



# a survival guide to self-care

How to Thrive During Uncertainty



grow  
counseling

# a survival guide to self-care

## How to Thrive During Uncertainty

Times feel uncertain. During uncertainty, our actions need to be intentional. Thriving in this season is possible by implementing a few daily, simple self-care strategies.

GROW Counseling, based out of the Metro Atlanta area, developed this survival guide designed to help you engage in self-care during this difficult time. This tool will guide you to focus on elements within your daily activities you can control. It will help you stay grounded and intentional every day. The guide includes essential self-care strategies, extra self-care strategies, and other-care strategies. GROW Counseling has additional free resources for you at [growcounseling.com/resources](http://growcounseling.com/resources).

Many counseling centers are offering telemental health services at this time. This means counseling services are offered remotely via phone or video conferencing.



# table of contents



## **essential self-care strategies**

Learn the essential self-care strategies necessary to thrive in this season.

## **extra self-care strategies**

Discover extra self-care strategies that are the most helpful to you personally.

## **other-care strategies**

Explore ways to take care of other people and create a list to use with your daily guides.

## **emotion regulation**

Grow in your ability to identify your emotions. Every day you will be prompted to identify how you feel.

## **self-assessment journaling prompts**

Take time to evaluate how you are handling this season and what you will need to thrive.

## **daily survival guides**

Once you complete the above sections, you're ready to begin using the daily survival guides. There is an example to show you how to use the 15 guides.

# essential self-care strategies



The essential strategies to self-care include healthy sleep patterns, drinking plenty of water, exercise, getting fresh air, personal hygiene, and maintaining a daily routine. Each day you will be prompted to be intentional with each strategy.

## healthy sleep patterns

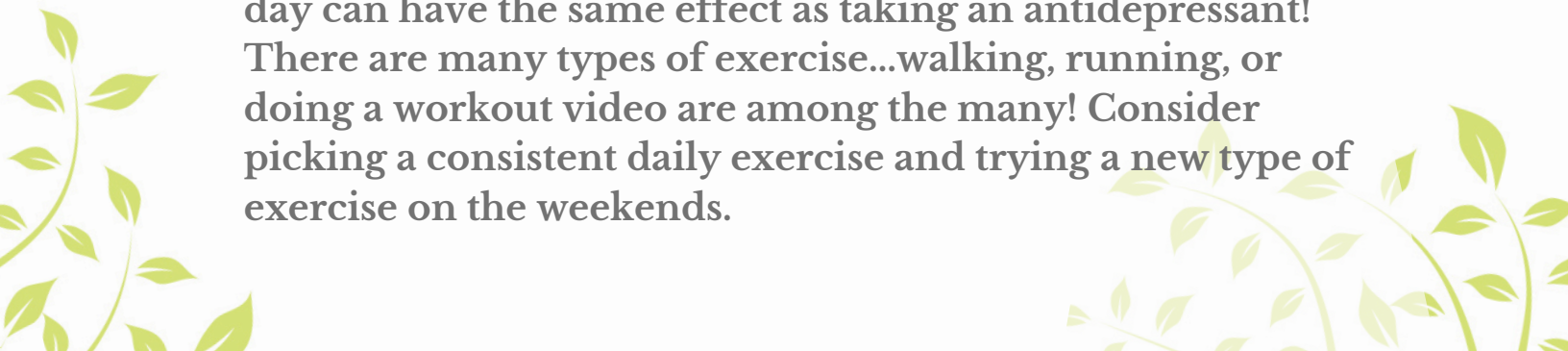
Sleeping too little and sleeping too much can both cause emotional and mental distress. Consider implementing a consistent wake and bed time.

## drinking water

A general recommendation of water intake is to drink eight glasses of water per day. If this is a challenge, set a goal to gradually increase your water intake over time. Track your water intake in the daily journal and see your progress.

## exercise

Exercise is essential to self-care during uncertainty. Moving your body regularly can help you maintain healthy chemical levels in your brain. This can help you avoid spikes in depression and/or anxiety. Studies actually show that getting your heart rate up for as little as 30 minutes a day can have the same effect as taking an antidepressant! There are many types of exercise...walking, running, or doing a workout video are among the many! Consider picking a consistent daily exercise and trying a new type of exercise on the weekends.





# essential self-care strategies continued

## fresh air

Getting outside at least once a day can help boost your mood. You'll have a reminder in your journal each day.

## personal hygiene

Taking care of your personal hygiene helps provide normalcy. Even if you are not able to go out, consider getting ready just like you normally would.

## emotion regulation

Regulating your emotions is essential during uncertainty. The first step in emotion regulation is being aware of how you feel. It's okay and normal to feel multiple emotions at one time, even if those emotions are contradictory. Make yourself aware of your emotions each day with the daily journal.

## daily routine

Setting up a simple daily routine will help the days not blend together. It is helpful to set up a routine for weekdays and a different routine for weekends. This will help keep a feeling of normalcy during uncertainty. Remember, this is not a one-size fits all scenario. Do what works best for you!

# extra self-care strategies



Adding one extra self-care strategy into your day can help keep you grounded, calm, and hopeful. Examples of extra self-care strategies include reading a book, lighting a candle, learning something new, etc.

Below make a list of extra self-care strategies you can do from home. The daily journal will prompt you to use one strategy from the list each day.

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# get inspired



Here's a list of extra self-care strategies you can use to get inspired to create your own list!

Soaking in the bathtub  
Planning my career  
Recycling old items  
Relaxing  
Jogging, walking  
Listening to music  
Recalling past parties  
Lying in the sun  
Laughing  
Thinking about my past trips  
Listening to others  
Reading magazines or newspapers  
Hobbies (painting, model building, etc.)  
Planning a day's activities  
Eating  
Practicing karate, judo, yoga  
House projects  
Working on my car (bicycle)  
Cleaning

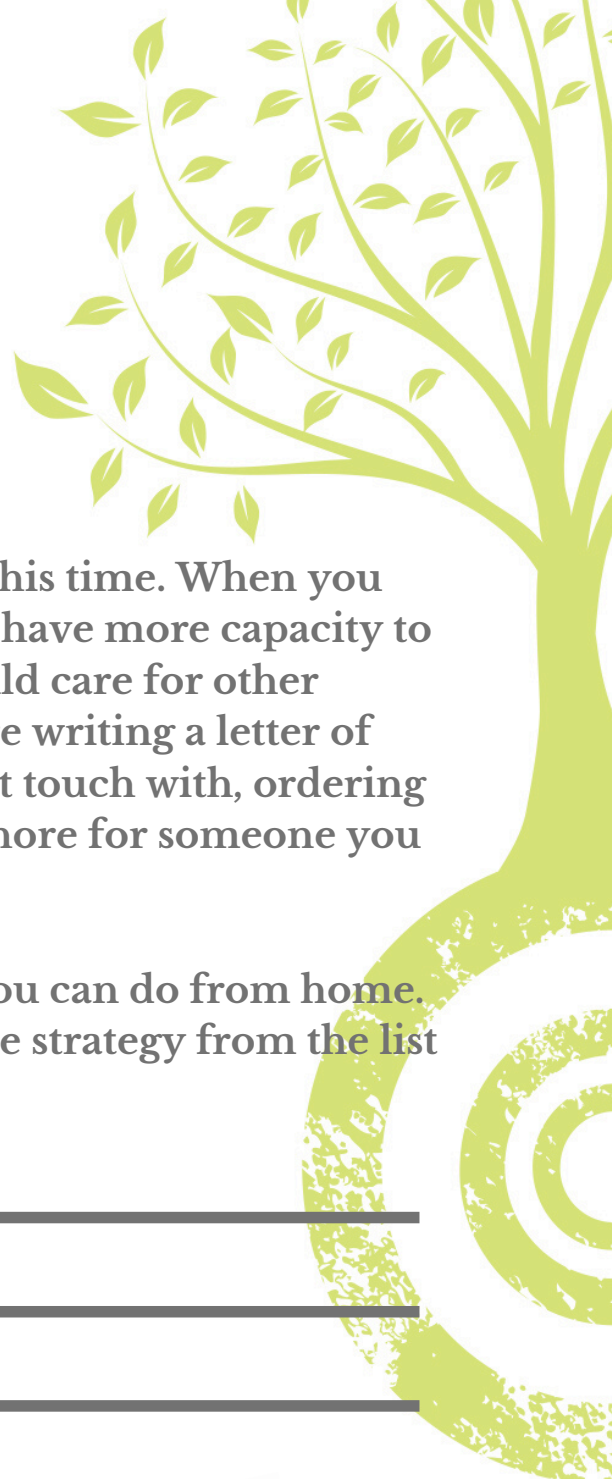
Remembering compliments  
Praying  
Having quiet evenings  
Taking care of my plants  
Doodling  
Singing around the house  
Arranging flowers  
Sketching, painting  
Doing something spontaneously  
Playing musical instruments  
Making a gift for someone  
Cook a new recipe  
Writing books (poems, articles)  
Daydreaming  
Refinishing furniture  
Watching videos or DVDs  
Making lists of tasks  
Completing a task  
Thinking about my achievements  
Exchanging emails  
Playing cards

# other-care strategies

Caring for others is very important during this time. When you are intentional with your self-care, you will have more capacity to care for others. Create a list of ways you could care for other people. Examples of other-care strategies are writing a letter of encouragement, calling someone you've lost touch with, ordering groceries for an elderly neighbor, doing a chore for someone you live with, etc.

Below, make a list of other-care strategies you can do from home. The daily journal will prompt you to use one strategy from the list each day.

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_____	_____
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_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____







# self-assessment journaling prompts

Before you begin using the daily survival guide, take some time to respond to the following journaling prompts.

**During uncertainty, fear is normal. What level would I rate my current fear and why?**

**What currently feels out of my control? How can I focus my mind on things I can control?**

**How well am I taking care of myself right now?**

# self-assessment journaling prompts



**What is helpful about watching the news? What is unhelpful about watching the news?**

**How much time spent watching the news is best for me personally?**

**Do I need anything urgently? Is there a safe way for me to get what I need?**

# daily survival guide to self-care *example*

date:

3/16/2020

day of the week:

Monday

I'm thankful for:

tacos

today I feel:

concerned  
thankful  
overwhelmed  
hopeful

water intake:



exercise plan:

go for a walk

extra self-care strategy:

light a candle

other-care strategy:

call a relative

what is something I'm currently  
looking forward to?

I'm looking forward  
to summer and for  
things to calm down.

**don't  
forget to  
get some  
fresh air  
today!**

There's a lot going on that can be destructive and scary, but these circumstances can also create some great opportunities to connect with people in our lives. Don't miss out on them! - Wendy Dickinson, Ph.D, Licensed Psychologist

# daily survival guide to self-care

date:

day of the week:

I'm thankful for:

today I feel:

water intake:

exercise plan:

extra self-care strategy:

other-care strategy:

What am I currently looking forward to?

**don't  
forget to  
get some  
fresh air  
today!**

There's a lot going on that can be destructive and scary, but these circumstances can also create some great opportunities to connect with people in our lives. Don't miss out on them! - Wendy Dickinson, Ph.D, Licensed Psychologist

# daily survival guide to self-care

date:

day of the week:

I'm thankful for:

today I feel:

water intake:

exercise plan:

extra self-care strategy:

other-care strategy:

What do I want to accomplish today?

**don't  
forget to  
get some  
fresh air  
today!**

# daily survival guide to self-care

date:

day of the week:

I'm thankful for:

today I feel:

water intake:

exercise plan:

extra self-care strategy:

other-care strategy:

What sounds fun to me right now?

**don't  
forget to  
get some  
fresh air  
today!**

I believe self-care involves stepping into holistic wellness, noting habits and choices that build us up, give us energy, and help us participate in our lives well.  
-Courtney Hintermeyer, LPC

# daily survival guide to self-care

date:

day of the week:

I'm thankful for:

today I feel:

water intake:

exercise plan:

extra self-care strategy:

other-care strategy:

What could I organize today?

**don't  
forget to  
get some  
fresh air  
today!**

In our busy lives, however, we rarely slow down  
and reflect on how we feel. - Dustin Ellis, CIT



# daily survival guide to self-care

date:

day of the week:

I'm thankful for:

today I feel:

water intake:

exercise plan:

extra self-care strategy:

other-care strategy:

How could I encourage someone today?

**don't  
forget to  
get some  
fresh air  
today!**

# daily survival guide to self-care

date:

day of the week:

I'm thankful for:

today I feel:

water intake:

exercise plan:

extra self-care strategy:

other-care strategy:

What have I been putting off that I  
could do today?

**don't  
forget to  
get some  
fresh air  
today!**

Routines can be really helpful to us during times of stress and crisis by providing structure and predictability. Think about what parts of your day are helpful routines and how we can reclaim those routines to help keep us grounded.  
- Wendy Dickinson, Ph.D, Licensed Psychologist

# daily survival guide to self-care

date:

day of the week:

I'm thankful for:

today I feel:

water intake:

exercise plan:

extra self-care strategy:

other-care strategy:

Am I sticking to my daily routine?

**don't  
forget to  
get some  
fresh air  
today!**

Self-care begins with taking care of your basic needs including eating, sleeping, bathing, and medical needs. -Ann Sheerin, LPC

# daily survival guide to self-care

date:

day of the week:

I'm thankful for:

today I feel:

water intake:

exercise plan:

extra self-care strategy:

other-care strategy:

What is a new thing I could try today?

**don't  
forget to  
get some  
fresh air  
today!**

Gratitude grows when we focus on what we have,  
rather than what we don't – my favorite coffee mug, clean sheets on the bed,  
a warm scarf, a crisp apple, or the sunlight coming through the trees.  
- Wendy Dickinson, Ph.D, Licensed Psychologist

# daily survival guide to self-care

date:

day of the week:

I'm thankful for:

today I feel:

water intake:

exercise plan:

extra self-care strategy:

other-care strategy:

How well am I taking care of  
personal hygiene?

**don't  
forget to  
get some  
fresh air  
today!**

Self-compassion is treating yourself the same as  
you would a good friend. -Ann Sheerin, LPC

# daily survival guide to self-care

date:

day of the week:

I'm thankful for:

today I feel:

water intake:

exercise plan:

extra self-care strategy:

other-care strategy:

What would be best to avoid right now?

**don't  
forget to  
get some  
fresh air  
today!**

Coping resources are the way we take care of ourselves and manage the stressors in our lives. They can bring a sense of peace in your life and give you the ability to deal with the things going on in your life!

- Wendy Dickinson, Ph.D, Licensed Psychologist

# daily survival guide to self-care

date:

day of the week:

I'm thankful for:

today I feel:

water intake:

exercise plan:

extra self-care strategy:

other-care strategy:

How could I make today fun?

**don't  
forget to  
get some  
fresh air  
today!**

While this is understandably frightening for many, it is going to be essential to take care of our mental and physical health throughout this time. -Jasmine Tyson, Ph.D.

# daily survival guide to self-care

date:

day of the week:

I'm thankful for:

today I feel:

water intake:

exercise plan:

extra self-care strategy:

other-care strategy:

Who could I connect with today that I miss?

**don't  
forget to  
get some  
fresh air  
today!**

While trying to stay apart from people physically, it is important to maintain our relationships and social connections. Don't isolate!  
Who brings life to you and helps you stay calm? Stay connected to them!  
- Wendy Dickinson, Ph.D, Licensed Psychologist



# daily survival guide to self-care

date:

day of the week:

I'm thankful for:

today I feel:

water intake:

exercise plan:

extra self-care strategy:

other-care strategy:

What am I thankful for today?

**don't  
forget to  
get some  
fresh air  
today!**

There are two main types of coping strategies: avoidant and active. Avoidant could include excessive drinking, shopping, gambling, or numbing out on social media. Active coping skills require that we engage in something different, rather than remaining in stress. -Kim DeRamus Lareau, LPC, CPCS

# daily survival guide to self-care

date:

day of the week:

I'm thankful for:

today I feel:

water intake:

exercise plan:

extra self-care strategy:

other-care strategy:

What do you want to complain  
about today?

**don't  
forget to  
get some  
fresh air  
today!**

What if feeling, acknowledging, and accepting these emotions is  
the path to truly being your best self? -Molly Halbrooks, LMFT

# daily survival guide to self-care

date:

day of the week:

I'm thankful for:

today I feel:

water intake:

exercise plan:

extra self-care strategy:

other-care strategy:

What are you hopeful for?

**don't forget to get some fresh air today!**

Stress has an enormous negative impact on our immune system. One of the most important things we can do in a time like this is to take our level of stress down. How do we manage our stress? We increase our coping resources and protect our environments.- Wendy Dickinson, Ph.D, Licensed Psychologist