



# COVID-19 EMOTIONAL SUPPORT MONTH Week 3



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## Physical and Emotional Well-Being

### Maintaining good sleep

Sleep is a pillar of health. Getting enough sleep keeps your immune system strong. It is also crucial for helping you mentally cope during this uncertain time. That said, it is completely natural to experience more disturbed sleep during this pandemic - including difficulties falling asleep, staying asleep, or waking earlier than you are used to in the morning. You may also find yourself feeling more fatigued than usual. Below are some tips to help your sleep in this challenging time.

#### Create a "COVID-19 free" wind down

Before going to bed, it is important to unplug and ready yourself for a restful night. The first thing to do is to say goodbye to all COVID-19-related news. We suggest:

- 1-2 hours prior to bed, unplug from email, news, and anything else that creates a busy mind and begin focusing on creating a calm, relaxing environment. Say goodbye to COVID news; trust that it will be there in the morning.
- Turn down the lights and do things that are relaxing. Relaxing activities vary by person, but often include reading, listening to music, or doing some guided meditation or mindfulness videos provided by [UC San Diego](#).
- Avoid alcohol close to bedtime and discontinue caffeine after noon.



## **Keep a regular sleep schedule**

Maintain a regular wake up time. If possible, also try to get some direct sunlight in the morning. Together, these will help regulate your circadian rhythm.

## **Don't toss and turn in bed**

If you are unable to fall asleep or wake up and can't fall back to sleep, don't toss and turn in bed for longer than 15-20 minutes. Get out of bed and do something relaxing until you feel sleepy and then go back to bed.

## **Make your bedroom a shrine to sleep**

Be sure to keep your bedroom dark, quiet, and cool.

## **Mind your day to protect your night**

What you do during the day can have a big effect on your night. Working from home affords convenience, but also may lead to more sedentary behavior and napping. Napping can eat away at your sleep drive, making it harder to fall asleep at night. Inactivity can similarly lead to lighter sleep and less feelings of restoration in the morning after a night of slumber.

## **Good sleep habits for children**

- English version: [Good Sleep Habits](#)
- Versión en español: [Buenos Hábitos de Sueño](#)
- Versão em português: [Bons Hábitos de Sono](#)

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## **Maintaining physical activity**



Find ways to exercise. More than ever before we know that our physical health affects our mental health, and exercise can reduce stress reactivity and even improve moderate depression.

Although it may be tough to exercise indoors, engaging in regular physical activity will help reduce your anxiety and stress. The online applications below have guided exercise routines. Check for availability on sites

Consider that *live* classes for exercise and meditation give us a group experience which we otherwise now lack and structure to our day, and we may be more likely to show up for them.

- [Planet Fitness](https://www.facebook.com/planetfitness/) live streams classes every day at 4pm PST:

<https://www.facebook.com/planetfitness/>.

- [J&J Official 7-Minute Workout](#) is a free workout library app containing 22 preset workouts, varying in intensity and duration. Workouts are designed to fit your schedule and range from 7 to 32 minutes in length.
- [Do Yoga With Me](#) and [Yoga with Adrienne](#) offer free yoga videos for everyone.
- [Zumba dance concert videos](#) offer great workouts free to those with an Amazon Prime membership.
- A vigorous 30-minute [Vinyasa yoga class](#) with master teacher Janet Stone.
- [Peloton](#) is offering a 30-day trial of their digital membership, which offers streams of live/recorded group classes from a closed set. (It doesn't require their bike to access classes on cycling, strength training, yoga, and meditation.)
- [The Workout.Today](#) is a daily email newsletter with a free workout that you can do at home.
- [UCSF Fitness Center](#) is offering over 115 on-demand, pre-recorded fitness classes. No membership required.

Most of us still have opportunities to go outside for exercise while maintaining physical distancing! [Research shows](#) fresh air, and seeing greenery, reduces somatic stress in our body, and clears our mind.

- If possible, take walks and enjoy nature in your immediate neighborhood.
- Check with your local park district regarding open parks and recreational day use areas.

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## Online stress reduction resources

Different people like different types of stress reduction practices. On this website, we have pointed you to social support (at a distance!), exercise, and sleeping well - all of which build your stress resilience. It also helps tremendously to adopt a daily mind-body practice, like yoga, qi gong, or meditation. Even if it's only for five or 10 minutes a day, that practice makes a difference. Set a time of day you block out for this on your calendar; if possible, right after waking is a great time for practice. We have highlighted [free apps](#), but there is an abundance of longer practices on the web to do at home for deeper restoration.

Here are a variety of practices to reduce mental and somatic stress that can be done online. Explore these and see what you love! This is a great time to join a live group online. We will update this section regularly, including live events.

### **Meditation**

- [Lovingkindness meditation practice](#) with Sharon Salzberg and others from the Insight Meditation Society.
- Ten free [online meditation classes for kids](#) from Mindful Schools. Sign up to get email updates when new classes are released.
- Various times: UC San Diego offers several [live 20-minute sessions](#) each day on coping, mindfulness, compassion, and anxiety.
- 12:30–1:00 p.m.: UCSF's Amy Hepner has [weekly meditation sessions](#) on Wednesday via Zoom. (Meeting ID: 514 447 417, or call in at the phone number: (669) 900-6833).

- Various times: The East Bay Meditation Center offers [meditation self-care groups](#) online (some specific to POC, LGBT, those with disability, and others).
- [Contagious Compassion Sessions](#): Led by UCSF Psychiatry Residency Training Program alum [Ravi Chandra, MD](#), these online sessions introduce some specific mindfulness, compassion, and self-compassion skills for this time of crisis. Many of these sessions are free.

## Online

- Health Journeys has [free meditations every day at noon for kids and adults](#).
- The [Wheel of Awareness](#) includes meditation that is both visual and audio by Dan Siegel, MD.
- The [UC Berkeley Greater Good Science Center](#) offers a ton of articles, resources, practices, and videos all focused on well-being during COVID-19.
- [The Healing Mind](#) led by UCSF's Martin Rossman, MD, provides [stress and fear-reducing guided imagery meditations](#) to help with COVID-19 stress and anxiety.
- [Online Insight Meditation Sessions](#): For further live, free online meditation classes please see this frequently updated database with classes led by highly experienced teachers at all times of the day.

## Mind-body movement for restoration and relaxation

- [Qi Gong to Enhance the Immune System](#), by Roger Jahnke, OMD, contains free short practices that are beginner friendly. More programs are available at the [Healer Within Community](#).
- [Restorative yoga poses](#) (helps to use large pillows here).
- [Deep guided relaxation \(Yoga Nidra\)](#) can help with anxiety and sleep, and are available on YouTube for free practices. Free recordings of iRest for enhancing resilience, sleep, and relieving anxiety are also available on [Insight Timer](#). These can be done sitting or lying down, and have been shown to help veterans with anxiety conditions.
- Have you been sitting a lot during the day? Most of us have! This can exacerbate any chronic conditions or posture issues we have. Here are some helpful home exercises provided by physical therapist and yoga instructor Harvey Deutch at [Redhawk Physical Therapy](#) for pain relief:
  - [Thoracic spine and shoulder stretch](#)
  - [Hip flexor and abdominal wall stretch](#)
  - [Seated stretch for neck pain](#)

## References:

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<https://psychiatry.ucsf.edu/sites/psych.ucsf.edu/files/Weill%20Department%20of%20Psychiatry%20and%20Behavioral%20Sciences.png>