

## Coping Skills and Activities for Quarantine

### COMFORT

- Create a “routine” for your quarantine/isolation (ex: set an alarm to wake up and get up out of bed each morning)
- Eat something you enjoy, maybe your favorite snack or dessert! Make it slow and just notice everything about it. Enjoy.
- Nap/rest.
- If someone you love was feeling sad say out loud or in your head what you would say to them. Now say those words to yourself.
- Meditation
- Find the softest, most cuddly thing and give it a big hug. Notice how soft and comforting it feels.
- Sing or hum your favorite songs, ones that comfort you when you hear them.
- Read for pleasure (if you don’t have access to a physical copy of a book, try audiobook or e-book!)
- Think of a person who makes you really comfortable and calm. Picture them in your mind and notice as many things as you can about them.
- Take a shower/bath or wash your face.
- Try and wrap up in something really cozy (blanket, sweater, etc).
- Watch your favorite movie and focus on the most comforting scene.
- Collect some inspiring, positive, and/or funny quotes on sticky notes and leave them around your room so you can have reminders when you see them.
- Select some of your most comforting photographs and look at them.
- Remind yourself that this is temporary

### DISTRACT

- Create a self-care checklist/plan and start working on it
- Learn a new language (Duolingo app)
- Talk/text/FaceTime a loved one
- Zoom Game Night (Code Names is a game available online, and the app House Party provides a zoom atmosphere with games attached!)
- Start a new television series or watch a show you have never seen but wanted to watch.
- Watch some cute or funny animal videos (or watch/read anything comedic or otherwise pleasant!)
- Puzzle (if you don’t physically have one, check out your app store or google for free games)
- *Example Meditation:* Visualizing A Comforting Place – It can be helpful to have a place in your mind where you can go anytime you want to. In this place you are in complete control. You

decide who can get in and who has to stay out. It can be a real place you know of or imaginary. You can stay there as long as you like. You can come back whenever you want to.

- Start by picking a spot. Where is it? Are you inside or outside?
  - Next decide what the weather is like. Is it sunny? Overcast? Raining?
  - Is the grass or ground or room warm or cool?
  - How does the air feel?
  - What do you see around you?
  - What sounds do you hear?
  - What sensations do you feel?
  - What smells do you feel?
  - What people or animals would you invite into your safe place?
  - Imagine a protective bubble, wall, or boundary around your safe place, and a lock only you can open.
- Remind yourself that this is temporary

### EXPRESS YOURSELF

- Journal
  - Gratitude journal (prompts can be found online and through apps)
  - Success/Goal journal
  - Feelings journal (use feelings wheel to identify emotions [www.feelingswheel.com](http://www.feelingswheel.com))
- Color/artwork (can use the computer/apps if you don't have access to supplies)
- Send a heartwarming message to a family member or friend to let them know you care or love them.
- Start a blog – it can be about anything you want to talk about or are passionate about!
- Create your own content – Tik Tok videos, YouTube, make your own movies
- Learn a Tik Tok dance
- Write a letter to someone (send or don't send, that's up to you)
- Create positive affirmations of self
  - List your strengths
- Practice radical acceptance
  - "This is the way it has to be right now"
  - "The present is the only thing I have control over"
- Remind yourself that this is temporary

### RELEASE

- Punch OR squeeze a stress ball/pillow/soft object as hard as you can for 20 seconds. Rest for 20 seconds. Repeat. Use music to punch/squeeze to a beat if that helps.
- Do as many push ups/sit ups/insert any kind of exercise you can in a minute. Rest.
- Put your headphones on and listen to very loud music.

- Scream into a pillow to release tension until you feel better.
- Run on the spot really fast to start with and then very gradually slow yourself down.
- Dance or move your body for at least 5 songs – dance. it. OUT!
- Online workout class (aerobics, yoga, weightlifting)
- Journal - Thought dump or negative thoughts then rip up/throw away negative thoughts or replace with new coping thought
- *Progressive Muscle relaxation* – Progressive muscle relaxation is the process of systemically tensing and relaxing all of the muscle groups in your body until you feel thoroughly relaxed and free of tension.
  - o <https://youtu.be/86HUcX8ZtAk>
- Remind yourself that this is temporary

#### RANDOM

- Take a break from watching the news/being on social media
- Separate what is in your control from what is not.
- Sort out your photos in files or categories – organization keeps you busy
- Make a photo album or a music playlist.
- Teach yourself origami (use the internet as your teacher!)
- Listen to an audiobook.
- Play a card game (like solitaire)
- Paint your fingernails/toenails
- Learn a passage from a book that you enjoy reading
- Make your own personalized avatar/bitmoji. If you already have one, give it a glow-up.
- *Guided meditations* – Leaves on a stream exercise
  - o <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vjKltKKSUR8>
- Make a list of things you are looking forward to doing when you get out of isolation
- Remind yourself that this is temporary

#### BREATHE

- *The Ujjayi (or Ocean) Breath:* This a yogic breath that has a calming effect on the entire nervous system and can help lower blood pressure and heart rate. This breath has been shown to activate the parasympathetic nervous system, the part of the brain that is responsible for returning the body to a normal state after high stress. How to do it: Breathe in as deeply as you like. Exhale strongly from your mouth as though you are trying to fog up a hand mirror. Practice that for a few times and then close your mouth and let the inhale and exhale both come from your nose. When you exhale, let your breath come from the very back of your throat, making a rushing sound.
- *Shallow Breathing or Holding Your Breath:* Most advice says that when you are feeling stressed, you should “calm down and take a deep breath.” For some people, this works well, and others

may find more relief in taking shallow breaths, or in holding the breathe for a moment. You know your own self best, so do what feels right for your body.

- The Slow Exhale: When we breathe in, we take in oxygen from the atmosphere. When we breathe out, our body releases carbon dioxide. In excess, caron dioxide can make us feel lightheaded or woozy. But in balance, it can help us maintain a sense of calm and centeredness. When you are feeling keyed up and anxious, try this breath. Take in a moderate breath, and then release it very slowly, like releasing air from a tire. As you do it, consciously relax the muscles in your face, jaw, neck, and shoulders.
- The 3-Part Breath/Diaphragmatic Breathing: Most of us breathe by taking air into our chest area and releasing it, rarely taking a breath that reaches all the way into our belly. The 3-Part breath refers to taking air all the way into your belly, letting it fill your ribcage, then filling up your chest before exhaling. This is the way that babies naturally breathe, but for most people it is something that needs to be learned again. This breath becomes easier with practice, and you might find it easier to do lying down at first. How to do it: sit or lie down and place one hand on your belly. As you breathe in, be conscious of letting the air fill your lower abdomen (as opposed to your chest), then fill your upper abdomen, then fill your chest. Breathe out, and repeat.
- **Using apps like Headspace, Insight Timer, Calm and CalmHarm provide you with a visual aids to help focus on your breathing**
- Remind yourself that this is temporary