



Small Moments for Mindfulness – Tips for Incorporating Self-Care into a Busy Schedule

As we move through this collective grief experience, the Wendt Center recognizes the need to provide some strategies for self-care. Finding the time to care for ourselves can often be experienced as “one more thing” to check off our to-do list, yet it is vital that we are intentional with incorporating small ways to tend to own well-being during this difficult time. The Wendt Center understands that right now there may be a lack of time, energy, motivation, and support. This document is meant to offer you support and encouragement as you try to find ways to incorporate even a few five-minute breaks during the day, which can have a restorative benefit.

Find Small Moments for Yourself

Take a 'micro-break'	Take a walk in nature	Drink water for hydration	Have a dance party at home	Journal	Create a collage with old magazines
Grow things	Cook a favorite dish	Listen to music for the mood you want	Reframe thoughts	Find a hobby or revisit an old one	Stretch for 10 minutes
Listen to inspiring podcasts	Create a “well done” list	Think of food in terms of energy	Ask for help	Establish a solid daily routine	Create a “funny file”

These small moments build up. To inspire your self-care practice, here are some specific ways you can create small moments each day:

Micro Break Inspiration

- Listen to a recorded meditation (link to https://youtu.be/fG5DiMN9_nc)
- Love on your pet for a few minutes.
- Breathe in essential oils/pleasant smells to “reset” the mind.
- List three things for which you are grateful.
- Turn up your favorite song and sing along in your loudest voice.
- Wash your hands and observe the water going down the drain; mindfully focus and imagine your difficulties and challenges of the moment going away with the water.

Reframing Thoughts Inspiration

- Instead of, “I am trapped at home with nothing to do,” tell yourself — “I am engaging in physical distancing for the health of myself, family and community.”
- Rather than, “I can’t believe I have to go to work during this time!” consider — “I need to go to work, but I am taking precautions to keep myself as safe as possible.”

- Create a well done list: “I played with my child for 10 minutes.” “I took time for myself when I needed it.”

Physical Distancing Inspiration

- Walk alone mindfully. Notice the sights and sounds as you move through the space. Focus on the lifting and placing of your feet.
- Drive with the windows down. Notice the breeze, sounds, smells.
- Take a virtual tour of a museum.
- Listen to an inspiring podcast.
- Attend a free concert on Instagram.

Connection Inspiration

- Set up a time to meet with friends virtually.
- Start a virtual book club.
- Write and mail letters to loved ones.
- Plan a movie night where you and a friend both watch a movie at the same time and virtually come together afterwards to discuss.
- Sing a song with family or strangers.
- Make a list of people you can reach out to when you are struggling.

Move Back and Forth between Activities

Our brains often need a break from a certain type of activity. Try moving back and forth between activities that use the right brain and left brain:

Left Brain

- Complete work tasks.
- Read a book.
- Plan for the upcoming week.
- Do a household chore.
- Look for project ideas or on-line courses to take.
- Exercise.
- Play a game.
- Complete a puzzle.

Right Brain

- Listen to music for the mood you want: fast tempo to get energy, slow tempo to relax.
- Write in a journal using a prompt: What am I experiencing in my body right now?
- Write in a journal after reading an inspiring article or quote.
- Color a mandala or other coloring sheet.
- Watch something that makes you laugh.

Consider How You Structure Your Day

While routines may be challenging to keep during COVID-19, you can attempt to move through your day with some intention by focusing on small actions that promote well-being and connection with self. Here are some suggestions for your morning, daytime, and evening routine:

Morning Routine Ideas

- Create a prayer, affirmation or mantra you say to yourself each morning to set the tone.
- Set an intention for your day (i.e., openness, patience, gentleness).
- If you have plants, water them thinking about life, growth, and successes you have witnessed in the last week.
- Stretch your body.

Daytime Routine Ideas

- Each time the phone rings, wait for the third ring while you center yourself with intention.
- Resist the urge to check or immediately respond to text messages – before you do, take a micro break.
- TAKE YOUR LUNCH BREAK! Eat slowly noticing textures, tastes, temperatures. Think of how the food nourishes you and what made this nourishment possible.
- Set a timer that goes off every 1-2 hours and take a micro break.

Evening Routine Ideas

- Straighten or dismantle your work space, change your clothes, choose an end of work day song and move your body.
- Engage with family through games, stories and art. Do a feelings check-in. How are you today? Any worries you'd like to discuss?
- Read or listen to an engaging, non-work related book (libraries have free audio book collections) or journal while having a cup of tea.
- Avoid social media and news.

Remember, any small moment you create to care for yourself is a victory!