

Updated Notice for Patients of Yvonne B Bregman, 3/16/2020

After a virtual meeting yesterday with over a dozen physicians, psychologists and social workers I have decided that it is best to suspend any face to face meetings with patients until the health precautions are lifted. I am still available to support and work with you.

What does this mean in practical terms? I am happy to arrange either a Zoom, HIPAA compliant video session or speak with you over the phone. Estimates for the amount of time we may have to limit contact range from 4 and 8 weeks. Given that, it is important to stay connected and supported. Below, are some suggestions from ADAA, WHO, Give An Hour, the Campaign to Change Direction, the BBC, colleagues and others.

Take care of You:

Reframe *I am stuck inside* to *I can finally focus on my home and self*

Stay close to your normal routine (wake up and go to bed at the same time, eat meals, shower, adapt your exercise regimen and get out of your PJs, do laundry as usual...)

Consider meditating for 10 mins each day.

Go for a walk or hike by yourself or with family members

Keep track of what you are eating and commit to eating healthy

Limit alcohol, sugary snacks and THC

Get 7-8 hours of sleep and if you take a nap make it for 30 mins or less.

Check in with others:

Use technology to stay connected with people in your life.

Call a loved one, family member or friend to check in on them and let them know you care about them and their emotional well-being...bring some joy!

Write a letter to a loved one letting them know how much they mean to you and how much you care about them.

Take time to connect with an old friend or classmate.

Engage and Connect Wisely

Facetime your loved ones and "join" them for a meal.

Choose only certain credible websites (who.int or cdc.gov) for only limited times

Review your social media and screen time habits: limit the amount of news and social media to 2, time limited, periods a day per WHO recommendations. Mute things that are triggering, unfollow or mute certain accounts.

Revisit happy memories and create an online photo album to share with friends and loved ones.

Learn a new hobby. Get out your cookbooks, photo albums (or put one together), draw, color, garden, or organize a space that has grown chaotic.

Pull out board games, puzzles and cards.

Relax

Plan a night in dance party for your family. Have fun with the theme, music, decorations and food.

Plant in your garden

Open a book you have been wanting to read for at least 30 mins a day.
Fill the bathtub, add bubbles and light some candles
If you find it relaxing, clean out that junk drawer, closet or pantry.

Know the Five Signs to Get Help with your Mood

- 1) Personality Changes...which can come on gradually but are noticeable to others
- 2) More angry, anxious, agitated or moody than usual.
- 3) Withdrawal or isolation
- 4) May neglect self-care and engage in risky behaviors
- 5) Feeling overcome with hopelessness and overwhelmed by circumstances.

From AADA...

A Chaotic home can lead to a chaotic mind: "With all the uncertainty happening outside your home, keep the inside organized, predictable and clean. Setting up mental zones for daily activities can be helpful to organize your day. EG: try not to eat in bed or work on the sofa...use the kitchen table for meals and work at a desk. Loosening these boundaries just muddles your routine and can make the day feel very long. Additionally, a cluttered home can cause you to become uneasy and claustrophobic of your environment.

Start a new quarantine ritual. With this newfound time, why not do something special during these days? Start a daily journal to jot down thoughts and feelings to reflect on later. Take a walk every day at a usual time or connect with others at a usual time. Start a painting or drawing which you can add to everyday. Having something special during this time will help you look forward to each new day.

Use telehealth as an option to talk to me if your anxiety becomes unmanageable.

Adapted From the BBC: A.P.P.L.E.

A- Acknowledge and notice the uncertainty, or feeling that comes to mind.

P- Pause...give yourself a breath. Remember, just a messenger not a forward tackle.

P- Pull back...This is a moment in time...where is that feeling coming from?...get curious.

L- Let go. Think of your mind as a clear blue sky with "clouds" of thought drifting through.

E- Explore. Notice this moment. Access your five senses...what do you hear, see, taste Smell or touch? Where are you sitting, standing or walking?

Finally, think of at least 3 things for which you are grateful.

From NAMI and [workplacementalhealth.org](https://www.workplacementalhealth.org)):

Practice Acceptance: Accept that the news coverage will not answer all your questions or address all your worries. Accept uncertainty. Trust that officials around the globe and the medical community are trying their best to address the situation.

Ask someone for help: If you feel you need separation from the news, have a friend or loved one filter the news for you, and give updates based on a reasonable assessment of what's relevant to you. This will allow you to reduce direct news consumption.

Make a Health Disruption Plan. Education can be critical to alleviating stress and anxiety. Speak to your health care advisor about coronavirus precautions specific to your health needs, including a health disruption plan. Be sure that medication refills are up to date. If you are concerned about running low, reuse that your treating health care provider approves a 60 or 90 day supply of medication.

Recognize warning signs and triggers. Continue to monitor new or worsening symptoms you may be experiencing with either your mental health or overall health and well-being. Do your best to keep your stress level low and engage in activities, like those listed, that help you manage your stress levels during this disruptive time.

I am here...call, text or email if you need some extra support. Yvonne