

SELF CARE RESOURCES

"Being kind to yourself lets you be kinder to others, and that just might be the finest gift you can give to the world."

- Cheri Huber

It is far too easy to focus so much on others that we neglect to care for ourselves. Yet, the paradox is, that this care for ourselves is exactly what is needed to sustain and renew ourselves in the important work that we do for others. Below are a list of FREE resources that can help you with building your own self-care routines. They cover everything from mindfulness and mental health to healthy nutrition and yoga. Try to find a few to put into practice and remember that self-care is not "indulging" or "selfish" but necessary to be the best providers, co-workers, family members, and community members that we can be.

Free Self-Compassion Practices with Dr. Kristen Ne: <https://self-compassion.org/>



Mindfulness & Other Tools Summary

A wealth of virtual, home-accessible tools (apps, podcasts, videos, etc.) are now available to support mindfulness, relaxation and movement. Here, we list a selection of resources that offer substantial content for free-or have made their content available-to support coping in general, or some specific to COVID-19 stressors.

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Mental Health

Resource: [COVID Coach](#)

From: U.S. **Department of Veterans Affairs**

Free app to support coping and resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic. Includes tools for tracking mood, managing stress, navigating caregiving, staying healthy and connected and connecting to further resources as needed

Resource: [PTSD Coach Online \(website/app\)](#)

From: **National Center for PTSD**

- **Repository of free resources for anyone who needs help with upsetting feelings. Specific materials geared for worry/anxiety, anger, sadness, sleep problems, and trauma.**
- [Videos](#)
- [Handouts](#)
- [App for those with PTSD](#)

Resource: [Mindshift CBT \(app\)](#)

Free interactive cognitive-behavioral tools to manage anxiety, develop more effective ways of thinking and take positive action



Healthy Habits

Resource: [Operation Health@Home](#)

Source: **MGH Home Base Program**

Library of video-based coaching tips (updated daily) for enhancing fitness, nutrition, mindfulness and mental health while coping with COVID-19 stress. Tips include easy home recipes; mindful eating; guided fitness workouts; coping techniques; and mindfulness meditations. Developed for the military community and their families, but applicable for anyone

Resource: [Eating for Physical & Mental Health During COVID-19](#)

From: **MGH Department of Psychiatry**

Expert tips from Dr. Uma Naidoo, Director of Nutritional & Lifestyle Psychiatry at MGH, for healthy eating, meal planning, and snacking to support mood and mental health during stressful times

[Additional tips via Harvard Health Blog](#)



Mindfulness

Resource: [Free Online Meditation Resources for COVID-19](#)

From: **The Awake Network**

List of free meditation resources from a variety of sources and organizations, including guided meditations, video sessions, apps and classes

Resource: [Coronavirus Sanity Guide \(website includes videos and app\)](#)

From: **Ten Percent Happier**

- **Resources** on this webpage include: guided meditations, podcasts, blog posts and talks focused on managing coronavirus-related stress and anxiety. These resources will be updated over time
- **Dr. Luana Marques** of the Massachusetts General Hospital [Center for Anxiety and Traumatic Stress Disorders program](#) is interviewed with other experts for a [one-hour podcast, sharing practical tips for “How to Manage Coronavirus Anxiety”](#) Guided meditations include: centering/grounding for coronavirus responders; relaxation; self-compassion; and finding ease
- **Talks include:** handwashing mindfully; caring for others during time of coronavirus; coping with anxiety; releasing fear; etc.
- **Free access to Ten Percent Happier app** is now available for healthcare workers

Resource: [Mindfulness for Wellness \(website\)](#)

From: **MGH Department of Psychiatry**

Free 8-session online program developed by Dr. Louisa Sylvia and team from the MGH MoodNetwork, introducing mindfulness skills to help with coping with COVID-19 stress. Each session takes about 15-20 minutes, focuses on a specific skill, and can be completed on your own time

Resource: [Headspace \(app\)](#)

Free access to Headspace Plus is now available for United States health care and public health professionals through 2020

Resource: [Insight Timer \(website and app\)](#)

Free library of over 30,000 recorded meditations for sleep, anxiety, stress, mindfulness, self-compassion, calming music, for kids, etc.

Resource: [Calm \(website with recordings\)](#)

Curated free recordings include: soothing meditations for mindfulness and self-compassion; sleep meditations; calm music; relaxing soundscapes; mindful movement exercises; mindfulness for kids; daily mindfulness activity calendars; journaling resources; ideas for social connection

Resource: [MyLife \(app\)](#)

Free app to help notice feelings and reactions, practice mindful breathing, and broaden perspectives via guided meditations; also has acupuncture and yoga exercises, for kids and adults. This app addresses the toxic stress of racism, body acceptance and the grief of climate change in its activities.



Positive Emotions

Resource: [Positive Psychology Exercises \(app\)](#)

From: **Mass General Center for Addiction Medicine**

Dr. Bettina Hoepfner's team at the Mass General [Center for Addiction Medicine](#)

has developed a freely available app that engages users in daily positive psychology exercises focused on noticing and fully engaging with positive experiences even amid life challenges. While this app was originally developed to support smoking cessation (for scientific validation, [see this paper](#)), the happiness exercises can be used as a stand-alone module (simply tap "Happiness" on the homepage of the app) and can be used by all

Positive psychology exercises focus on noticing kindness (e.g., teachers putting together homeschool tools); doing kind things (e.g., leaving toilet paper in the shelf for the next person to buy); savoring (e.g., taking 5 minutes to sit in the sunshine); reliving positive experiences (e.g., looking at photos and recalling joyful events); and noticing good things that are also happening (e.g., whole communities engaging in social distancing for the greater good)

Resource: Positive psychology videos, practices and classes; Meditation and mindfulness videos and other tools.

From: [Greater Good Science Center](#)

The Greater Good Science Center is a treasure trove of free resources, podcasts, short videos, reading and classes on positive emotions, and anti-racism. One of their most popular classes, [The Science of Happiness](#) has been taken by thousands of people around the world.



Yoga and Movement

Resource: [Wakeout \(app\)](#)

Free app with hundreds of quick and easy 30-second physical exercises that can be completed in the home, while sitting, or outdoors

Resource: [How to Stay Active While You're at Home \(website\)](#)

From: **Sport England**

Guide to free resources for staying active at home, including:

- [Home workout videos](#)
- [Illustrated guides to gym-free workouts](#)
- [Dance-along videos with kids](#)

Resource: [Down Dog Yoga & Exercise Apps \(app\)](#)

From: **Down Dog**

Free access to all exercise apps (Down Dog, Yoga for Beginners, HIIT, Barre and 7 Minute) until April 1 (and extended to July 1 for all students and teachers signing up with an .edu address)

Resource: [Online Yoga Resources \(website\)](#)

From: **Breathing Space Yoga & Mindfulness Studio**

Free online yoga resources, with videos as well as audio guided meditations to assist with stress and sleep