

## Self-Care in 2020

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Change is inevitable, but 2020 seems like it's getting more than its share. With everything going on, it's not an exaggeration to say that things may never be the same again. We are going through something more than normal and everyone is responding to that in their own way. In my conversations with patients and friends throughout this year, self-care has become an important theme. If you are struggling through 2020, self-care can help you find your center and stay balanced through the strangeness of this year. If you feel like you're getting through things well, self-care can be what keeps you moving forward with purpose.

When I talk about self-care, I refer to activities that 1. prioritizes you and your needs; 2. reduces stress and 3. do not harm you in the short or long term. Because of this, self-care always involves a level of introspection and self-awareness. Self-care can include a lot of different activities and will look different for each person.

### Here are some self-care suggestions as we move forward in 2020:

**Sleep** - Everything seems harder when you don't get enough sleep. If you aren't commuting or your schedule has changed, this may be a good time to experiment with an earlier bedtime, an afternoon nap or waking without an alarm clock.

**Exercise** - Exercise releases endorphins, reduces stress, increases fitness and can be fun if you choose activities you like. Add 15 minutes of your chosen activity to your daily routine.

**Eat great food** - Many people are reporting spending more time gardening, cooking and baking and enjoying the fruits of those labors. Healthful, delicious meals can be very simple or if you enjoy cooking, you can take the time to learn a new or more complex recipe.



**Stay socially connected** - It's so important, even while physically distancing to maintain our social connections to friends and family and luckily, there are lots of ways to do this. A weekly video chat with a group of family or friends is a great way to stay involved and provides something to look forward to for all involved. Phone calls, text messages and even snail mail are fun, but I encourage you to use video sometimes even if it's new to you - there is something about seeing your loved one that does seem to make a difference.

**Meditate** - Look up "5-minute meditation" on YouTube, sit down and breath through the guidance. Yep, it's that simple.

Your self-care may look really different than these suggestions and that's okay. In the end, the most important thing is that you take care of you the best that you can and reach out for help if you need it. If you need additional support, I'm available by telemedicine or in person. See our ad for details.



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