

K-State Research & Extension News for April, 2020
Submitted by Kathy Goul, Family & Consumer Science Agent

Caring for Yourself in Changing Times

During times of change and uncertainty, it is more important now, than ever before, to pause and take a moment to care for yourself. As we settle into new routines, these 7 tips for self-care will help you stay healthy and connected during these times.

Start your day with exercise. Exercise increases your energy and improves happiness. Get some fresh air outside while walking or biking, or take a virtual workout class at home.

Choose foods that nourish your body. The foods we choose have an impact on both our physical and mental health. Choose lots of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy foods and lean proteins. You can also select foods to “boost” your mood – such as oatmeal, nuts and even dark chocolate!

Don’t skip out on your sleep. It is important to get 7 to 9 hours of sleep, especially during times of stress. Limit your exposure to the news and social media two hours before bedtime. Finding ways to relax during that time, such as reading a book, writing in a journal or listening to soothing music will help you have a more restful sleep.

Learn and explore. Keep your mind active by taking virtual tours of museums, reading, trying new recipes or solving puzzles. Being engaged in learning will increase your confidence, give you hope and provide you with a sense of purpose.

Create a routine. Set regular times for eating, exercising, going to bed, rising in the morning and working or studying. Having these routines will help you maintain a sense of normalcy during these times.

Practice mindfulness. Take breaks throughout the day to slow down and be present. The practice of pausing, breathing and just “being” is essential to your well-being and mental health. Being mindful can help reduce stress and decrease anxiety.

Talk with a friend. Stay connected with friends, family and co-workers through phone and video calls. These connections will help you cope with the ups and downs in life.

Finally, it is important to remember that times of uncertainty can increase feelings of isolation, loneliness and depression. If you know of someone in crisis, please reach out to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255.

Source: EachMindMatters.org. For more information about family resource management or adult development and aging, contact the Marais des Cygnes Extension District Paola (913-294-

4306) or Mound City (913-795-2829) offices, or write to kgoul@ksu.edu or check out our website: www.maraisdescyignes.k-state.edu.