bereaved children, teens, young adults, and their families can share their experiences.

SAMHSA (Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration)

PHONE: 1-800-662-4357

WEBSITE: http://beta.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline

HOURS: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

The helpline is a free service that provides treatment referrals and information for individuals and families facing mental health and/or substance use disorders.

Add other important emergency numbers:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Do not hesitate to reach out if you are in a crisis. Call 911 if you feel there is an immediate threat to you or someone else.

Taking Care of Your Mental Health During the COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a worldwide health crisis as well as a worldwide mental health crisis. Medical professionals have made clear what we need to do to protect ourselves from the health risks of the coronavirus: keep six feet away from others, wash our hands frequently, avoid touching our faces, wear face masks and gloves in public, and so forth. However, what people should do for mental health issues is not really clear. This workbook was written to help you understand the many ways the pandemic can affect your mental health, and it offers practical tools and solutions to deal with problems before they become too serious.

The first section of this workbook deals with specific problems you might be experiencing as a result of the way the pandemic has affected you. Some of these are likely issues you grappled with in the past. Psychologists know that acute or prolonged stress can reactivate long-standing problems you may have dealt with during your life, such as using alcohol to deal with upsetting thoughts and feelings, losing your temper with others, or struggling with depression and anxiety. Other issues may feel new and even catch you off guard. The important thing is to not let the current problems you are experiencing spiral out of control and add yet another problem area to your life.

In Section Two, you'll find worksheets that will help you develop twenty-two resiliency traits. Resiliency is defined as our capacity to survive and thrive and live a happy and fulfilling life despite extreme stress. Some people are naturally more resilient than others, but every one of us can become more resilient with a little practice. Each worksheet is written in a manner that is practical, user-friendly, and easy to understand. While no single worksheet is effective for everyone, we are confident this workbook will assist you in navigating these difficult times.

About the Authors:
Angela M. Doel, MS, is a writer and director of operations at Between Sessions Resources. She has served in various clinical supervisory positions and worked as a family therapist. Ms. Doel earned her MS in counseling psychology at the University of Pennsylvania. She holds an advanced certificate in nutritional counseling, and her areas of specialization are health education and eating disorders.

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Lawrence E. Shapiro, PhD, is a prolific author of self-help books and the inventor of more than 100 therapeutic games. Dr. Shapiro is known for his practical approach to helping others. He has written workbooks, storybooks, card games, board games, and smartphone apps. His work has been translated into twenty-seven languages.

About the Series:
Between Sessions Resources produces a variety of tools to enhance the effectiveness of psychotherapy and counseling. This workbook is part of the company's ongoing efforts to standardize the treatment of both common and uncommon mental health problems.

BETWEEN SESSIONS RESOURCES
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