

From the Grove

A MENTAL WELLNESS NEWSLETTER

by Dr. Wanda Hall-Myers

Adapting to the New Normal

Change is challenging for most people. Some changes are welcomed, but other changes are met with resistance. Change can shake your world as some of you are experiencing with COVID-19. You notice that change can also be scary as you consider the uncertainty that comes along. Change doesn't just involve the change, but it involves the mind, perceptions, beliefs, and emotions of those experiencing the change.

Change can also bring on symptoms of anxiety and depression as well as physical symptoms such as headaches and gastrointestinal problems. It is important during times of change to practice healthy habits to maintain a mind and body that are well. Let's explore a few tips.

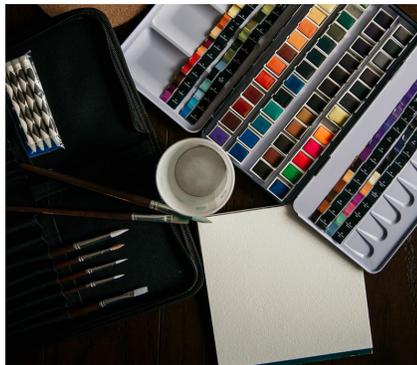
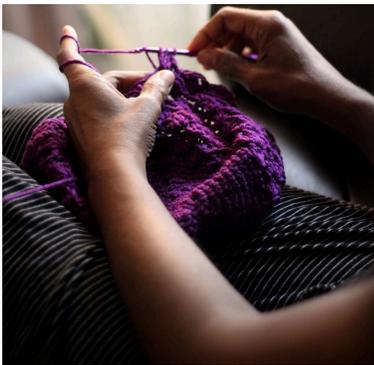
- **Rely on your faith.** Engaging in prayer and meditation remains important especially during challenging times. Find daily time to pray and meditate. Schedule time to reflect on God, His Word, and His awesome power.
- **Eat healthy.** Sometimes when you're most stressed, it's easy to skip meals or reach for comfort foods that may be unhealthy. Be mindful that a healthy diet includes a variety of vegetables, fruit, legumes, whole grains, seeds and nuts.
- **Get adequate sleep.** Sleep is an important factor in staying healthy. Have you noticed that when you're tired, you are more likely to be irritable and experience difficulty thinking? Depending on your age group, you should get 7-10 hours of sleep nightly.



- **Exercise.** Exercise is important for a variety of reasons. When you exercise, endorphins are released that help you feel better emotionally. You don't have to spend hours working out or pumping iron. Simply walking can do wonders, whether indoor or outdoor.



- **Learn a new skill.** You may have more time in your schedule since there are restrictions in going out. Take the opportunity to learn something new. For example, there are many types of new technology you could learn and use. You could also learn to cook a new dish or learn about any topic of interest to you.
- **Start a new hobby.** How many times have you thought, “I would do ___ if I had more time.” Well, maybe now is the time to try your hands at gardening, crocheting, painting, decorating, etc. Or maybe you need to re-start a hobby you used to enjoy, such as reading.



- **Manage your intake of news.** There is such a thing as “too much news”. It really can become depressing listening to hours and hours of sad news. Stay informed with what’s going on but do limit your time taking in information. Also, be mindful of the news source and stick with reliable sources and not Facebook, for example.



- **Maintain a schedule.** As much as possible, try to maintain a routine. Plan out your day ahead of time and try to stick with your schedule. However, don’t stress if you get off schedule. Be sure to include a variety of activities to stay engaged and active, even when you are having to stay in the house.
- **Do something for someone else.** There is no shortage of ways to be helpful. Find a way to make someone’s day better, such as through a call or card. Or find a way to help in the relief effort of COVID-19. You feel better when you focus on others.

ACTION PLAN

Of the tips listed, which 2 areas do you need to work on the most? Set goals to help you get started.

EXAMPLE

Area: Meditate on scripture

Goal: I will read the “Home Daily Bible Readings” found in the Sunday School book each morning at 9:00 a.m.

Area 1: _____

Goal 1: _____

Area 2: _____

Goal 2: _____