10 Strategies for Prioritizing Wellbeing in Uncertain Times

Wellbeing is defined as feeling good and functioning effectively through thriving and struggle.

1. **Take care of your health.** Prioritize sleep, movement, and healthy eating. Plenty of free apps can be helpful with this if assistance and/or reminders are needed.

2. **Be mindful of your social media use.** Set time limits for media consumption. Notice how it makes you feel. Pause before (re)posting: Does it need to be said? Does it need to be said by me right now?

3. **Be a thoughtful consumer of information.** Carefully consider the information you are learning. What is the source? Is it true, accurate, and relevant? Is my focus on this information helpful or hurtful to me?

4. **Reframe your thoughts.** Catastrophizing and ruminating are common reactions to stress. Working hard to refocus your attention away from these thoughts is helpful. We can’t tell ourselves to not think about something, we can only work to replace those thoughts with something different.

5. **Regardless of your spiritual beliefs, consider the serenity prayer.** Grant me the Serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the Courage to accept the things I can, and Wisdom to know the difference.

6. **Breathe.** The simple act of focusing on your breath can be powerful to center ourselves and reduce anxiety. It is particularly helpful to extend the exhales as this activates the parasympathetic nervous system (the system that calms us down). Even 30 seconds of focused breathing is significant.

7. **Notice the unexpected gifts in your life.** Take a few moments to really focus on these gifts. Savor them before you go to bed each night, share them with your others over dinner, write them in a journal.

8. **Get outside more.** Nature provides an abundance of benefits to our physical and psychological wellbeing. It connects, heals, soothes, and restores us.

9. **Spot the strengths in yourselves and others.** It’s easy to find fault in ourselves and others. Take a moment to recognize the strengths you see in others: Creativity, Curiosity, Judgment and Open-Mindedness, Love of Learning, Perspective, Bravery, Perseverance, Honesty, Zest, Capacity to Love and Be Loved, Kindness, Social Intelligence, Teamwork, Fairness, Leadership, Forgiveness and Mercy, Modesty and Humility, Prudence, Self-Regulation, Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence, Gratitude, Hope, Humor, Religiousness and/or Spirituality.

10. **Recognize your need for connection and take action.** Be creative as you reach out to people in different ways (while maintaining recommended physical distance): bring back letter writing, use video technology to engage virtually, reach out to long lost friends, share vetted and helpful resources, start or contribute to a fun social media challenge (describe your pet as a co-worker), volunteer.

For mental health assistance, visit [https://www.mihopeportal.com/](https://www.mihopeportal.com/), call 211, or call 800-317-0708 for Community Mental Health for Central Michigan.
1. Measure your Wellbeing: www.mildland.permahsurvey.com
2. Measure your strengths: www.viame.org
3. An interview from Scientific American: COVID-19: Dealing with Social Distancing
4. Dr. Martin Seligman offers: A simple exercise to help stay calm in the face of coronavirus uncertainty
5. Professor Lea Waters AM, Ph.D. contributed to an article in The Guardian: The family lockdown guide: how to emotionally prepare for coronavirus quarantine.
7. Greater Good Science Center's Greater Good Magazine (many useful articles!): https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/
12. 5 Ways to View Coverage of the Coronavirus: https://www.apa.org/helpcenter/pandemics
14. A list of free, online, boredom-busting resources! – ChatterPack: https://chatterpack.net/blogs/blog/list-of-online-resources-for-anyone-who-is-isolated-at-home
17. Mitch Albom: Coronavirus crisis will be defined by how we tell the story: https://www.freep.com/story/sports/columnists/mitch-albom/2020/03/15/mitch-albom-coronavirus/5050402002/
19. Because humor is a good thing for Immunity and Because we'll be on more virtual formats: A Conference Call in Real Life https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DYu_bGbZiiQ&feature=share&fbclid=IwAR2bY0T_ak_QWZqVgEcc0WL7NeP14Z7g4y1mRn746CEKCiHy8WKnmmnV0 17 Homeschooling Tweets That Are 100% True, 200% Funny: https://www.buzzfeed.com/asiawmclain/homeschooling

Brought to you by the Midland Regional Wellbeing Taskforce
Posters for Prioritizing Wellbeing in Uncertain Times

DAILY QUARANTINE QUESTIONS:
1. What am I GRATEFUL for today?
2. Who am I CHECKING IN ON or CONNECTING WITH today?
3. What expectations of “normal” am I LETTING GO OF today?
4. How am I GETTING OUTSIDE today?
5. How am I MOVING MY BODY today?
6. What BEAUTY am I either creating, cultivating, or inviting in today?

What NOT to Do When Someone Has Anxiety

Don't...
1. Don't say “Just calm down” or “Relax!”
2. Don't say, “There's nothing to worry about.”
3. Don't say, “I've got problems, too.”
4. Don't enable an unhelpful coping behavior.

Instead...
1. Try asking open-ended questions about how they feel.
2. Show that you see how upset the person is and empathize.
3. Take a back seat for now and hear them out.
4. Gently and firmly hold them accountable.

Brought to you by the Midland Regional Wellbeing Taskforce
COPING CALENDAR: KEEP CALM. STAY WISE. BE KIND

30 actions to look after ourselves and each other as we face this global crisis together. Please use & share.

1. Make a plan to help you keep calm and stay in contact.
2. Enjoy washing your hands. Remember all they do for you.
3. Write down ten things you feel grateful for in life and why.
4. Stay hydrated, eat healthy food and boost your immune system.
5. Get active. Even if you’re stuck indoors, move & stretch.
6. Contact a neighbour or friend and offer to help them.
7. Share what you are feeling and be willing to ask for help.
8. Take five minutes to sit still and breathe. Repeat regularly.
9. Call a loved one to catch up and really listen to them.
10. Get good sleep. No screens before bed or when waking up.
11. Notice five things that are beautiful in the world around you.
12. Immerse yourself in a new book, TV show or podcast.
13. Respond positively to everyone you interact with.
14. Play a game that you enjoyed when you were younger.
15. Make some progress on a project that matters to you.
16. Rediscover your favourite music that really lifts your spirits.
17. Learn something new or do something creative.
18. Find a fun way to do an extra 15 minutes of physical activity.
19. Do three acts of kindness to help others, however small.
21. Send a letter or message to someone you can’t be with.
22. Find positive stories in the news and share these with others.
23. Have a tech-free day. Stop scrolling and turn off the news.
24. Put your worries into perspective and try to let them go.
25. Look for the good in others and notice their strengths.
26. Take a small step towards an important goal.
27. Thank three people you’re grateful to and tell them why.
28. Make a plan to meet up with others again later in the year.
30. Remember that all feelings and situations pass in time.

“Everything can be taken from us but one thing: the freedom to choose our attitude in any given set of circumstances.” ~ Viktor Frankl

ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

Find out more about the Ten Keys to Happier Living, including books, guides, posters and more here: www.actionforhappiness.org/10-keys

Why The Coronavirus Is Triggering Mental Health Issues:

Despair
Mindset switch from “living” to “survival”
Triggers feelings of hopelessness

Increased health anxiety

Fear for loved ones lives

Decreased financial security

Quarantine makes it more difficult to distract oneself from existing mental health issues

Coronavirus isn’t just threatening our physical health, but our mental health too. Look after it. Please share to raise awareness.

@RealDepressionProject

Brought to you by the Midland Regional Wellbeing Taskforce
7 Ways to be More Optimistic

See setbacks as temporary
Viewing your setbacks as permanent makes you more likely to give up. See them as a learning curve and resolve to come back better because of them.

Regain a sense of control
What can you do to improve the situation? Focusing on this leads to more possible solutions, less problematic barriers and more action.

Don’t over-generalise
After a disappointment, it is easy to think that everyone and everything is conspiring against you. Compartmentalise. A setback in one aspect of your life does not make you a failure in others.

Watch out for key phrases
Phrases such as "I will never", "I always mess up" and "This happens every time" after a failure are not helpful. Use phrases like "I might be able to" and "I could try this".

Shift your focus
It is tempting to focus on things you can’t change. This can lead to stress and frustration as it is out of your hands. Control the controllables.

Take a balanced approach
Regardless of success or failure, there are always things that you did well and things you can do to improve. Build a stable base from which to learn.

Acknowledge your own contribution
Don't always put your success down to luck or other people performing worse than you. Build your optimism by reflecting on how you contributed to your successes.