

23 Tips for Thriving In Quarantine

1. **Stick to a routine.** Go to sleep and wake up at a reasonable time, write a schedule that is varied and includes time for work, various kinds of self-care and other completing other responsibilities.
2. **Dress for the social life you want, not the social life you have.** Get showered and dressed in comfortable clothes, wash your face, brush your teeth. Dressing in bright colors will help improve our mood.
3. **Get out at least once a day, for at least 30 minutes.** Fresh air does wonders for our mental health push yourself to get outside (while following social distancing guidelines). Early in the morning or later in the evening might be less busy times depending on where you live. If you are at high risk and have been advised to not go outside at all, open your windows and let the air in!
4. **Find some time to move each day, again daily for at least thirty minutes.** If moving outside isn't something you are interested there are still tons of ways to incorporate movement into your day. Check out Youtube for yoga, stretching, or short workouts. The Ferris Rec Center app is another great place for ideas. Make sure you are moving every single day.
5. **Reach out to others.** Try to do FaceTime, Skype, phone calls, texting—connect with other people to seek and provide support. Have virtual watch parties as you stream Netflix, send memes to one another, play virtual board games or host virtual dinner parties. Stay connected in this isolation.
6. **Communicate your needs to your parents and/or roommates:** Your parents may not be used to you being home either. Work to communicate your needs and boundaries. There may be some growing pains, show compassion for yourself and them as you work through the new dynamic. You are likely spending significantly more time with your roommates, make sure you are communicating your intentions and needs. Try to make these conversations in person!
- 7.. **Stay hydrated and eat well.** This one may seem obvious, but stress and eating often don't mix well, and we find ourselves over-indulging, forgetting to eat, and avoiding food. Drink plenty of water (at least half a gallon a day of liquid), eat some good and nutritious foods, and challenge yourself to learn how to cook something new. Check out Pinterest or YouTube for cooking tutorials.
- 8.. **Develop a self-care toolkit.** This can look different for everyone. A lot of successful self-care strategies involve a sensory component (seven senses: touch, taste, sight, hearing, smell, vestibular (movement) and proprioceptive (comforting pressure). An idea for each: a soft blanket or stuffed animal, a hot chocolate, photos of vacations, comforting music, lavender or eucalyptus oil, a small swing or rocking chair, a weighted blanket. A journal, an inspirational book, or a mandala coloring book is wonderful, bubbles to blow or blowing watercolor on paper

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through a straw are visually appealing as well as work on controlled breath. Mint gum, Listerine strips, ginger ale, frozen Starburst, ice packs, and cold are also good for anxiety regulation.

9. Give everyone the benefit of the doubt. A lot of cooped up time can bring out the worst in everyone. Each person will have moments when they will not be at their best. It is important to move with grace through blowups, to not show up to every argument you are invited to, and to not hold grudges and continue disagreements. Everyone is doing the best they can to make it through this.

10. Everyone find their own retreat space. Space is at a premium. It is important that people think through their own separate space for work and for relaxation. It is good to know that even when we are on top of each other, we have our own special place to go to be alone. This will be especially important for those who are more introverted and need a quiet place to re-charge. Nostalgic tip: build a pillow blanket fort like when you were a kid and practice self-care inside it!

11. Lower expectations and practice radical self-acceptance. We are doing too many things in this moment, under fear and stress. This does not make a formula for excellence. Instead, give yourself what psychologists call “radical self-acceptance”: accepting everything about yourself, your current situation, and your life without question, blame, or pushback. You cannot fail at this—there is no roadmap, no precedent for this, and we are all truly doing the best we can in an impossible situation. Remind yourself of that.

12. Limit social media and COVID conversation. One can find tons of information on COVID-19 to consume, and it changes minute to minute. The information is often sensationalized, negatively skewed, and alarmist. Find a few trusted sources that you can check in with consistently, limit it to a few times a day, and set a time limit for yourself on how much you consume. Be particularly mindful of social media right now. For many, social media can be a source of anxiety even when we aren’t in the midst of a global pandemic. If you notice yourself often defaulting to a social media app on your phone, consider deleting or hiding that app so you have to take additional steps to access it.

13. Notice the good in the world, the helpers. There is a lot of scary, negative, and overwhelming information to take in regarding this pandemic. There are also a ton of stories of people sacrificing, donating, and supporting one another in miraculous ways. It is important to counterbalance the heavy information with the hopeful information. Check out websites such as the GoodNewsNetwork.org or positive stories on YouTube.

14. Help others. Find ways, big and small, to give back to others. Support restaurants, offer to grocery shop (if you are comfortable with it), check in with elderly neighbors—helping others gives us a sense of agency when things seem out of control.

15. Find something you can control and control the SH!T out of it. In moments of big uncertainty and overwhelming circumstance, control your little corner of the world. Organize

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your bookshelf, purge your closet, put together that furniture, re-organize your computer desktop, delete old emails. Be as present as you can when controlling these tasks to help you stay grounded.

16. Find a long-term project to dive into it. Now is the time to learn how to play the keyboard, put together a huge jigsaw puzzle, start a 15 hour game of Risk, paint a picture, read the Harry Potter series, re-watch The Office for the 16th time, crochet a blanket, or develop a new island in Animal Crossing. Find something that will keep you busy, distracted, and engaged to take breaks from what is going on in the outside world.

17. Engage in repetitive movements and left-right movements. Research has shown that repetitive movement (knitting, coloring, painting, clay sculpting, jump roping etc) especially left-right movement (running, drumming, skating, hopping) can be effective at self-soothing and maintaining self-regulation in moments of distress. Try holding a stress ball in each hand and going back and forth squeezing them. Toss a ball back an forth hand to hand as you are watching TV.

18. Find an expressive art and go for it. Our emotional brain is very receptive to the creative arts, and it is a direct portal for release of feeling. Find something that is creative (sculpting, drawing, dancing, music, singing, cooking and creating beautiful plates of food) and give it your all. See how relieved you can feel.

19. Find lightness and humor in each day. There is a lot to be worried about, and with good reason. Counterbalance this heaviness with something funny each day: cat videos on YouTube, a stand-up show on Netflix, MEMEs! Find the newest, hottest meme and send it to everyone you know!

20. Reach out for help—your team is there for you. If you have a therapist reach out if you need support, we are available to you, even though our communications will look a little different. Keep up your medications. If you are having difficulty coping, seek out help for the first time. Contact the Personal Counseling Center via phone or email (ThePCC@ferris.edu) and we can get you in contact with a counselor. Seek support groups online or connect with neighbors. The internet is a wonderful thing that will help us all stay connected through this.

21. “Chunk” your quarantine, take it moment by moment. We have no road map for this. We don’t know what this will look like in 1 day, 1 week, or 1 month from now. A technique to manage anxiety is called “chunking”—focusing on whatever bite-sized piece of a challenge that feels manageable. Whether that be 5 minutes, a day, or a week at a time—find what feels doable for you and set a time stamp for how far ahead in the future you will let yourself worry. Take each chunk one at a time and move through stress in pieces.

22. Remind yourself daily that this is temporary. It seems in the midst of this quarantine that it will never end. It is terrifying to think of the road stretching ahead of us. Please take time to remind yourself that although this is very scary and difficult and will go on for an undetermined

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amount of time, it is temporary. This will be just one of many memorable chapters in your life. We will return to feeling free, safe, busy, and connected in the days ahead.

23. Find the opportunity to grow. This whole crisis can seem sad, senseless, and overwhelming. When clinicians work with trauma, a key feature to helping someone work through said trauma is to help them find their area of gained strength. The meaning and construction that can come out of destruction. What can each of us learn here, in big and small ways, from this crisis? When we all emerge from this how can we see the ways in which we have grown. What strength can we discover in ourselves and in others?