A close-up portrait of a middle-aged man with a grey beard and glasses, smiling with his eyes closed. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.

If you are subject  
to quarantine or  
isolation, remember  
you are doing so not  
just for your own  
safety, but also for  
your family, friends  
and neighbors.

# Managing Stress

During these uncertain times



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# Tips to Reduce Social Isolation

- FaceTime or video conference friends and family daily.
- Skip the phone and conference calls with colleagues and in exchange use video conferencing software.
- Get outside for at least 30 minutes every day. Vitamin D can help your mood.

## Organizations that can help



[Disaster Distress Help line](#)



800.985.5990



[Domestic Violence Hotline](#)



800.799.7233 & TTY 800.787.3244



[Anxiety and Depression Association of America](#)

# Tools to Tame Anxiety

Whatever is stressing you out (and if you're like most people, there is something, be it family, work, classes, or relationships), the good news is that there's also something you can do about that stress. Which is a good idea because researchers have reported that stress can take a serious toll on your health. People under chronic stress are more likely to get colds, may have trouble sleeping, and may have an increased risk of high blood pressure. So avoid all the possible side effects by busting out of the stress cycle. Here are six tips that help—and fast.

We all get a little frazzled now and then, but these six stress busters can help soothe your nerves in just 60 seconds.



## TAKE DEEP BREATHS

In stressful situations many people take short, shallow breaths, which can affect the way their brain works and how it processes their thoughts. But breathing slowly and deeply helps restore rational thought and put things in perspective. Give this a try: Exhale, inhale through your nose for three seconds, then purse your lips, and exhale for as long as possible, trying to get all the air out of your lungs while letting your cheeks inflate. Repeat until you've settled down.



## DROP YOUR SHOULDERS

When you're anxious, your body instinctively shields itself like a boxer on the ropes. Your head drops, shoulders hunch, and chest caves in. Try lowering your shoulders away from your ears during stressful times. If that feels instantly better, then you carry a lot of tension in your neck and upper body, and you may want to drop those shoulders more often. Put a sticky note with the word shoulders on your computer, dashboard, or any place you frequently glance.



## SING!

Researchers have found that singing increases your stress-reducing hormone (called cortisol) more than just listening to music does. If you like to turn up your favorite songs on your drive home from work, try singing along and see if it helps end your day on a nicer note.



## LAUGH OUT LOUD

When it comes to decreasing anxiety, it turns out watching a comedy is more effective than viewing a peaceful landscape scene, according to researchers at Osaka University. Collect your favorite funny clips on your smartphone or computer, and try watching one or two when stress starts getting the better of you.



## HAVE A BITE

Dark chocolate is not only good for your taste buds but, thanks to its free-radical fighting polyphenols, this sweet treat also reduces the stress hormone levels in the blood. You don't have to overdo a good thing though—1 ounce is all it takes to soothe.



## BREW A CUP

Try sipping chamomile tea instead of coffee when stress strikes. Studies have shown that the herb contains ingredients with naturally soothing effects for mild anxious moments.

# Tips to Reduce Your Stress



Set a new temporary routine and schedule for yourself and children



Talk to people that you trust



Maintain a healthy lifestyle while at home



Eat a healthy diet



Contact a health worker or counselor if feeling overwhelmed & need help creating a new normal



Socialize via video conferencing



Sleep 7-9 hours a day



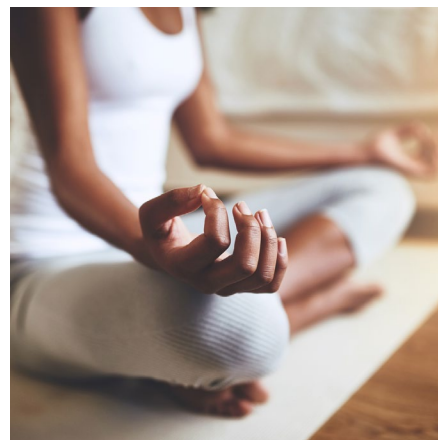
Limit worry by reducing the time you spend on social media and news coverage



Don't use smoking and alcohol or other drugs to deal with your emotions



Exercise daily



Begin to meditate. If you think that meditation is just for monks and yoga fans, think again. Meditation, a technique that helps you calm the mind, is another means of tapping into mindfulness. How does it work? Sit down in a comfortable position for a few minutes, close your eyes, and concentrate on your breath. The goal is to acknowledge your thoughts rather than obsess over them. With regular practice, you'll find it easier to let go of stress and drama and just "be" in the moment.



## More about breathing

Just breathe. Next time you're feeling stressed, pause and take a few deep breaths. Yes, it's that easy. Deep breathing not only calms your nervous system, helping you feel more relaxed, it also forces you to be more mindful. "When you are more conscious of your inhale and exhale, it keeps you in the present," says Belisa Vranich, Psy.D., a clinical psychologist and founder of The Breathing Class. According to Vranich, mindful breathing is a little different than normal involuntary respiration because it requires relaxing when you inhale and tightening up on your exhale: Soften and expand your pelvis on the inhale and use your abdominals to consciously squeeze out all the stale air on the exhale.



# Tips while working from home



01

## Keep Your Alarm Set

Sticking to a familiar routine helps - it's still a work day. Keep your alarm set to its usual time and get showered and dressed by the time you'd usually be leaving the house to commute to work.

02

## Continue your commute

As you're not heading out of the house to get to your workplace anymore, introduce a local walk before you start work, into your routine. This has a number of benefits - fresh air, connection with nature and it punctuates your day. You won't move seamlessly from bed to desk, which would be no good for your brain or body. Make the most of this time, as current guidelines state that you should only be leaving the house to move, once a day.



03

## Check-in with your colleagues

Connect with colleagues over online calls at the beginning of the day. It provides an opportunity to share concerns, workloads or how you might be able to help each other. It's easier to hide issues behind emails and the written word, but seeing and speaking to other people regularly helps to open up a dialogue and keep communication positive.



04

## Upgrade your lunches

No soggy sandwiches for you anymore! Stepping away from the computer and making lunch from scratch, reading a book for half an hour or sitting outside if you have an enclosed garden space or balcony, will give you a break from screens and continual updates on the virus.





05

## Mark the end of your day

Like your new morning ‘commute’, develop a ritual to end the working day. If you can, put your computer away, tidy your working area, go out into the garden if you have one, go for a walk or start an indoor workout. [Click here for a beginners cardio workout](#)

06

## Try something new

Use extended time at home to try new things - listen to a different type of podcast (try podcast pot luck - listen to the first thing you spot on iTunes), watch a program you wouldn’t have thought to before, or read that book from you keep meaning to start. Start a new hobby or pick up an old one. If you like to knit, [visit Arne & Carlos Daily Quarantine Knitting Podcast on YouTube](#).



07

## Prioritized Sleep

We all know that stress and uncertainty can change our sleeping patterns, so try to be mindful of this. Just like waking, keep to your regular bedtime and add in some relaxation before you hit the hay. Finally, keep phones and scrolling far away from the bedroom!

08

## Five simple steps to de-stress


1. Say stop when your thoughts are spiraling out of control.
2. Focus on your breathing
3. Visualize yourself in a “happy place”
4. Use the WOOP Technique:
  - **Wish:** what is your wish or hope right now?
  - **Outcome:** What is the ideal outcome?
  - **Obstacle:** What is getting in your way?
  - **Plan:** “If [obstacle], then I will [action or thought].”
5. Listen to your favorite music





# Talking to Children

News of the coronavirus COVID-19 is everywhere. Many parents are wondering how to bring up the epidemic in a way that will be reassuring and not make kids more worried than they already may be. Here is some advice from the experts.



**Kids worry more when they are kept in the dark.**

1. Don't be afraid to discuss the coronavirus. Most children will have already heard about the virus or seen people wearing face masks, so parents shouldn't avoid talking about it.
2. Be developmentally appropriate. Don't volunteer too much information, as this may be overwhelming. Instead, try to answer your child's questions.
3. Take your cues from your child. Invite your child to tell you anything they may have heard about the coronavirus, and how they feel. Give them ample opportunity to ask questions.
4. Deal with your own anxiety. If you notice that you are feeling anxious, take some time to calm down before trying to have a conversation or answer your child's questions.
5. Be reassuring. It's helpful to reassure your child about how rare the coronavirus actually is (the flu is much more common) and that kids actually seem to have milder symptoms.
6. Focus on what you're doing to stay safe. An important way to reassure kids is to emphasize the safety precautions that you are taking. If kids see people wearing face masks, explain that those people are being extra cautious.
7. Stick to routine. Make sure you are taking care of the basics just like you would during a spring break or summer vacation. Structured days with regular mealtimes and bedtimes are an essential part of keeping kids happy and healthy.
8. Keep talking. Tell kids that you will continue to keep them updated as you learn more.

## How to Talk to Kids About the Coronavirus



### Videos for Younger Kids

[Elmo and Rosita: The Right Way to Sneeze!](#)

[Daniel Tiger: Germs, Germs Go Away](#)


### Videos for Older Kids

[Brain POP: Coronavirus](#)



# Supporting Others

Checking in on your family, friends and colleagues is always important, but during the coronavirus outbreak this will be more important than ever. While we are all feeling worried and anxious about our physical health, it's important to remember the impact on our mental health too. You don't need to be an expert on mental health to be there for someone. Think about using these three top tips:



**"In times of stress, the best thing we can do for each other is to listen with our ears & our hearts & to be assured that our questions are just as important as our answers."**

**Fred Rogers**



## **Check in on family, neighbors, co-workers & friends**

Even though you can't get together in person, you can still pick up the phone, have a video chat, group text or chat on social media. Let everyone know that you are there to talk and ready to listen.



## **Listen and reflect**

This is a challenging time for all of us and it's important to remember that our mental health, along with that of our family and friends, will be challenged. If someone confides in you, just listen. You don't need to try to fix them, just be a compassionate ear to lean on. Many times this is all they need to manage.



## **Ask Questions**

Some people may be hesitant to open up, but be persistent if you think that they aren't being forthcoming. If you don't think they are being honest, ask them again with interest, as this can help someone to open up.

## **Free Video Conference Tools**

- **Zoom** - Their free-of-charge Basic plan can host up to 100 participants simultaneously. [Learn More.](#)
- **Google Hangouts** - up to 25 people with a Gmail account can video chat together. [Learn More](#)
- **Skype** - Communicate for free, no matter the device, up to 24 people. [Learn More](#)
- **iPhone & Android** - Simply call, select merge call & then repeat - up to 5 (including you) for iPhone and 6 for Android.

# Well being breaks

## WELL-BEING BREAK: BREATHING & STRETCHING EXERCISES

**WELL-BEING BREAKS:**

- Support our Better Tomorrow 2025 commitment
- Bring physical activity and mental balance into the work environment
- Reinforce our culture of health and well-being
- Require only 5-10 minutes
- Can take place anywhere
- Help us stay active & thrive

### BREATHING EXERCISES

**BREATHING EXERCISES ARE A GOOD WAY TO RELAX, REDUCE TENSION AND RELIEVE STRESS.**

**DEEP BREATHING/ABDOMINAL BREATHING TECHNIQUE**

- Find a quiet place and get comfortable
- Breathe in through your nose. Let your stomach fill with air
- Breathe out through your nose
- Place one hand on your stomach and the other hand on your chest
- As you breathe in, feel your stomach rise. As you breathe out, feel your stomach fall
- The hand on your stomach should move more than the one that's on your chest
- Breathe fully into your stomach as it rises and falls with your breath
- Do this breathing 3 to 10 times

**DEEP BREATHING INCREASES THE SUPPLY OF OXYGEN TO YOUR BRAIN AND PROMOTES A STATE OF CALMNESS.**

Source: www.lifeworks.com

[CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD](#)

## STRETCHING EXERCISES

**STRETCHING HELPS YOU PROMOTE THE HEALTH OF YOUR JOINTS, LIGAMENTS AND MUSCLES.**

**IT IMPROVES CIRCULATION, DECREASES STRESS AND HELPS AVOID EXCESSIVE RELATED INJURIES.**

**STRETCHING ALSO HELPS TO PREVENT DISABLING OSTEOARTHRITIS.**

### STANDING FORWARD BEND

- Stand with feet hip-width apart
- Reach your arms up and over your head
- Keep your feet flat on the floor
- Keep your knees straight
- Keep your back straight
- Keep your head straight
- Keep your arms straight
- Keep your feet flat on the floor
- Keep your knees straight
- Keep your back straight
- Keep your head straight
- Keep your arms straight

### SPINE STRETCHING

- Stand with feet hip-width apart
- Reach your arms up and over your head
- Keep your feet flat on the floor
- Keep your knees straight
- Keep your back straight
- Keep your head straight
- Keep your arms straight

### HIP STRETCH

- Stand with feet hip-width apart
- Reach your arms up and over your head
- Keep your feet flat on the floor
- Keep your knees straight
- Keep your back straight
- Keep your head straight
- Keep your arms straight

### CHEST OPENER

- Stand with feet hip-width apart
- Reach your arms up and over your head
- Keep your feet flat on the floor
- Keep your knees straight
- Keep your back straight
- Keep your head straight
- Keep your arms straight

### STANDING QUAD STRETCH

- Stand with feet hip-width apart
- Reach your arms up and over your head
- Keep your feet flat on the floor
- Keep your knees straight
- Keep your back straight
- Keep your head straight
- Keep your arms straight

[CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD](#)

## CONFERENCE CALL WORKOUT

The average person sits 8 hours every day. Sitting has been termed the "new smoking" due to the lack of activity which leads to a number of preventable chronic diseases. But who made the rule that says you have to sit still when you're on a conference call? A conference call can be a great time to move your body and take a moment for your health.

**GET MOVING WITH THESE SIMPLE CONFERENCE CALL EXERCISES!**

Check out [www.sodexoUSA.com](#)

### "TEXT NECK SOLUTION" NECK CIRCLES

About 15 seconds

### "HOPING FOR A RAISE" ARM RAISES

Forward to lateral, then lateral to forward - 8-10 reps

### "PAPER WEIGHT" ARM CIRCLES

Forward and backward holding paper weights (10 seconds each way)

### "CONFERENCE CALL" CURLS

8-10 reps - Use paper weight or water bottle sitting at the desk

### "LONG WEEK" LUNGES

30 sec each side - use chair for balance

[CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD](#)

## WELL-BEING BREAK: MEDITATION

**WELL-BEING BREAKS:**

- Support our Better Tomorrow 2025 commitment
- Bring physical activity and mental balance into the work environment
- Reinforce our culture of health and well-being
- Require only 5-10 minutes
- Can take place anywhere
- Help us stay active & thrive

### MEDITATION

**MEDITATION IS THE PRACTICE OF FOCUSING YOUR ATTENTION TO HELP YOU FEEL CALM AND GIVE YOU A CLEAR AWARENESS ABOUT YOUR LIFE.**

**MEDITATION MEANS DIFFERENT THINGS TO DIFFERENT PEOPLE AND THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO DO IT.**

**MINDFUL MEDITATION** may help you relax and relieve stress.

**PRACTICE RELAXATION TECHNIQUES WHILE YOU'RE DOING OTHER THINGS.**

**MEDITATE WHILE COMMITTING TO WORK, ON A BUS OR TRAIN, OR WAITING FOR AN APPOINTMENT.**

[CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD](#)

## MEDITATION

**THE GOAL OF MINDFUL MEDITATION IS TO FOCUS YOUR ATTENTION ON THE THINGS THAT ARE HAPPENING IN THE PRESENT MOMENT.**

### FIND A QUIET PLACE.

Find a quiet place, but some noise is acceptable.

### SIT IN A COMFORTABLE POSITION.

Before you sit down, remind yourself that you are there to focus on the present moment. This may help keep your mind from wandering.

### YOU CAN CLOSE YOUR EYES, OR YOU CAN LOOK DOWN.

Keeping your gaze a few inches in front of you on the floor.

### START TO PAY ATTENTION TO YOUR BREATHING.

This is a good way to focus your attention on what is happening right now.

### WHEN YOU START, TRY TO MEDITATE FOR ONLY 10 MINUTES AT A TIME.

Then, you can gradually increase the time.

### USE A MEDITATION APP

For guided meditations, OR PLAY RELAXING MEDITATION MUSIC for positive energy.

### DON'T TRY TO CHANGE YOUR BREATHING.

Just notice how it feels in your lungs and chest.

### KEEPING YOUR ATTENTION ON YOUR BREATHING WILL HELP YOU STAY FOCUSED

and not get lost in the thoughts that your feelings may trigger.

[CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD](#)

When deciding if any exercise is safe, you need to consider the technique used as well as your individual condition, such as injury history and fitness level. This information included herein is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. You assume full responsibility for how you choose to use this information. Sodexo, Inc. and its affiliates do not guarantee the accuracy of this information or any results and further assume no liability in connection with this presentation, including any information, methods or suggestions contained herein. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified medical healthcare professional prior to starting any new program or treatment or with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition or if you have any other medical needs.