

TIPS AND STRATEGIES TO FLOURISH THROUGH THE UNCERTAINTY OF COVID-19.

LOSS AND GRIEF

Things have changed drastically! With that comes significant personal and global loss and grief whether we are aware of it or not. We have lost our usual way of living. We grieve leaving behind our comfortable and familiar ways and the certainty this provided.



OUR BRAVE NEW WORLD



We need to think and act for the greater good of all. Afterall, we are all interconnected. What we put out there comes back to us, just in unexpected ways. We do well to let go of frivolous desires and fantasies for the time being. Taking this time seriously, to feel vulnerable and to step up on courage allows our creativity to flourish; to innovate, help each other grow through this and even have fun in ways like never before. We can never go back to who we were. We can choose to embrace all this time brings - the good and the bad; or struggle... and potentially die.

WAYS TO EVOLVE INTO AN IMPROVED VERSION OF OURSELVES

1. Keep Safe

Disconnect from seeing anyone that you really don't have to see. Only be in company with the person or people you live with. Minimise outings for essential goods like food and medicines by planning ahead. Only one person venture out to get them. Listen to our leaders' guidelines and implement them in a genuine way that considers your own circumstances and needs.

2. Stay Connected



Staying connected is critical to maintaining our health and well-being. Being loving, kind and compassionate helps us navigate either being more intensely connected with those in our homes or distant to those we love being with in person. Our faces are a prime part of our social engagement system; that's why there is no substitute for seeing and learning to read people's face as we talk with them, whether in person or via technology. Texting just doesn't cut it! Use Apps like House Party, Face Time or What's App, that are effective while keeping us safe. Have a Happy Hour with our families or friendship group or organise a Sunday dinner utilising the connecting Apps so we can chat

as if we were all in the one room sharing stories and finding out how we're all doing. Forced isolation allows us the opportunity to be more connected; listen more attentively; and respond more authentically to what is being said by ourselves and others – the way to enriching relationships.

3. Practice Grounding

Grounding helps relieve overwhelm, anxiety, fear and panic. Feel our feet connected to the earth. Be still. Breathe. Relax into you just being - without having to think or feel. Just BE for a few moments. It helps us soften and allows us to focus on our inner selves, the place within us that is always peaceful and the place to return to so we can get back in touch with all that is awesome and unique about us! This is always available to us and no one can ever take it away. Being practised at grounding enlivens our best selves to shine brightly and motivates us to help others and ourselves.

There is a plethora of really helpful grounding techniques readily and freely available to use via the internet. Mindfulness, yoga, tai chi, meditation, diaphragmatic breathing and so on are all great for calming our nervous systems. Good Apps include: Smiling Mind, Tapping Solution, Head Space, Omvana, BreathTaking, Tide and This is Sand. Ground every day.



4. Check in with YOURSELF



Structure a self-care sacred space and time to do a daily check-in with how we are doing. The space can be created with simplicity; like our favourite chair and a lit candle; some soft cushions in front of a window with a view; a bubble bath; our bed with a family photo nearby just before we go to sleep. Make it an intentional space to go - to sit and quieten. Slow our breathing down, gently in and out through the nose and right to the edges of each breath, in and out. Close our eyes if okay for us and relax into the awakening of what is going on for us inside. At the least read a book there. Remind ourselves if we drift away to troubles or others that "in this space its only about me". It's a time for some extreme self-care and love. It's a good idea to score ourselves out of 1 to 10 (10

being extremely stressed) on how we are right now (How are we feeling? Are our thoughts helpful or too negative? Is our body tense or relaxed? Is our body trying to let us know through new ailments that we are too stressed and need to heed this physical warning? Please seek professional help if we are at a 9 or 10 in terms of stress and not coping with daily life. Help is at hand via online counselling or medical assistance if we're freaking out.

5. Get Creative, be Challenged and have Fun

What a unique time to try new and different things to stimulate ourselves away from the boredom that comes if we don't choose something different, new or challenging. Play, have fun and feel a new sense of joy. The internet is full of creative home-made videos of people doing just this. Get inspiration from them. Brainstorm and make a list of activities we could do. Leave space to add more as our ideas start to flow. What-ever our thing: arts and crafts, construction, reading, singing, writing, playing music, dancing... just start doing it and mixing it up a bit. No rules apply. Be free. Enjoy!



6. Keep Moving



Find ways to keep moving your body regularly to keep energy flowing through your mind and body. Set up stations like a mini boot camp. Have different exercises to do at each for a few minutes. It can be simple: squats, skipping on the spot, jumping, push ups, leg lifts, sit ups, running on the spot and so on. Put on some uplifting music and get that heart pumping. If allowed outside, go for a run or walk briskly to get some fresh air and health-giving cardio. Do some dancing, hoola, play hopscotch, chalk draw on the sidewalk or join in one of the many online activity classes available online. Try something you've not done before. Modify activities so the kids can join in with you.

7. Nourish

Feed our bodies with non-processed and fresh foods and beverages as much as possible. Include a fat, protein and carbohydrate in every meal for a balanced diet. Check the internet for what foods belong in each group. Aim for a 'rainbow of good health' on our plates. Limit coffee, alcohol, soft drinks and all things sugary. For snacks, have at hand some: fruit; hummous and crackers and vegie sticks; nuts; or some home-made non sugary treats like protein balls - to enable our bodies to take us through the day with plenty of energy.



8. Give and be Grateful

if you have nothing
to be grateful for,

check your pulse. 😊

Start with our surrounds: notice and be grateful for all that we have rather than what we don't have right now. Which of those things remind us of what matters most in our lives? A family photo? An artwork? A person or animal? Find 3 things each day to be grateful for - to lift our spirits and shift our body chemistry to a more positive health giving one. Give something of ourselves because we can: pause what we are doing to give time to a friend or family member; help someone in need, no matter how small; write a letter to thank someone for what they have done for us; forgive and make peace with someone we've held a grudge with. Look out as well as within to share our resources and capabilities with others to help us get through this together.

9. Sleep and Relax well



Sleep and relaxation are vital! Relax: to rest and reset; to process our day as it unfolds; and digest the food we eat. We need time in deep sleep so our physical body is still and our brains can get busy repairing and boosting our immune system. Poor sleep leads to fatigue, immune suppression and mood disorders. Leading to bedtime choose quieter activities like: reading or meditating; drink a calming drink like camomile tea; switch off technology and try a sleep-inducing App like - Calm: Meditation and Sleep; Breathe: Meditation & Sleep; or Mindset: Hypnosis for Stress. Sleep peacefully!

When we do all this, we heal ourselves and others.

Our newly created ways to live will in turn help heal the earth.