



MAINTAINING EMOTIONAL HEALTH DURING A PANDEMIC: HOW TO ENSURE YOU (AND YOUR SPOUSE) SURVIVE SELF-ISOLATION INTACT

Here are some suggested questions to help you orientate to what experts say are important for surviving unusual circumstances without getting overwhelmed.

What structures have you put in place?

This is important, because the more our lives can remain the same, the more routines we maintain, the less disoriented and deteriorated our good habits become.

Who does what? When?

It's critical that everyone pitch in and follow through with the regular chores and responsibilities of running a home, caring for and educating children, managing stressful financial times, and working from home. Often, the help we normally have isn't available so the burden is greater. Being a good team means together each accomplishes more.

What are you doing for your own personal self-care?

These are the most critical behaviors for determining your well being over the long run. Remember to do the things that you enjoy doing on your own or with your friends. Each of you will fare much better when you take responsibility for your own peace of mind and happiness, rather than blaming your partner for it. I've included a self-care assessment so you can get a quick idea of how well you are doing, and/or what you might add to your self-care plan.

What resources do you have? Can you get?

Do you have a separate space in the home where you can have some time to yourself? Do you have family members that can help out? Is there a way to order your food to be delivered or have your house cleaned?

How much time do you need alone each day/week?

We all need time to ourselves as much as we need time together. This is healthy. Make sure you are asking for it and feel you have a right to it. Otherwise, your resentment will build up and spill over onto your partner and family.

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MAINTAINING EMOTIONAL HEALTH DURING A PANDEMIC: A SELF-CARE ASSESSMENT

Remember: Two strong individuals make a strong Team.

Self-Care Strategies:

- ☐ 1. I am taking time each day to slow down, breathe, meditate, or read spiritual/uplifting literature.
- ☐ 2. I am restricting the amount of time I listen to the negative pandemic news.
- ☐ 3. I am staying in the present moment, rather than futurizing and getting fearful.
- ☐ 4. I am getting some form of exercise most days.
- ☐ 5. I am restricting the amount of alcohol and/or drugs I am consuming.
- ☐ 6. I am structuring my day so that I can keep a routine as much as possible.
- ☐ 7. I have gone to bed early to ensure I sleep well and enough.
- ☐ 8. I turn off the devices and television at least ½ hour before bedtime to wind down and support my sleep.
- ☐ 9. I am setting realistic goals, recognizing that self-isolation is utterly exhausting.
- ☐ 10. I am getting up from my computer regularly to avoid screen fatigue.
- ☐ 11. I restrict the number of hours I work in any given day to ensure balance.
- ☐ 12. I use techniques and/or strategies to manage my anxiety/fear.
- ☐ 13. I am facing my emotions and using this time as an opportunity for growth.
- ☐ 14. I am being gentle with myself and my partner, understanding that we are all doing the best we can under difficult circumstances.
- ☐ 15. I try to find something fun to do alone or with family/friends each day.
- ☐ 16. I am doing something I feel proud of at least once a day.
- ☐ 17. I am spending quality time with my partner/spouse away from distractions.
- ☐ 18. I am negotiating time together and time alone effectively.
- ☐ 19. I take alone time for myself to rejuvenate.
- ☐ 20. I look for the silver linings each day and take advantage of this time to know myself better.
- ☐ 21. I am focused on learning to be a better team player, knowing that my behavior matters.
- ☐ 22. I am making time to connect with friends who nurture me.
- ☐ 23. I am staying in touch with extended family members and making time for family meetings.
- ☐ 24. I am asking others for help, when I need it or am tired.
- ☐ 25. I deal with resentments, in constructive ways, when they come up, rather than let them fester.
- ☐ 26. I give myself permission to have a tantrum to let off steam, doing it safely and alone, rather than targeting my anger at my partner, co-workers, or children.
- ☐ 27. I have reached out to a therapist or mental health professional for help.

If you checked less than 10 boxes, it would benefit you to pick 1-2 extra strategies each week that will help you build up your emotional well being. What you do now will impact how you feel later. We will get through this together - happy, healthy and ready to re-engage in life more fully. And if you need additional support or help, please don't hesitate to reach out to us.