



Dear CCNY Community,

This week we present:

Letters to Home - Self-Care

Living in a time of shelter-in-place initiatives, social distancing, and self-quarantine has meant increased time spent indoors. These initiatives help keep ourselves, our loved ones, and communities safe. While we do our parts, feeling lonely, sad, and stressed during this “new normal” is not uncommon. Self-care, the action of protecting and improving our health and mental health, has proven useful in managing and addressing these emotions. Below are some tips and resources for engaging in self-care at home:

- **Listen to You and What You Need:** Check-in with yourself about your needs throughout the day. At different times, this might mean paying attention to physical, mental, and social needs. Listening to what our bodies and minds might need in any given moment is validating and helps us self-soothe.
- **Mindfulness and Meditation:** Setting a time in the day to connect and re-center can help regulate emotions, increase awareness, and improve motivation and concentration. Mindfulness and meditation applications are helpful in guiding us through different exercises and make it easier for us to develop new skills. Some examples include: deep breathing, mindful eating utilizing all five senses, and setting intentions for the day.
- **Exercise and Balanced Meals Promote Health:** While being safe at home, we can easily fall into being physically inactive. Take some time to move around! This can look like following a workout or yoga class online, taking a walk around the block, or stretching in the space available to you. Additionally, balanced meals promote good nutrition and boost the immune system. Adjusting to a “new normal” forces us to get creative and to re-adjust our habits. Practicing regular physical exercise and a healthy diet can help increase energy, attention and concentration, and stress management.
- **Practice Healthy Sleep and Daily Hygiene Habits:** Sleep habits and hygiene are important components of self-care. Getting a good night’s rest regularly is related to improved mood, concentration, and motivation. Finding time in the day to shower, do laundry, and change into clean clothes can go a long way toward improving mood during

quarantine. The importance of these self-care elements should not be taken for granted during this time.

- **Make Time for Your Hobbies and Relaxation:** Make time for activities you enjoy and/or excel at. Finding creative ways to practice hobbies or begin exploring new ones can help boost our confidence and self-esteem throughout the day. In addition, engaging in hobbies and projects can help fight off boredom and frustration.
- **Stay Social, Connect Virtually with Friends and Family:** We are social beings; it is normal to feel isolated and lonely during this time. Make plans to connect with family and friends throughout the week. Reconnect with loved ones you may not have spoken to in a while. Be mindful of your social meter to avoid over-extending yourself.
- **Managing Finances:** Are your finances a stressor during this time? Be mindful of how you are doing financially. Setting aside time to budget and assess this area of your life is one way to engage in self-care. Explore and identify ways of remaining in control of your finances during these uncertain times to decrease financial stress.
- **Talk to a Therapist:** Talking to a professional about your current experiences and challenges is a great way to take care of yourself. While the days of in-person mental health services are on pause, therapists are still available to help via virtual platforms. Ask your current provider about options for tele-counseling. If you are looking for a new provider, use search engines to filter by your preference, insurance, and to inquire if therapists are offering discounted virtual services.
- **Pay It Forward:** If your current circumstances allow, reaching out and helping others are ways to find fulfillment and meaning during this time. You can reach out to provide groceries for elderly or immunocompromised neighbors, organize a virtual support group for friends and family, or get involved in the many initiatives that may be going on in your neighborhood.

Additional resources to help you while distance learning:

[Addressing COVID-19 Anxiety](#)

[Organizing Neighborhood Support](#)

[Calm - Meditation App](#) and [MindShift CBT App](#)

[Self-Compassion Meditation Guide](#)

[Happiness Podcast](#)

[Identify Your Strengths](#)

[A Calm Place](#)

[Find a Therapist - Psychology Today](#)

[Find a Therapist - Headway](#)

For immediate mental health support please call NYC Well 1-888-NYC-WELL (888-692-9355). NYC Well provides free, confidential services to support mental health concerns. NYC WELL is available 24/7 and can provide assistance in over 200 languages.

You can also text WELL to 65173 or access the NYC WELL website at <https://nycwell.cityofnewyork.us/en/> to chat with a counselor.

Stay safe and take care of each other.
The Counseling Center