

## 19 Mental Health & Wellness Tips during CoVid19

To benefit from the following tips, while they may be obvious, ask yourself:

“Am I actually doing what’s listed below?”

Accountability, determination and discipline are what make us resilient and able to meet the challenges we are facing in the current climate. Remember CoVid19 has not added hours to your day. Manage your expectations realistically.

1. Get into routine: go to sleep and wake up at a reasonable time. Plan your day and write a daily and weekly schedule, be realistic with what you are trying to achieve. Turn off unnecessary notification, if you spend your time responding you are not working to your own agenda.
2. Your schedule should vary and includes time for work, breaks and downtime as well as self-care activities such as personal hygiene, 30 minutes activity per day, healthy meals and snacks and 30minutes to 1 hour without any electronic devices.
3. Dress for the work and social life you expect when restrictions come to an end. Stay in the habit of presenting yourself as you want to be seen. Get showered and dressed in comfortable clothes, wash your face, brush your teeth. Put on some bright colours and do change into different outfits throughout the week. How you dress impacts your mood, sense of value and definitely your day and how productive you are. Change into casual none work cloths when you are finished for the day.
4. Get out at least once a day. If you are concerned about community transmission, try first thing in the morning, or later in the evening, try less travelled routes. If you are high risk or living with those who are high risk, open the windows, fresh air can rises our energy and spirits.
5. Stay hydrated and eat well, stress management and food management are highly linked. Check with yourself, are you over-indulging, forgetting to eat, and avoiding food? If so, reintroduce healthy food habits. Drink plenty of water, and be extremely conscious of your alcohol consumption.



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6. Develop a self-care toolkit. This will be different for everyone and there are plenty of examples online. A lot of successful self-care strategies involve a sensory component (seven senses: touch, taste, sight, hearing, smell, vestibular (movement) and proprioceptive (comforting pressure)).
7. Take note and write down your stress and overwhelm triggers. Pinpoint how your stress builds step by step. Understand and analysis your stress signifiers. When they become apparent, change what you're doing, take a break, and allow your stress to deescalate in a productive fashion.
8. Keep a diary or journal to track what you have accomplished each day, make a point of writing the day, date and time of each entry to stop the days blending into one. Make sure to take two days off per week where you do not work to avoid adding stress to your life and eventual burnout. Turn off all devices.
9. Give everyone the benefit of the doubt, and a wide berth. Time spent in confined spaces can bring out the worst in those around you. Each person will have moments when they will not be at their best. It is important to pick your battles, do not show up to every argument, hold grudges and continue disagreements.
10. Expect behavioural issues and increased frustration and respond in an adult fashion. Expect and acknowledge increased anxiety, worries and fears, nightmares, difficulty separating or sleeping, testing limits, and meltdowns. These are normal reactions under the current circumstances.
11. Lower expectations and practice radical self-acceptance. Even if you are not feeling stressed, we are in a time of deep rooted social stress that will be triggering us all. Instil daily "radical self-acceptance": accepting everything about yourself, your current situation, and your life without question or blame.
12. Limit all newsfeeds and social media and COVID conversation. CoVid19 information is often exaggerated, negatively skewed, and alarmist. Do not check constantly for updates, this is a waste of time and personal resource. Set a time limit for yourself on how much you consume (30 minutes maximum, twice times daily).



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13. Focus on what you can do rather than what you cannot. Find something you can control, and manage this to its final destination. In moments of huge uncertainty and overwhelm, control you're your own behaviour, day and week. Organisation helps to anchor and ground us when the bigger things are chaotic.
14. Find lightness and humour in each day. There is a lot to be worried about, and with good reason. Counterbalance this heaviness with something fun each day.
15. Reach out for help—your team is there for you. If you have a therapist or psychiatrist, they are available to you, even at a distance. Keep up your medications and your therapy sessions the best you can.
16. If you are having difficulty coping, seek out help for the first time. There are mental health people on the ready to help you through this crisis.
17. Break down your quarantine into what you can handle psychologically. We have no road map for this. We don't know what this will look like in 1 day, 1 week, or 1 month from now. Focus on what feels manageable for you. Whether that be 5 minutes, a day, or a working week at a time and set a time stamp for how far ahead in the future you will work to at a time. Take each time stamp one at a time, and move through stress in pieces.
18. Remind yourself daily that this is temporary. It seems in the midst of this quarantine that it will never end. Take time to remind yourself that although this is very difficult, and will go on for an undetermined amount of time, it will pass. We will return to feeling free, safe, busy, and connected in the days ahead.
19. Find the lesson. Find your agency, the potential positive outcomes of this time in restriction. What habits will you keep and what needs to go. What needs to change in yourself, your homes, your communities and your world?