



## Social Distancing Self-Care

Week of 5/11/2020

### Daily Self Check-In

- We are currently living in a stressful time with a lot of unknowns, and that can bring up feelings of anxiousness or uncertainty. When we are anxious, we tend to over-estimate the danger, and the odds, of bad things happening, while under-estimating our ability to cope if or when those bad things happen. For help with these feelings, we need to learn to tolerate uncertainty instead of worrying excessively about it. We can do this by remembering APPLE.
  - **A – Aware:** Notice the need for certainty as it comes up in your mind.
  - **P – Pause:** Don't react as you normally do. Don't react at all. Just pause, and breathe.
  - **P – Pull Back:** Tell yourself this is just the worry talking, and this apparent need for certainty is not helpful and not necessary.
  - **L – Let Go:** Let go of the thought or feeling about needing certainty. Tell yourself it is only a thought or feeling. Don't believe everything you think! Thoughts are not statements of fact. They will pass. You don't have to respond to them. You might imagine them floating away in a bubble or cloud.
  - **E – Explore:** You can explore the present moment, because right now, in this moment, you are ok. Notice your breathing, and the sensations of breathing. Notice the ground beneath you. Look around you and notice what you see, what you hear, what you can touch, what you can smell. Right now. Shift your focus off attention to something else – maybe carry on with what you were doing before you noticed the worrying thought, or do something else – mindfully, with your full attention.

## Tip of the Week

- Are you feeling a little stir-crazy after so many weeks of being at home? Give one (or all!) of these a try!
  - **Color or doodle.** Studies have shown that “structured coloring of a reasonably complex geometric pattern” such as a symmetrical mandala pattern or coloring book, can lead to a meditative state that helps reduce anxiety.
  - **Go for a walk.** Walking not only counts as physical activity, but also provides many mental health benefits. Walking can make you feel more creative, happier, and reduce feelings of boredom or dread.
  - **Sleep.** Aim to get seven to eight hours of sleep a day. If you are going to take a nap, stick to 10-20 minutes to avoid feeling groggy or messing with your sleep-wake cycle.
  - **Do yoga.** Studies have shown that yoga can boost your mood, lower stress and anxiety, and boost your self-esteem.
  - **Chat with a friend.** Call, text, email, or video chat with your friends and family. Research has shown that social support can make you more resilient to stress.
  - **Listen to (or play) music.** Singing has been shown to improve people’s mental health and sense of belonging, and listening to music can help reduce anxiety and pain while bolstering people’s moods.

## Mindfulness Strategy

- Five Finger Breathing Exercise
  1. Stretch one hand out so that you have space between your fingers.
  2. Hold up your pointer finger from the other hand.
  3. Start at the bottom of your thumb. Use the pointer finger to trace up your thumb as you slowly breathe in through your mouth.
  4. When you get to the top of your thumb, slowly breathe out your nose as you trace down the other side.
  5. Repeat for all fingers until you have traced your entire hand.

