



Staying Sane in the Midst of COVID-19

Over the past few weeks, concerns about the spread of the coronavirus have turned our daily lives upside down. Right now, it seems that there is a lot in our lives that is beyond our control. While social distancing is slowing the spread of COVID19, it has caused a disruption in our routines. Many of us are struggling to find a new “normal” in our lives.

At times like this, it's easy to get caught up in our own fears and concerns and focus on what we **can't** do or have. I would like to give you some things that you **can** do every day that will help change our focus to something more positive and promote good self-care.

Maintain your normal routine as much as possible. Even though you're now spending all your time at home, try to stick to your regular sleep, school, meal, or work schedule. It will help give you a sense of normalcy.

Eat well. Stay away from junk food, processed foods, and sugar as much as possible and pay attention to portion sizes. It is also important to minimize trips to the grocery store to limit the spread of COVID19.

Take time out for activities you enjoy. Read a good book, watch a movie, play a favorite game, make something, cook, do a craft, or learn something new.

Find ways to exercise. Physical activity will make you feel better. Get creative and find something new to do:

- Get outside for a walk or run
- Take a bike ride
- Get outside and play with your kids or pets—they need the exercise too

Find things that nurture your spirit. Get your family together and have devotions, read the Bible, pray. You may want to start a gratitude journal and write down five things every day that you are thankful for. It will help you to focus on the things that you do have and help you look at things more positively.

Stay in touch with friends and family. Find different ways to support and encourage each other during this stressful and uncertain time. Touch base through phone calls, video chats and virtual meetings and maybe even write a letter to send in the mail.

Reach out to others in need. Offer help to an elderly or disable neighbor by bringing them some groceries or call them on the phone to let them know they are not alone. Be a positive and uplifting presence in their life.

Remember to follow the guidelines for preventing the spread of the virus. Even if you're not in a high-risk group, stay at home, wash your hands frequently, and avoid contact with others. This can help save the lives of the most vulnerable in our community and prevent the healthcare system from being overburdened.

“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.” (Isaiah 41:10)

While it feels like there is a lot we can't control, remember that we all can make choices to keep ourselves and our families healthy. God reminds us that He is with us. He will give us the strength and help that we need to see us through.

If you would like information about COVID19, please go to the Center for Disease Control at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/index.html>.

For local updates, go to the Minnesota Department of Health at <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/> OR the St Louis County Health Department at <https://www.stlouiscountymn.gov/departments-a-z/public-health-human-services/public-health/coronavirus-information>.

If you are sick and need advice, please call your provider at: **Essentia Health**—1-833-494-0836 or **St Luke's**—218-249-4220, and they will provide you with information on what you should do.