

MSJ Wellness Center Counseling Services



A Lion-Hearted Mental Health Care Package: Coping with COVID-19

Just like you, the staff in the Wellness Center Counseling and Health Services are venturing onto a new path, a new reality associated with COVID-19. We hope you and your families are adjusting to these challenging circumstances. We also want to do more than send warm wishes, we want to put something in your inbox to bring you a moment of peace, joy, and comfort. We have put together this Virtual Care Package in the hopes that – even if just for a moment – it helps you focus on self-care. After all you've done to adjust to distance learning and social distancing, **you deserve it!**

Choose self-care

1. Watch a self-help-video or try one of the other virtual services offered by [MSJ Wellness Center Counseling Services](#)
2. David Kessler, a grief expert discusses how COVID-19 may be bringing up feelings of [grief](#) and anticipatory grief and provides strategies for coping
3. It's ok to [grieve the little things](#)
4. As long as we also, practice [gratitude](#)



5. Try the [Woebot](#) app--hundreds of expert-crafted tools to learn about yourself and improve your mood whenever you need them
6. Advice from an [astronaut](#) on coping with isolation

7. The [struggle to focus](#) is real



8. Practicing the "APPLE" technique can help decrease anxiety and worries:

Acknowledge: Notice and acknowledge the uncertainty as it comes to mind

Pause: Don't react as you normally do. Don't react at all. Pause and breathe

Pull back: Tell yourself this is just the worry talking, and this apparent need for certainty is not helpful and not necessary. It is only a thought or feeling. Don't believe everything you think. Thoughts are not statements or facts

Let go: Let go of the thought or feeling. It will pass. You don't have to respond to them. You might imagine them floating away in a bubble or cloud

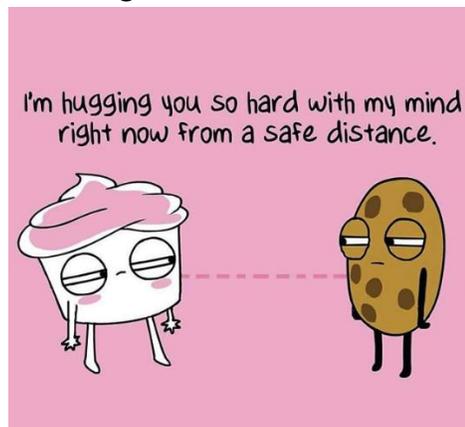
Explore: Explore the present moment. Notice your breathing and the sensations of your breathing. Notice the ground beneath you. Look around and notice what you see, what you hear, what you can touch, what you can smell. Right now. Then shift your focus of attention to something else - on what you need to do, on what you were doing before you noticed the worry, or do something else - mindfully with Your full attention

9. Learn more about how to [cope](#) and stay emotionally well during COVID-19 related school closures

10. Ask yourself these [six questions](#) every day.
11. Being present eases anxiety and worry. Try 1 or all 52 [free mindfulness exercises](#)
12. Get instant access to self-care tips, resources, and connections with other students by joining the [Active Minds Student Slack Network](#).
13. Feeling [overwhelmed](#) is OK
14. Be kind to yourself--practice [self-compassion](#)
15. Try the [Stop, Breathe, Think](#) app--check in with how you're feeling, and try short activities tuned to your emotions
16. Enroll in Yale's free course, [The Science of Well-Being](#)--engage in a series of challenges designed to increase your own happiness and build more productive habits

Choose connection

1. Connect with a clinical counselor during the TALKNOW feature of [Lions Health](#); Use the TALK NOW feature to connect with a therapist 24/7 in a safe place to talk about anything distressing you.
2. Host a virtual [NetflixParty](#). Netflix recently announced a new way to watch Netflix with your friends online. Netflix Party synchronizes video playback and adds group chat to your favorite Netflix shows
3. Send a virtual hug



credit: @thegoodadvicecupcake

4. If you are self-quarantining with loved ones, did you know that a [20 second hug](#) does wonders? Oxytocin (the "cuddle hormone") is released, a hormone that relaxes us and lowers anxiety. When it's released during these 20-second hugs it can effectively lower **blood pressure** and reduce the **stress** hormone norepinephrine

5. Have a dance off with friends and have a live virtual dance party
6. Play online games together like Minecraft. [Discord](#) is a platform you can use to play and chat with friends at the same time
7. Cards Against Humanity or Checkers more your speed? Have a [virtual game night](#) and use Google Hangouts or Facetime to chat while playing. [Wirecutter](#) has more game night options and suggestions
8. Go old school and phone a friend (but maybe text them first)



9. This is a great time to check in with people you haven't heard from in a while
10. Pets are benefitting from our increased time at home. Share some of your best furry friend's antics with others online
11. Host a dinner party with friends or family over Facetime or Google Hangouts
12. Invite someone to a virtual lunch or coffee break
13. Start a personal/public blog, website or podcast
14. Find a penpal or write handwritten letters to friends/loved ones

Choose the arts & creativity

1. Explore [art museums](#) from around the world virtually
2. Engage in [Random Acts of Kindness](#)
3. Want to flex your sketchbook skills? This is just one example of an [art challenge](#) you can find on social media
4. [Art-viewing](#) can help with social and psychological support for people caring for those with mental health challenges. Just do it virtually for now, though
5. [Virtual concerts and Broadway shows](#) to watch during the COVID-19 shutdown.

- Express your feelings through creative writing, painting, drawing, photography, clay, listening and/or playing music, or experimenting with a new baking recipe.
- [Color](#) these adult coloring pages

Choose music

- Free virtual concerts!
 - Rolling Stone: [In My Room concerts](#): (3 concerts a week).
 - [John Legend](#)
 - NPRs [Tiny Desk concerts](#) for the arts (Harry Styles, Chika, Taimane, Coldplay and more):
 - Live virtual [concerts](#) from NPR ranging from Experimental to Jazz and Americana to everything in between.
 - Compilation of classical music and opera on demand as well as live streams from the [Guardian](#) and [Classic fm](#).
- Make a music video.
- Create a variety of playlists highlighting different moods or activities (e.g., I'm rearranging my living space playlist, I need to chill out playlist).



Choose movement

- [Stretching and movement](#) can help with anxiety and sleep
- Try one of the [virtual workouts or yoga classes](#) offered by the ERAU Fitness Center
- Choose from a variety of [free-trial workout](#) streaming services.
- Additional suggestions on ways to [stay active](#) during COVID-19

5. Free virtual classes through the [YMCA](#), no membership required

Choose kids' activities

For students with children or younger siblings, here are some free resources to entertain and engage with your little loved one

1. [Scholastic Lessons](#)
2. [Mystery Science](#)
3. [Storyline](#)
4. [Lunch Doodles with Mo Willems](#)
5. [Cincinnati Zoo](#)
6. [Cosmic Kids Yoga](#)
7. [Gemini](#), free children's concerts
8. [LearnAway](#) -remote learning ideas, resources, tips, and tools from birth through 12th grade
9. [#DisneyMagicMoments](#)
10. Let them try [free audiobooks](#)

Choose helping others



1. Donate to local food banks.
2. Find ways to help young students who depend on school lunches.
3. Buy a gift certificate to a local small business or restaurant.
4. Tip delivery drivers and restaurant staff generously if you are able.
5. Check-in on your neighbors, friends, and classmates who may be more vulnerable.
6. Consider donating blood.
7. Practice physical distancing.
8. Share information responsibly and support those who create good information.

9. Contribute to history by sharing your [coronavirus diaries](#).
10. Take the [Active Minds' Young Adult Mental Health Survey](#).
11. Practice patience, kindness and understanding.

Choose nature

1. Go for a [mindfulness walk](#).
2. Breathe the fresh air and take in what is around you. Use your 5 senses to connect with nature
3. Exercise your green thumb by purchasing a low maintenance plant or have someone gift you with a baby plant (succulents are great) Plants are a great way to brighten up your workstation and improve [well-being](#)



Choose deep breathes

1. [Inhale. Exhale.](#)
2. Check out the [CALM](#) app--free meditations, stories, music and yoga

Choose cooking

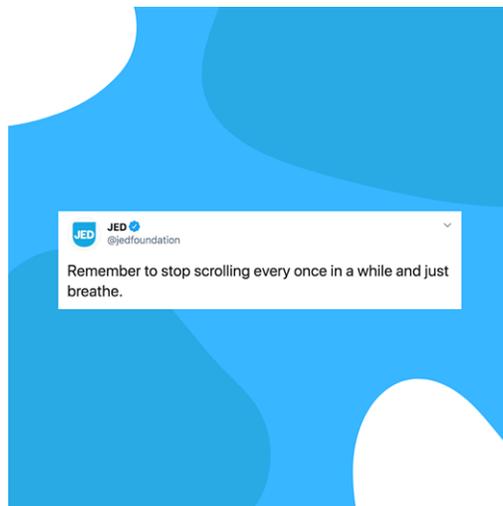
1. How about experimenting with some [new recipes](#)? Share your creations on social media and/or have a live cooking challenge with friends

Choose sports

1. Desperately missing sports? Check out these free passes
 - a. Free [NBA](#) League Pass: games from this season, and classic games
 - b. Free [NFL](#) Game Pass: game replays
2. There are plenty of [eSports](#) to enjoy

Choose rest

1. Take a break from the news and your screens



2. Learn and practice good sleep [hygiene](#)
3. Create your own [sleep soundscape](#)
4. Get help for [insomnia](#)

Choose support

1. Connect with the [MSJ Wellness Center Counseling Services](#) if you are interested in counseling with an MSJ counselor or to register with TAO: Therapy Assistance Online, a library of self-help resources
2. Connect with a clinical counselor during the TALKNOW feature of

[Lions Health](#); Use the TALK NOW feature to connect with a therapist 24/7 in a safe place to talk about anything distressing you.

3. [Find a therapist](#) in your area

Choose laughter

Take time for some stress relief. [Laughter](#) can be one of these ways and has been associated with psychological health benefits

