

Wellness in Times of Crisis

During these difficult times, we can still focus on our wellness. Many of us are staying at home, following the guidelines to reduce the spread of the coronavirus. Some people may continue to go to work but find they feel anxious about their risk.

A situation is considered stressful when a person finds or believes they do not have the resources to handle it. These situations affect any (or many) dimensions of wellness. During this pandemic, people are feeling challenged physically, financially, and emotionally. Many of us are feeling social isolation, disruptions in our usual habits and routines, and interruptions to our occupational and intellectual wellness.

Crisis Management Skills

The first set of crisis management skills involves making sense of the crisis—being clear about the actual situation and to objectively examine what it means for you. The second set of skills involves gathering reliable and relevant information about the situation and about the actions that you can take to address it or lessen its impact. Finally, **emotional skills** are needed to express and manage your feelings of fear, anxiety, frustration, and maybe even boredom, if the current situation is prolonged.

Maintaining your existing **habits and routines** may not be possible but knowing what contributes to your wellness will help you find creative ways to adapt your daily activities to fit your new circumstances. In this special issue of *Words of Wellness*, we include some simple and practical tips to stay well in our current crisis. Do reach out to get support from and provide support to your peers, friends, and family. Remember that we're all in this together!

Stay Socially Connected

An important tip for social wellness is to stay in touch through calls, texts, emails, and even letters. Finding it hard to decide what to talk about other than your worries? Keep connected by sharing positive uplifting messages. Send something funny or share a touching story that reminds you that most people are kind, good, and caring, even in tough times. Social distancing is about connecting in different ways. Don't be alone. Creatively connect.

Emotional Wellness is Critical

Laugh whenever you can. List the things for which you feel grateful. Get the help you need to avoid resorting to inadequate or destructive coping strategies, like substance use. Support is available by phone and online—use it when you need it! Regain perspective. You are not totally helpless. You do have control over many aspects of your life. Only you can assume responsibility for initiating a wellness plan. That starts with taking actions to make the plan happen.



Let's Keep Our Minds Occupied

Building our intellectual wellness is important. For example, take a virtual museum tour, watch a concert online, or look for a podcast.

Creative activities can boost your intellectual wellness and your wellness in other dimensions. Pull out whatever crafts you've abandoned over the years. Try baking, coloring books, old magazines for collages, crochet hooks and yarn. Sketch whether you think you can draw or not.

Your Environmental Wellness

Get outside, if you can do this safely. A walk, a peek at the stars, or discovering new spring buds can do wonders for improving your mood and reducing your stress level.

While this may not be the most fun tip, if you're staying in at home, maybe you finally have time to tidy up, reorganize, and pack up some of the things you no longer use or wear.

References and Resources

- The 8 Dimensions of Wellness graphic is copyrighted by CSPNJ, Inc.
- The daffodil picture is available online and is free for reuse without attribution from pixabay.com
- You can find past issues of the WoW newsletter at www.cspnj.org (click on "news").
- Find sleep tips yoga nidra at <https://insighttimer.com/jenniferpiercy>
- Find many online resources by searching "tidying up," including a surprising number of videos on how to reorganize your sock drawer!
- Get a head start on your gratitude list by watching this: Brother David Steindl-Rast at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zSt7k_q_qRU
- Check out the emotional wellness kit at <https://www.nih.gov/health-information/emotional-wellness-toolkit>

Tips to Stay Physically Well

In addition to the ever-present advice on preventing virus transmission, consider how you stay physically active and keep a routine. Every hour during the day, walk around the house or outside if possible. Keep engaged in doing activities that are relaxing or productive. It is important to set up your sleep environment and evening routine, so you get to bed and wake up at the same time each day. Here are some breathing and moving strategies:

- <http://www.care2caregivers.com/self-care/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/user/yogawithadriene>

