

# Mental Wellness While Staying at Home



*"Although the  
world is full of  
suffering, it is also  
full of overcoming  
it."*

*- Helen Keller*

# Mental Wellness While Staying at Home

*Please Note:  
This workbook  
contains topics  
surrounding mental  
wellness, eating, and  
other topics that  
some may find  
triggering.  
Take steps as they  
become necessary  
for you.*



## **HELPLINES:**

Drug and Alcohol  
Helpline: 1-800-565-8603

Mental Health Helpline: 1-  
866-531-2600

Kids Help Phone: 1-800-  
668-6868

Women's Crisis Services of  
Waterloo Region: (519) 742-  
5894

# Mental Wellness While Staying at Home.

Even more information about our current situation? Yes! You bet!

But stay with me.

The world is in a very unsteady place at the moment. With such uncertainty, comes fear.

**Fear is an  
emotion that is  
meant  
to be felt.  
It is okay to feel.  
It's what comes  
next that matters!**

## 02

# OUR WORLD IS IN A DIFFICULT PLACE.

There is a general feeling of uncertainty right now. Not only are we confined to our homes, but the media is quite unclear as to what information is "true" right now. **You're not alone, but in times of crisis our initial reaction is to panic.**

However, a moment of panic and a state of panic are different. Understanding this is key.

# ACKNOWLEDGE THAT YOUR FEELINGS ARE VALID- BECAUSE THEY ARE

Feeling unsure, anxious or even terrified of the current situation is okay. Your feelings are valid no matter what they are in this moment. **The goal for continuing through this workbook is to take your state of panic to an action plan with intention.** Being "stuck at home" doesn't mean you need to be doing nothing. Having time to relax is important but too much down time, as you probably know is the enemy of anxiety.

## 03

# COMMUNICATE

Continuing communication with those around you is so important. **While we are "social distancing", we can't stop communicating.** Video chat with a loved one, catch up with a friend you haven't spoken to in a while. Create a group video call so you can chat with all your friends you were hoping to see. There are so many ways to use social media to connect, now is the time to utilize all of these methods.

# SET BOUNDARIES

Having said that, set boundaries regarding social media. It can be easy to get caught up in the never ending scroll. At this point, this means seeing a ton of news whether you are trying to or not. **Set limits for how much time you spend on social media.** Accept if it is making you upset. Just because we are at home does not mean we always need to be online. Use your settings to put alarms after a certain amount of time online. Choose to unfollow accounts that are harmful to your well-being. Whatever you need to do, for each person this will be slightly different.

## MAKE A PLAN

**In a time of uncertainty, focus on that which you can control. Plan your time so that if you get lost in the fear, you have something to fall back on.**

Continue any regular routines you implement in your everyday life. A morning routine, healthy eating routines, all that normally happens.

Now is the time to develop healthy routines if you have been struggling during busy times. Work on a morning routine, your self care on a regular basis, regular physical activity.

Plan each day as if it were a work day, continue to wake up at a regular time. Schedule things into your day as if they were appointments.

A **"Menu" Schedule** makes it easy to commit to following a plan. We can sometimes begin to feel trapped in a strict schedule but that is where the "menu" part comes in.

For each time scheduled activity "Work Time"- instead of writing out each thing you want to accomplish in that time, list a variety of things that could be worked on.

**This approach allows flexibility, and avoids our anxious brains being disappointed if not each day goes exactly according to plan.**

# 05

## EXAMPLE "MENU" SCHEDULE

**8:00 AM** - Wake Up

**8:30-9:00 AM** - Breakfast & Get ready for the day

**9:00AM-10:00AM** - Self Care / Creative

**10:00AM-11:00AM** - Move your body/ Exercise

**11:00AM-12:00PM** - Academic/Work

**12:00PM-1:00PM** -Lunch Break

**1:00PM-5:00PM** - Academic/Work

**5:00PM-6:00PM** - Outside / Creative

**6:00PM- 6:30 PM** - Dinner Break

**6:30-10:00PM** - Free Time / Relaxation

### "Menu" Options

**Self Care/Creativity** - Journalling, Painting, Meditation, Reading, Create a vision board, Organize/Declutter, Listen to music, Call a loved one, Cook/Bake a new recipe, Listen to a motivating podcast.

**Move Your Body**- This is personal preference, choose your favourite or choose to switch it up. Yoga, Home Workout (Youtube, Pinterest), Go for a walk, Meditation.

## 05.2

### MY "MENU" SCHEDULE

8:00 AM - 9:00 AM -

9:00AM-10:00AM -

10:00AM-11:00AM -

11:00AM-12:00PM -

12:00PM-1:00PM -

1:00PM-2:00PM -

2:00PM-3:00PM -

3:00PM-4:00PM -

4:00PM-5:00PM -

5:00PM-6:00PM -

6:00PM-7:00PM -

7:00PM-8:00PM -

8:00PM-9:00PM -

#### TIPS

- Leave gaps for your plans to change
- Allow for reflection time on what pieces are working really well
- Use multiple different hour blocks for one thing if needed, but take five minute breaks to avoid burnout



06

## WHAT MAKES YOU HAPPY?

**Focus on these activities, spend more time doing things you enjoy.**

Is there a passion project you "haven't had time for" because of your busy work schedule?

Do you absolutely love practicing yoga each day but are usually "too busy"?

Have a bin full of blank canvases and paint waiting to create something?

This is the time for you. Spend more time doing the things you love.

For some, there isn't a certain activity that comes to mind when prompted about a hobby that brings you joy.

Now is the time to find what you love to do, outside "work". Find something that sparks your creativity, makes you think in a different way, and challenges you.

Now is the perfect time to find your passion. Or if you're in a place where you know what this is already, go for it full force. Why not? What better time?



07

# SELF CARE & PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

**Learn something new about yourself, take care of yourself each day.**

Have you tried keeping a daily journal, or gratitude journalling? A great practice is every morning, or evening whichever you prefer do a **"thoughts dump"**. Many of us go into journalling knowing exactly what we want to write about, or have a goal for what we are doing.

The purpose of a "thoughts dump" is **just writing whatever is bothering you, comes to mind, or has come up in the past day**. No intentions, no goals, just writing. Getting these thoughts on paper can be extremely relieving, you don't feel like they're taking up space in your mindset throughout the day.

Even if you don't have these things already at home, even research online questions to ask yourself in order to know your true self better. You will be amazed how you answer some of these questions differently than you may have initially thought you would have.

Listen to a motivational podcast, and just write whatever comes to mind. This can be an amazing stress relief.



# RELATIONSHIP DEVELOPMENT

**Life gets busy. We don't mean too, but sometimes we neglect the relationships in our life. These relationships can be family, friends, partner and many more.**

We have a lot of time to reflect during this unusual phase and you may notice some feelings arise about individuals you have/had a connection with.

Allow these feelings to teach you something. They may motivate you to reach out to someone you haven't spoken to in a while or realize that you're seeking closure from a previous relationship ending. There is opportunity for forgiveness and understanding during this time.

Be patient with yourself as you work through this. Different steps may need to be taken, however, you can only control your actions. Others involved may not be on the same journey as you, whether that be reconciliation or inner peace.

Be compassionate with yourself and others involved. Seek as much understanding as possible.

**At the end of the day, do what you believe you need to do to improve your well-being.** Call up a friend, open up a difficult conversation or take a step in a new direction if you feel so moved.



# THINK AHEAD



*Always believe something wonderful  
is right around the corner.*



What comes after this?  
We will not be stuck in this forever.

Is there something you've been wanting to do for years but your everyday life has gotten in the way? A passion project you've been dreaming of completing, but putting it off.

**Set yourself up to be in the best place you can be when things "normalize".**

Instead of being trapped in what's happening right now, use the time to plan your future. Research the hobby you've always been wanting to learn, make it happen.





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# DO WHAT YOUR FUTURE SELF WILL THANK YOU FOR

“

*Don't look back, you're not  
going that way.*

”

**What takes you longer than you'd hope on a regular basis? Is there something you can work on during this time to make your work life easier for the future?**

**During a busy work week, do you struggle to keep up with your emails?**

Organize them, filter them, set up automated responses where you can. Unsubscribe from unnecessary email lists. Make things easier, however this looks for you.

**Do you find that you have a hard time finding outfits to wear during the work week?**

Go through your closet, declutter, organize things according to outfits or pieces you know can go together. Find your "weak spots" and strengthen them for when we return to "normal".



# 11

## KEY TAKE-AWAYS

*What does all this mean? This time is up to you: how you spend it, how you think about it.*

- **Your feelings are valid**, no matter what you are feeling.
- **Communication and relationships don't need to stop.** Social media doesn't just need to be a place for "news". Reach out to those you haven't seen in a while & stay connected to those you regularly do.
- **Plan your time at home** to make use of it the best you can. Take this a step further and plan for the future beyond this.
- **Spend extra time taking care of yourself**, making sure your mental wellness is in a positive place. Do things that make you happy in times of stress. Adjust often.
- **Self care & personal development should always be a priority.** Now is the time to start - learn something new about yourself, figure out what you want your ideal life to look like.

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## WE WILL GET THROUGH THIS

It is not easy to realize, but most of the world is in a similar place still.

The uncertainty, unknown and heightened media presence is something everyone that is dealing with.

With anxiety, it is easy to be stuck in the fear that we are the only ones in this situation. That no one will understand, or really see how we feel.

The media is not helping these feelings. At first glance, it acts as constant reminders that something is wrong. However, if you take the time to dig a little deeper, you will see the unity and compassion.

There is positive information being released everyday, it just happens to be harder to find.

The reality is, the world has been through this before. Not the exact same thing, but very similar. We will get through this, things will go "back to normal" at some point. It is up to us when that time is.

**"This too shall pass"**

-Olivia & Shaelyn

