

SELF-CARE AND SOCIAL DISTANCING

By Shainna Ali Ph.D., LMHC

While the world is changing, we are experiencing a need to adapt our lifestyles as well. As we adjust, many are noticing that usual methods of self-care may conflict with social distancing guidelines. While self-care strategies tend to be subjective, one thing that remains the same regardless of who you are is the essentiality of self-care during times of high stress. Here are three questions to ask yourself as you adjust your self-care as we face the COVID-19 pandemic.



What can I still do?

It may seem as though everything is changing around you, and you may indeed be experiencing tremendous change; however, don't fall into the trap of exacerbating your adjustment process by overlooking the things that are consistent. While we are all adapting in several ways, some things may be consistent. Even if you are distracted by all that you may be unable to do, could you shift your focus to consider the strategies that you have used in the past that may still transfer during this time?

Here are some ideas:

Baths, coloring, cooking, crafting, deep breathing, digital detox, gratitude, meditation, mindfulness, music, painting, praying, sewing, therapy, and writing.

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Once you choose hope,
anything is possible.

- Norman Vincent Peale

Quotes sourced from Self By Design

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Book of the Month Recommendation

The Splendid and the Vile

by
Erik Larson

“It’s the story of Churchill and his family during the World War II London blitz, bringing to life the resilience of the family and the British people during such a challenging time. It’s a book that had been on my wishlist, but I pulled it from my nightstand as I found myself wanting to read about inspirational moments in history, where people had lived through experiences that were intense and overwhelming and to find inspiration in how other people had gone through unprecedented challenges.”

What new opportunities for self-care are available under these circumstances?

As we deal with the uncertainty of the time and the seemingly consistent status of constant change, it can be easy to paint this entire experience as negative. Can you find the silver lining? Many are experiencing some adjustments that could have benefits such as the ability to be home, delayed deadlines, and more free time. Are there coping skills that you have wanted to try that social distancing creates an opportunity to explore? Similarly, are there habits that you may have neglected from the past that you can pick back up during this time?

Examples include:

Cleaning, experimenting with a new routine, household bonding, learning something new, more playtime with pets, organizing, playing an instrument, rest, and staycation.

Which of my self-care strategies can be adjusted?

While you may have to forego a lot of your usual strategies, don't be so quick to let them go entirely. Consider the ways that you can meet the need of that strategy in a similar context. For example, while gyms and fitness centers may be closed, that does not necessarily mean you need to neglect exercise altogether. Depending on your current location and social distancing guidelines, you may have the option to go for a walk or enjoy an outdoor routine. If you are confined, perhaps you can video chat a workout buddy, use a fitness app to guide you, or find a local studio that is streaming a class you enjoy.

Self-care is commonly misinterpreted to be a solitary process. Remember, self-care is comprised of the skills that you use to meet your varying needs. As social beings, we tend to long for connection (yes, introverts too). In light of social distancing, it is certainly normal to experience reactions such as a loss, confusion, and worry when realizing that you may not be able to connect to others in the ways you usually prefer. However, please caution considering social distancing to be synonymous with social isolation. Be creative and explore various ways to remain connected.

We live in a time in which technological advances provide us with several options to connect. Videogames can help you avoid the stress of the moment as escape into another realm with a friend from afar. If you are in the same household, perhaps this is a good opportunity to bring out a good, old-fashioned board game to spark nostalgia. Several social platforms offer the opportunity to engage on a wider scale. Under the circumstances, perhaps you can use this time to connect on a more intimate level. Perhaps you can organize a video chat gathering, host a Netflix watch party, sending a thank you E-mail, or call a loved one.

For more information or advice, contact eni online at:

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Celebrate Cinco de Mayo with this Healthy Recipe

Baked Bean and Cheese Quesadillas

by Martha Rose Shulman

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 corn tortillas
- 1/3 cup cooked baked beans, homemade or canned, with sauce
- 1 ounce grated Monterey Jack, Cheddar or mixed cheeses 1/4 cup
- Salsa for serving optional

DIRECTIONS:

1. In a microwave: Place a corn tortilla on a plate. Top with the beans. Lightly mash the beans with the back of a spoon. Sprinkle on the cheese, and top with the remaining tortilla. Press down gently, then microwave for 1 to 1 1/2 minutes until the cheese has melted. Remove from the microwave, cut into quarters or sixths and serve.
2. In a pan: Place a corn tortilla in a pan. Top with the beans. Lightly mash the beans with the back of a spoon. Sprinkle on the cheese. Turn the heat to medium-high, and heat until the cheese begins to melt.
3. Place the remaining tortilla on top of the cheese, and press down lightly. Flip over the quesadilla in the pan, and heat for about 30 seconds or until the cheese has melted. Flip back over, and remove to a plate. Cut into quarters or sixths and serve.