

Wellness During a Pandemic

Strategies to Adjust to a New Way of Living

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Client Support and Empowerment

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What you can expect in this PowerPoint:



How isolation and this pandemic might impact our mental health



Strategies to combat anxiety and depression and "survivors' guilt"



Ideas on how to create work/life balance when trying to work at home

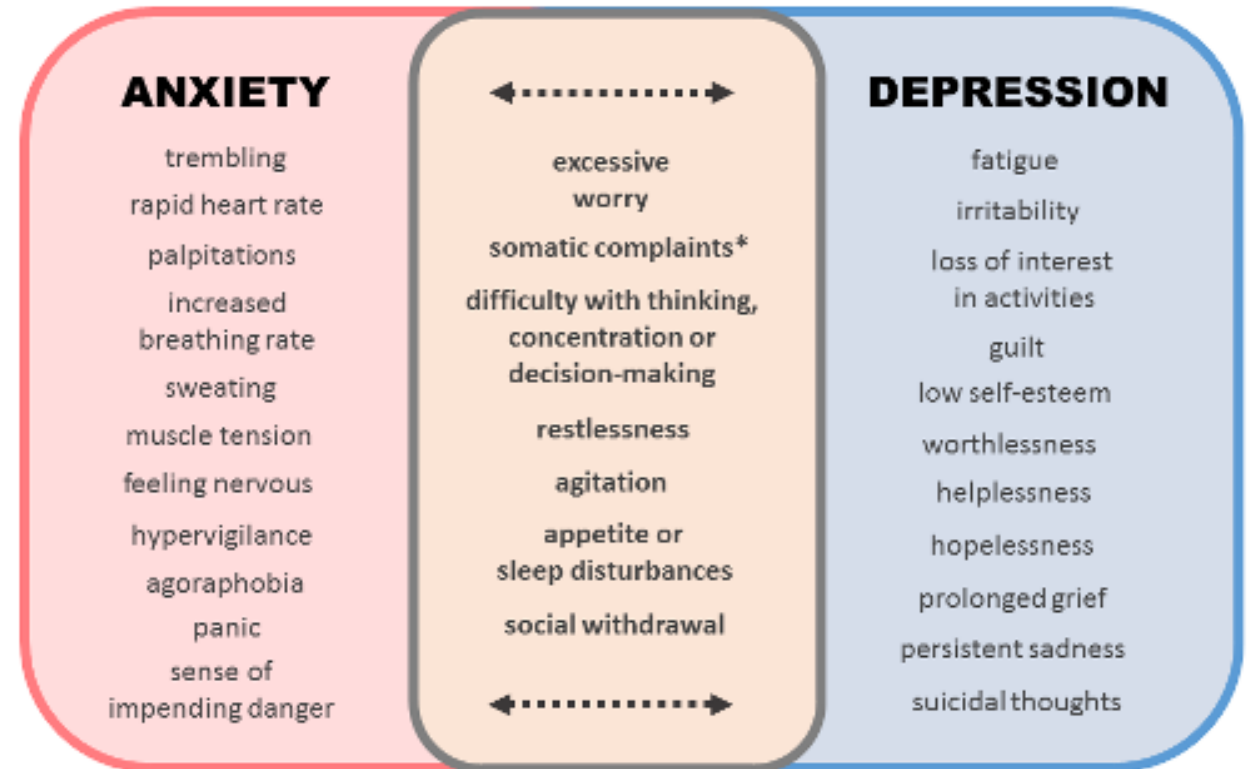
This Pandemic is Weighing on all of us!

- We aren't "working from home". We are at home, with all the distractions and demands that come with that space (kids, laundry, bills, TV, pets, dishes, etc.)
- AND, we are trying to do a full-time job in that chaotic and stressful environment
- The world is also stressful and scary right now
- Have you worried about being too close to someone for the first time?
 - Folks are losing income, housing, childcare, all the resources that come with school
 - We don't know when this is going to end
 - We worry about our loved ones getting sick
 - **Uncertainty causes its own world of anxiety**



Depression isn't "The Blues" and anxiety isn't "nervousness"

- Depression and anxiety have all kinds of stigma. But everyone experiences both throughout our lives, particularly in times of increased stress
- Check out that box →
- Have you been feeling any of those things lately?



But there are things we can do to help ourselves!

- To stay mentally healthy right now, we must participate in our own wellbeing
 - No one is going to come out of this unscathed unless we **try** and **act** to be healthy
 - Folks who don't move their bodies in the water will drown. You've got to SWIM!



Make Something — Creativity stimulates each part of your brain, unlike analytical thinking (i.e. work)

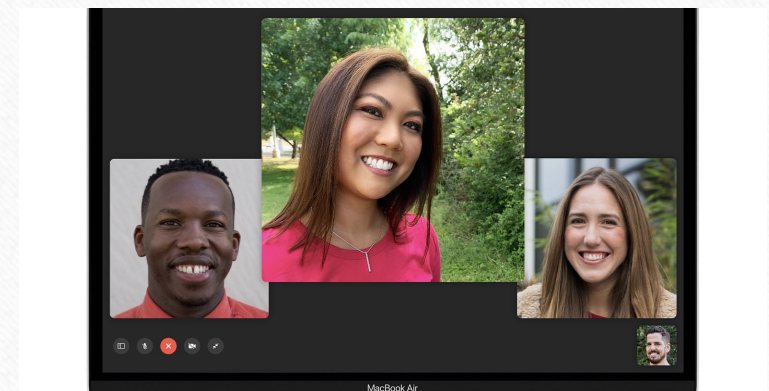
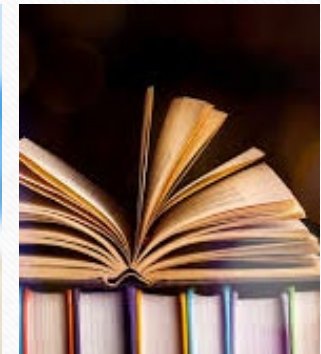
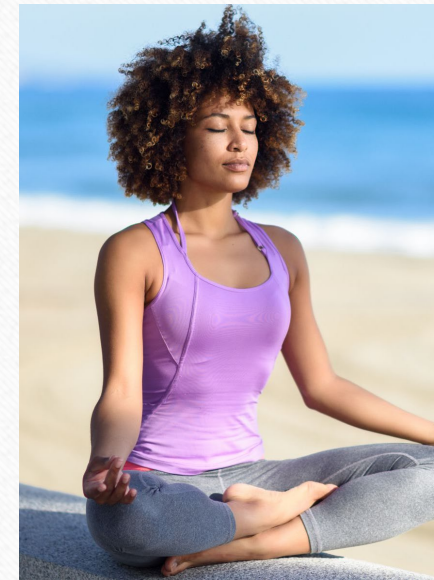
Working at home is a hamster wheel where we literally *see* little achievement. **Making something** allows us to watch progress and feel a different kind of accomplishment.

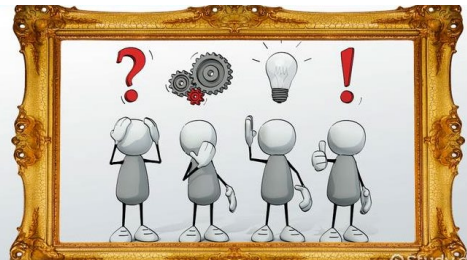
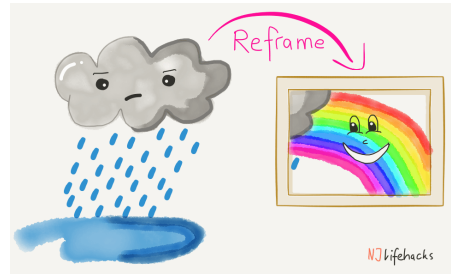
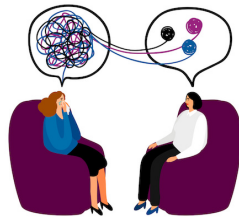
- **Ideas:**
 - Build a “catio” for your cat(s)?
 - Write a story
 - Draw, doodle, paint or color
 - Cook a new dish



More Ways to Combat Depression & Anxiety

- Move your body
- Connect with your friends/family every day
- Meditation and mindfulness
- **Turn OFF the 24/7 news!!** Being informed and being inundated are two very different things, with two very different ways of impacting our mental health.
- Find a new book or podcast series to get into (if you need recommendations, I'm your gal!)





Talk to Someone

- **Science says it helps**
- Talking with someone asks for a “forest through the trees” perspective and helps us get out of our own ruts
- The way we start thinking about something is usually the way we continue to think about it – but there *may* be another way to make sense of it!
- Friends, family, co-workers and telehealth are all good options

A balance scale is shown against a clear blue sky. The scale is made of a long, flat wooden beam balanced on a large, smooth, light-colored stone. On the left side of the beam, there is a stack of four smooth, light-colored stones. On the right side, there is a stack of three smooth, light-colored stones. The text "Ideas on Creating Work/Life Balance While Working from Home" is written in white, serif font across the middle of the image, with a thin white horizontal line underneath it.

Ideas on Creating Work/Life Balance While Working from Home

Work-Life Balance...at Home?

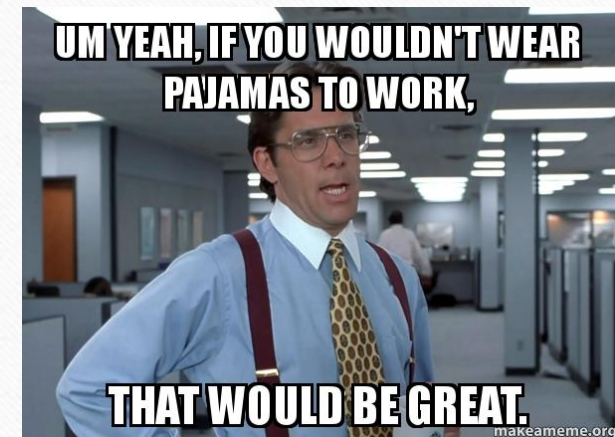
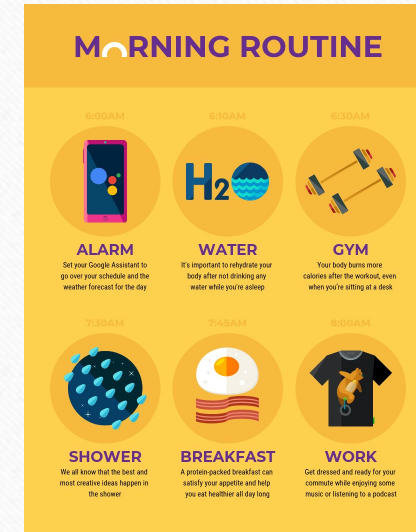
- Kitchens, dining rooms, and other spaces have become offices for remote work with computers, cords, and paperwork spilling into what was, until very recently, private space.
- For people with kids, or helping care for kids, these spaces are also daycare and an impromptu home-school with everyone trying to remain productive in the middle of the chaos of a million competing demands.



Places to Start:

Set an alarm, get up and get ready for work every day.

- Shower and change your clothes
 - And wear different clothes from day-to-day. Switching between “sleep sweats” and “daytime sweats” keeps us stuck and makes Tuesday feel no different than Wednesday, yesterday, this day or that day.



As much as possible, create a separate and intentional space to work from.

- If your home doesn't allow for a separate space, close shop at the end of the day and put your work stuff away.





Work with your family to set rules and expectations for work time

A couple of ideas:

- “I will check in with you every 60 minutes, for 20 minutes, without fail”
- “If you see that I am on the phone, that’s time for a quiet activity”
- “We will make time for two recesses and lunch each day”
- “If I see that you have headphones on, I will wait to ask you any questions”

Have a clear “start” and “stop” to your workday

- It can become easy to work all day, every day when your kitchen table is also your desk. That is NOT our expectation.
 - Work with your supervisor to determine your schedule and then follow that set schedule
- Working from home absolutely affects productivity – we know and expect that
- Like when you work from the office, your workday should end so **your life can take a front seat**

| OUR WORKING SCHEDULE | |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| Starting Time | 8:00 a.m. |
| Morning Coffee Break . | 9:00-11:30 a.m. |
| Lunch Hour | 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. |
| Afternoon Coffee Break . | 2:00-4:30 p.m. |
| Quitting Hour | 5:00 p.m. |

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When you start asking me questions about work during my lunch break, do not be alarmed by the flying object being projected at your face.



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user card

Take Breaks

- Take a walk around the block, eat lunch away from your computer, go play outside with your kids.
- Intentional breaks **help** productivity and mental health

What About Feelings of Guilt?

***It's also absolutely normal to feel guilt during or after a tragedy**

- You or your family may be mostly unaffected by the pandemic
- Perhaps your income has stayed steady, your family is healthy, and/or you enjoy the solitude.
- This is called "Survivors' Guilt" and often relates closely to one's real or perceived locus of control
- Common thoughts are:
 - "I am doing just fine while people are suffering great losses"
 - "I am not doing enough to help"
 - "I should not be enjoying anything right now"
 - "How can I be happy when others are sick/dying/losing access to their basic needs? This must mean I'm a bad person"



Give yourself Grace

- This is all super hard *and new*
- Comparison is the thief of joy – there is zero utility in comparing what you got done with what you *think* you should be able to do and then beating yourself up over it. **Instead...**
- Take a moment to step back and realize how much you're doing, managing, holding and carrying. We're all doing the best we can, and it's good hard work.