

10 Mental Health Quarantine Tips

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1. Set up a routine and stick to it. People of all ages thrive with structure and experience increased anxiety without it. Establish times for sleep, work, school, self-care, exercise, entertainment, and other regular activities.
2. Maintain basic healthy habits. Focus on daily habits promoting physical health including regular sleep, daily exercise, healthy eating habits, staying hydrated, and maintaining basic hygiene.
3. Spend at least 30 minutes outside daily. Our bodies need fresh air and exposure to sunshine. This can be combined with exercise, walking the dogs, or simply sitting outside and reading.
4. Schedule regular social interactions. Children benefit from special 1:1 time with each parent/caregiver. Everyone benefits from social interaction with someone outside the home daily. Use FaceTime, Skype, Zoom, Facebook Messenger for Kids etc. to set up virtual meal time and playdates.
5. Everyone needs some space and alone time. Establish a place for each family member to go to spend time alone. Have self-care items and solo activities available in each alone space (e.g. rocking chair, stuffed animal, book).
6. Have a list of activities for the family and each member to engage in for distraction. Jigsaw puzzles, coloring, crafts, art activities, crosswords, sudoku, and board games can provide an engaging activity to decrease anxiety and boredom.
7. Limit watching news to specific daily times. Focus on how this is a temporary situation. Increase positivity by thinking about the many helpers getting us through this. Send a thank you note/drawing to a helper.
8. Learn something new or take on a project. Use online resources to learn a new language, skill, activity, or complete a home project. Teach your children important life skills like cooking, laundry, and budgeting.
9. Continue to celebrate! Your plans might be different but it is important to continue to celebrate anniversaries, birthdays, graduations, and special events. Order a special take-out meal, bake a cake, or plan a virtual party. You can also plan additional ways to celebrate after the quarantine ends.
10. Get help and support when you need it. Do not be afraid to take advantage of the many resources available in the community to support you and your family during this difficult time. Mental health providers can meet via teletherapy. Contact your child's teachers and daycare providers for suggestions on learning and daily structure.