

Self-Isolation and Social Distancing: How to stay engaged, active, mindful and relaxed

(developed by the SASPCN Mental Health Team)

The following is a list of activities that might be fun, relaxing or pleasurable for you, when self-isolation or social distancing has been advised. Feel free to add your own ideas to the list:

Media and the news:

- Keep informed with legitimate sources but limit and self-monitor time spent checking social media and the news. It's easy to get swept up in new stories and get drawn into fear or panic
- Talk with others about how you're feeling and also know that it's ok to keep healthy boundaries if you find yourself becoming overwhelmed by what you hear
- Alberta Health Services provides up to date information for Albertans and healthcare professionals, online screening tool and visiting patients:
albertahealthservices.ca
- Here is a good resource to help you self-monitor symptoms: AHS self-assessment tool:
myhealth.alberta.ca (online screening tool to help you assess for symptoms of COVID-19 and steps to take)

Humour:

- Watch funny movies
- Look for opportunities in your day that are amusing. Share your experience with others
- Listen to funny podcasts, comedians
- Watch funny sitcoms on TV, game shows, reruns or something new
- Read funny books or literature or reread your favourites
- Engage in silly dancing by yourself, with your family or kids
- Make terrible Dad jokes
- Laugh at your pets or watch silly animal videos

Reflection/Mindfulness/Relaxation:

- Gratitude and positive thinking- notice 3 good things that happened today. Try this often
- Develop your own mantra or positive coping statement: such as "this too shall pass", "we're all in this together"
- Practice intentional deep breathing, often. Slow breath in, hold it for a few seconds then exhale slowly. Try imagining that your belly is a balloon (give it a colour if you want) that slowly inflates, then slowly deflates

- Think about positive comments/compliments you've received from others
- Meditation: There are many apps and websites. Exs. Apps-Calm, Insight Timer, Headspace, Website: Palouse Mindfulness
- Look through old photos and reminisce
- Recall past holidays, parties or other events
- Progressive muscle relaxation: tense each of the muscle groups of the body for 5-10 seconds then release, noticing how they relax
- Remember beautiful scenery
- Think about past happy moments with friends
- Think about your achievements
- Mindful eating. Slow down eating and try savouring each bite before the next
- Mindful tub soak. Try bubble bath, bath bombs, epsom salts. Use your senses to experience the warmth, comfort and pleasant aroma
- Listen to music. Mindful listening. Try to notice individual instruments as you listen.
- Think about pleasant memories
- Think about summer and sunny days
- Star gazing from your car or an evening walk
- Say I love you to someone you care about
- Tell someone why you appreciate them
- Think about your strengths and good qualities
- Fantasize good things about the future
- Think about past times when you were resilient
- Write about a positive experience you had. Include details. Share it if you like
- Soak in the bathtub (try with music, candles, epsom salts, bath bombs, bubble bath)
- Cuddle up with your pets. Talk about pets from your past and look at pictures or videos
- Grounding Strategy: Take a few moments to look around you. Find 5 things you can see, 4 things you can hear, 3 things that you can feel or touch, 2 things that you can smell or imagine, and 1 thing you can taste or imagine tasting. Add in 1 thing you like about yourself

Staying Connected:

- Try to start or join a TV/Movie/Book club with friends via phone, skype or FaceTime
- Make a coffee and phone a friend
- Seniors: Senior's Centre Without Walls Telephone-based social and health programming (780) 395-2626
- Reach out by talking on the phone or Skyping, FaceTime or WhatsApp
- Facebook Group: YEG Community Response to COVID-19. This site offers support for those who need help accessing basic supplies
- Facebook: St. Albert and Sturgeon Primary Care Network

Spiritual:

- Practice acts of kindness
- Prayer, meditation, scripture
- If you miss church or other faith-based services check out online services

- Spend time in nature, appreciate the beauty and wonders of nature you see
- Practice mindfulness, gratitude
- Mindful walks- try taking in your surroundings using all your senses

Keep Engaged, Stimulated

- Read books. Try Libby library app for online books
- Learn a new language: ie. Duolingo app, online library language books
- Free virtual museum and zoo tours
- For kids, check out free educational sites listed here: stmaryk12.net
- Try out new recipes, bake or cook
- Board or card games
- Take photos, look through old photos
- Doodling, sketching, painting or drawing
- Singing around the house
- Learn a new instrument or pick up the one you have
- Writing (journal, book, poetry)
- Making lists of tasks
- Create a family chore chart
- Arts and Crafts - Card-making, scrapbooking, jewelry making
- Knitting, crocheting, cross-stitching, embroidery
- Indoor gardening-planting seeds in containers
- Doing crossword puzzles or Sudoku
- Donate old items
- Making a gift for someone
- Build a reading fort with flashlights and books

Stay Active:

- Outdoor walks in the neighbourhood, forest hikes, jogging
- Create a family schedule. Check out this site: momtrends.com for a free colourful schedule you can use with your kids
- Take a drive in the country
- Try a home workout. Some gyms are offering the option of home workouts or even virtual personal training
- Chair Yoga or stretching
- Skate, dance or try snowshoeing
- Family walks
- Refurbish furniture - Home fix-ups/renos
- Cleaning or organizing around the house
- Bird watching

Some perspective: Conversations, relationships, songs, reading, self-care, love and hope will not be cancelled. Let's spread positivity and amplify hope in this current climate! Remember we're all in this together and this too shall pass 