



Covid-19 Coping: Wellbeing Tips for Uncertain Times

The outbreak of the Coronavirus and the spread of COVID-19 is an unprecedented moment in the span of human history. This may be one of the only times in our lives when our entire global community will have a shared experience of disruption from our daily patterns due to the exact same challenge.

You may be feeling some worry and anxiety right now, and you're not alone. Navigating this transition will involve feelings of uncertainty and loss for everyone. And, like all transitions in life, this experience also offers opportunities to consider how we want to respond and what capacities we need to do so effectively.

This overview is intended to offer both general and Dartmouth-specific resources and practices that can help to bolster your mental health and overall wellbeing during this trying time. Included are ideas that help cultivate a sense of perspective, facilitate mindful engagement and authentic connection, and can lead to intentional actions that contribute to a sense of meaning and purpose.



There are a wealth of resources out there for [coping with stress](#) during the COVID-19 outbreak. For instance, The Greater Good Science Center at UC Berkeley's [Guide to Well-being during the Coronavirus](#) is a comprehensive, evidence-based site that offers articles, podcasts, and practices related to topics including [stress and anxiety reduction](#) and [fostering connection](#). We have done our best to curate some of these resources into this portal as a starting point for you.

As you consider and experiment with different practices and ideas, listen to your gut, and remember that you are the expert in your own life. You can trust yourself to know what you ultimately need to thrive.

When you identify practices that feel especially helpful, feel free to share them with @dartmouth_swc on Instagram so others can learn from your wisdom!

Sending love and support,

The Student Wellness Center Team



STUDENT WELLNESS CENTER at Dartmouth College

Cultivate Perspective



While we cannot control much of what is happening around us, we always have some agency over how we make sense of and respond to these events. The below practices can help you establish a perspective that supports your wellbeing.

Experiment with or deepen contemplative practices like meditation, prayer, and mindfulness activities

Mindfulness practices can help us [find calm and nourish resilience](#). In the time of this pandemic, more [free, daily, live guided](#) mindfulness meditation classes are available than ever before and renowned mindfulness teachers like [Tara Brach](#) and [Jack Kornfield](#) are offering lots of resources, ideas, readings, and talks for the public.

The Student Wellness Center offers a variety of [Relaxation Downloads](#) created by Dartmouth students and staff.

The Tucker Center has curated an array of coronavirus [spiritual resources](#) including meditations, prayers, poems, music, podcasts, and more.

Many faith-based organizations have online communities, offer televised spiritual practices, and other ways to practice and connect virtually. Search locally or stay connected to [your faith community at Dartmouth](#).

Write it out: Journaling

The simple act of putting your experiences into words can relieve stress, help you recognize and understand your emotions, increase your self-awareness, and shift your outlook. [This article](#) offers different possibilities to get you started.

[Gratitude journaling](#) is another practice that has been shown to boost mental health and well-being.

[Mood Meter App](#)* can help you enhance your emotional awareness through tracking your feelings and their triggers. *Email Student.Wellness.Center@Dartmouth.edu if you would like a digital code for a free download

Reframe your mindset

[The story that you tell yourself](#) about your life has a powerful influence on your beliefs and lived experiences. For instance, your narrative for this term could be one of perseverance through adversity, discovering new depths of resilience, or supporting others in their struggles. You are currently playing a vital part in mitigating the damage of this pandemic. When you practice social distancing, you are saving the lives of friends, neighbors, family, and strangers. Remember that in many ways, remote learning makes you a superhero.

Connect Authentically



Relationships are a profound source of meaning in our lives, and no amount of social distancing can alter that reality. Despite the circumstances, there are a lot of ways to foster connection and belonging right now.

Compassionately communicate your needs with others

Being back in the same space as your family can easily lead to friction. Practicing [compassionate communication](#) to help strengthen relationships. Try putting yourself in others' shoes before reacting. This is an adjustment for everyone. Be upfront with your [needs](#) and requests, but keep in mind the challenges they may be facing as well and leave space for them to share too.

Be nurtured by nature

Finding ways to be in [the natural world](#), or even viewing scenes of nature, can improve your mood, boost your creativity, and provide a deep sense of calm & restoration. If you are able to maintain social distancing guidelines outdoors, try getting outside for some movement or explore what's right in your "backyard"; notice what is growing, listen for bird calls, feel the different textures of tree bark. If getting out is not an option, bring nature indoors with these [ideas](#)!

Connect through technology

[Zoom up](#) with friends and colleagues, Facetime with family near and far. If your schedules or time zones don't match up find a "video" pen-pal to send short clips/updates to each other.

Resurrect classic communication methods

Letter writing or telephone calls can help you connect with folks who aren't as technologically savvy. Don't forget about your grandparents or older neighbors who may feel even more cut off and lonely during this time.

Take the opportunity to reach out to past friends or far away family

Think of people you don't typically see in your day to day life or have not connected with in a while and reach out. They may welcome a call out of the blue.

Actively support others in taking care of themselves

Affirm people's choices that enhance their wellbeing and the health of the community. Applaud them for practicing strict social distancing, exchange healthy meal ideas, ask a friend to be a virtual bedtime buddy or an early morning yoga partner and text each other with updates about your healthy practices.

Need more ideas? Here are some [general tips and tools](#) for communication when living apart from others, [innovative ideas](#) that you can try with family and friends to reinforce your connectedness with each other and for [making your interactions more meaningful](#), even from a distance.

Engage Mindfully



Enabling ourselves to be in the present moment allows our minds to focus on something other than the stress and anxiety that may be dominating our thoughts. Additionally, some moments can transport us into new experiences of connection with something bigger than ourselves. Take notice of the sounds you hear, the sights you see, the sensations your body feels, what you smell & taste, and even taking stock of various emotions you feel.

Find the Joy & Be in the Moment

Relish in the home-cooked meals, savor the snuggles with your pet, embrace the game nights with siblings, listen to music that moves you. Focus on things that you have now that you wouldn't have had easy access to if your spring had gone according to plan.

Yoga for Calm

Consider yoga being more than a physical exercise, but rather a practice to hone your mindfulness skills (the ability to intentionally pay attention with a kind and curious attitude). Along with [soothing anxious thoughts](#), yoga emphasizes present-moment awareness in body, heart, & mind. Next time you're stretching it out, try bringing kind-hearted attention to the sensations you feel in your body, thoughts coming and going, and any emotions your heart is carrying. Simply notice it all, without needing to fix or change a thing.

Check out [this site](#) for free yoga classes of all kinds and for all levels. Includes meditations and guided relaxations too!

Wash your Hands (Mindfully!)

At this point we all know how important it is to wash our hands for at least 20 seconds and follow best practices to [stop the spread of germs](#). If singing Happy Birthday twice is getting old you could use up 20 seconds by [washing more mindfully](#):

- Begin by telling yourself, "I intend to bring all my attention to washing my hands."
- Look at the tap and the sink. Notice the contrasting colors and textures.
- As you turn on the faucet, notice how the metal or plastic feels against your hand. Notice your hand as it moves.
- Hear the sound of the water running. Feel the water caressing your hands.
- Notice the temperature of the water and of the soap.
- Feel your hands massage one another as you lather up the soap.
- Can you smell the soap? Any other smells? Notice how the soap bubbles feel on your skin. Now, pay full attention to the feelings and sounds of the water as you rinse your hands.
- Don't stop there - Continue to focus as you turn off the tap and dry your hands.
- Feel the tap again. Notice the muscles in your hands moving. Notice the texture of the towel, and perhaps the sounds the towel makes. Notice the temperature of your hands and how it changes as they go from wet to dry. When you are done, take a few seconds to take a full, relaxing breath.

Act Intentionally



With a clearer sense of your needs and desires, you can set intentions for yourself and take actions to start to move toward the outcomes you'd like to realize right now. Here are a couple ways to put your reflections into action!

Set a routine, make a schedule, or abandon one!

If you find the lack of structure unsettling, think of what your ideal day would entail and create a [daily schedule](#) with that in mind. Or consider relaxing your expectations and revel in the freedom to live minute by minute.

Interact with news sources intentionally

Choose when, from where, and how much information you want or need. Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting. Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including social media, and use only reputable sites to get updates and stay informed and educated: [Dartmouth COVID-19](#), [CDC](#), [WHO](#), [NIH](#), and State Departments of Health & Human Services (e.g. [New Hampshire DHHS](#)).

Set yourself up for remote learning

While you couldn't control the circumstances that lead to a spring of remote learning, there are things you intentionally do to [get the most out of it](#). Whether it's [before](#), [during](#), or after class, there are [practices](#) that may help smooth the transition and deepen the experience for you.

Make time to unwind

Do activities that bring you joy or experiment with new ones! Knit, read for pleasure, create a photobook, learn or play an instrument, write poetry, draw or [color](#). For some people organizing a pesky closet or junk drawer, working on a mini-renovation, or pitching in on chores can relieve stress and contribute to a feeling of productivity. For others unwinding may involve contemplating literature, [poetry](#), [visual art](#), design, or performances that take you out of the present each day.

Take care of your body

This could be a great time to implement some of those #wellnessgoals you may have for yourself: getting enough [sleep](#), eating healthy well-balanced meals, exercising regularly, reducing or cutting out substances like [alcohol](#) or [cannabis](#). You can still check in with your [Dick's House](#) Primary Care providers through their new telehealth options.

Bringing It All Together: Live Meaningfully

This term, like any period of time in our lives, will bring many new lived experiences. Some will be challenging and difficult and others may be fulfilling and rewarding. Almost all of these experiences, no matter how tough, will provide us with opportunities to know ourselves more fully, and can help us grow into the people we aspire to be in the world.

Perhaps the most unique opportunity of this term may be the chance to step back from the busy-ness that often characterizes the Dartmouth experience. Your inability to maintain your regular activities and plans for the next ten weeks offers a chance to reconnect with your motivations, hopes, and aspirations in a manner that can deepen your sense of meaning.



As you reflect on these parts of your life, you can clarify your sense of purpose by [exploring your values](#) or [identifying your character strengths](#). Applying your results back to the academic, social, and professional commitments you're making can help you align your life with the things that matter most to you.

Want to explore meaning even further? Check out [this talk](#), or [this one](#), [take a quiz](#) to explore your primary source(s) of meaning for you, or [schedule a wellness check-in](#) at the Student Wellness Center to talk about life with one of our staff members! However you choose to engage us, please know we're here for you.



Resources & Works Cited

Introduction/Overview

[Coping with stress during the 2019-nCoV outbreak](#) (World Health Organization)

[Guide to Well-being during the Coronavirus](#) (The Greater Good Science Center at UC Berkeley)

Cultivate Perspective

[Find Calm & Nourish Resilience During the COVID Outbreak](#) (Mindful.org)

[Live Meditation Sessions \(The Insight Meditation Community of Washington DC\)](#)

[Meditation Resources](#) (Tara Brach)

[Pandemic Resources](#) (Jack Kornfield)

[Relaxation Downloads](#) (Dartmouth College)

[Coronavirus Spiritual Resources](#) (Dartmouth College)

[How to Begin Journaling for Stress Relief](#) (PsychCentral)

[Gratitude Journal](#) (Greater Good in Action)

[Mood Meter App](#) (Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence)

[Is the World an Exciting or Terrifying Place?](#) (Washington Post)

Connect Authentically

[The Center for Nonviolent Communication](#)

[Learning during COVID-19 for families](#) (Cornell University)

[How does nature impact our wellbeing?](#) And [Bring Nature Indoors](#) (The University of Minnesota)

[Dartmouth Zoom](#)

[How to prevent loneliness in a time of social distancing](#) (Scientific American)

[Try these smart tips to stay connected to the people you don't see everyday](#) (Thrive Global)

[How to be together apart in the time of coronavirus](#) (The New York Times)

Engage Mindfully

[How Yoga Can Help Soothe Anxiety](#) (Kripalu)

[Free Yoga Classes](#) (Do Yoga with Me)

[Stop the Spread of Germs](#) (Centers for Disease Control & Prevention)

[Have You Ever Really Washed Your Hands](#) (Mindful 15 Podcast)

Act Intentionally

[Daily Schedule Template](#) (Dartmouth College)

[Getting the most out of remote learning. Preparing for Learning Remotely & Participating in Learning Remotely](#) (Harvard University)

[Learning During COVID-19](#) (Cornell University)

[How to Start a Mandala Practice \(Free Downloadable Coloring Book!\)](#) (Kripalu)

[The Peace of Wild Things](#) (Wendell Berry)

[The Hood Collection of Visual Art](#) (Dartmouth College)
[Refresh Sleep Improvement Program](#) (Dartmouth College)
[eCheckUp to Go \(Alcohol\)](#) (Dartmouth College)
[eCheckUp to Go \(Marijuana\)](#) (Dartmouth College)
[Dartmouth College Health Service](#)

Live Meaningfully

[Six ways to discover and choose your core values](#) (Psychology Today)
[VIA Strengths Survey](#) (VIA Institute on Character)
[Ted Talk: There's more to life than being happy](#) (Emily Esfahani Smith)
[Ted Talk: Meaning in life, the deep end of flourishing](#) (Michael Streger)
[What's your pillar? quiz](#) (Emily Esfahani Smith)
[Wellness Check-Ins](#) (Dartmouth)

Dartmouth Remote Resources

to support your wellbeing

The Student Wellness Center (SWC)

During Spring Term 2020, the [Student Wellness Center](#) is offering Wellness Check-ins via Zoom. Wellness Check-Ins give you a chance to talk with one of our staff members, who can provide a source of non-judgmental support. We will work with you to navigate the different transitions you're facing and take steps toward making the most of this term. For more information, or to schedule a check-in, please go to the [Wellness Check-In page](#) on our website.

We also have a variety of online resources such as [Relaxation Downloads](#), [Refresh Sleep Improvement Program](#), [Alcohol & Other Drug Self-Assessments](#) and related [resources and downloads](#), downloadable [Stall Seat Journals](#). Check back at our [website](#) for more virtual offerings throughout the term!

The Counseling Center

[The Counseling Center](#) remains committed to supporting students' emotional growth and wellbeing. We are actively working to move all contact to be via teletherapy (phone or HIPAA approved Zoom). We will work with each of you individually to help you continue with services at the Counseling Center or connect to local providers where you are. If you would like to schedule a phone triage appointment, or have questions about current services, please call our office at 603-646-9442.

We continue providing the following: Triage appointments to help determine treatment options, which may include short-term teletherapy or a referral to a local provider; For students who have an established relationship with one of our psychiatrists, we are providing psychiatric medication evaluations and med checks (when appropriate). For other students, we will help them get connected with appropriate care; On-Call services 24/7 (S&S 603-646-4000); Consultation; Coordinator of our Nutrition Program will provide teleconsultation.

We will also be providing an Anxiety Toolbox Workshop via Zoom!

Tucker Center

In a time of change, stress and uncertainty, Tucker staff are here for you! For virtual spiritual resources for those seeking calm, connection and sustenance in relation to the challenges of COVID-19 see the Tucker Center's [Spiritual Care, Practices and Resources](#).

We will also be providing virtual confidential and private [pastoral counseling](#) in relation to every day life or times of anxiety and change.

Academic Skills Center

During Dartmouth's remote spring term, [the Academic Skills Center](#) is here to serve you. We will be available online during our regular business hours, Monday through Friday: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. EST, and will provide [Academic Coaching](#) through zoom and Tutor Clearinghouse services, primarily through virtual [Academic Study Groups](#) and weekly [Resident Expert](#) virtual drop-in hours. For questions [Email us](#) or call us (603-646-2014) and leave your name, phone number, **time zone**, and email address. We will get back to you during our regular business hours. We look forward to working with you. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to us.

The Office of Pluralism and Leadership (OPAL)

The [OPAL Deans](#) are available for one-on-one and group advising, as well as general personal check-ins during the spring 2020 term. We want to stay in touch with you and hear how we can support your continued success, growth and development. The [OPAL Program Coordinators](#) are available to meet with student coordinators and committee leaders to brainstorm ways to keep your OPAL-affiliated projects viable and productive. We remain committed to supporting you by honoring the need for connection, community, and engagement to help you thrive in times of transition and change. You can connect with the OPAL team by emailing at OPAL@dartmouth.edu, or via our [individual emails](#) to schedule a time to connect via phone or Zoom.

Check the OPAL [website](#) for forthcoming information about virtual programs that we will offer during the spring term.

Outdoor Programs Office

Many people are asking if it is OK to go for a run, a hike, a bike ride, or a walk on the beach right now. Outdoor recreation - even going for a walk - can be important in maintaining physical and emotional health. OPO has some great [recommendations](#) to consider.

Collis Center & Student Involvement

While you are learning remotely for the spring term and social distancing for the benefit for our larger communities, we want to encourage you to continue meeting (virtually) and staying connected to your organizations. [On the Collis website](#), there are some tips and resources to help you manage your organization remotely and some ideas to help you stay connected during this unprecedented time. While we know they can't fully replace the in-person interactions we are used to on campus, we hope that these ideas and resources will help you feel connected to your Dartmouth communities.

Our staff remains ready and available to support you with ANYTHING you may need. If you have any questions or would like to set up a phone call or Zoom appointment, please blitz student.involvement@dartmouth.edu or call us at 603-646-3399 and we'll get you connected to the best person to help.

Office of Student Life

While Dartmouth will look a little different this term, the Office of Student Life will continue to support and provide inclusive opportunities for leadership, community, and learning. If you have any questions or would like to connect with a staff member, please reach out to one of the [Student Life departments](#): [Collis Center & Student Involvement](#); [Community Standards & Accountability](#); [Dartmouth Broadcasting](#); [Dartmouth Forensic Union](#); [Greek Life](#); [Outdoor Programs](#); [New Student Orientation](#)

If you aren't sure who to contact or are looking to join a community, please email the [Office of Student Life](#) or call us at 603-646-3399 and we'll get you connected to the best person to help. Please be on the lookout for updates and resources from each of these departments as we continue into the Spring Term.

New Student Orientation

With the Class of 2024 coming into view, we are focusing our efforts on warmly welcoming our newest students into the Dartmouth community. Students will begin to receive intentional communication from our office in May, but our [website](#) is a great resource for information and updates. If you have questions or thoughts in the meantime, please feel free to [email](#) us. We look forward to working with current Dartmouth students and our remarkable colleagues to welcome the Class of 2024.

Additional National Resources

Active Minds has created a [special online hub](#) for students to support their mental health during COVID-19.

The National Alliance on Mental Illness has developed a page of [guidelines for individuals with mental health concerns](#) as well as a more comprehensive [guide to resources](#) for support.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is a primary hub for current information related to the COVID-19. Among their many resources are sections on [managing anxiety and stress](#) related to the outbreak and [taking care of your emotional health](#) in times of stress or loss.

Meditation & Wellbeing Apps

[Insight Timer](#) A free website and app with a number of free guided meditations varying in lengths, styles, and focuses. It also includes the option to set a custom timer with sounds for your own silent meditation. Developed under the guidance of a Dartmouth alumnus (Jack Kornfield '67) so that's cool!

[Aura](#) A free app with personalized, daily 3-minute meditations and the ability to track your mood.

[Headspace](#) Hundreds of guided meditations & mindfulness exercises on everything from stress to sleep. Offers a free 2-week trial along with subsequent discounted subscriptions for students. Right now, they are also offering a number of modules for free called Weathering the Storm developed specifically for the outbreak.

[Calm](#) A meditation, sleep and relaxation app. The app is free to download and some free content is available, but a paid subscription to Calm Premium unlocks access to Calm's entire content library.

[10% Happier](#) Specifically geared towards newcomers and skeptics, this app includes guided meditations, videos, talks, and sleep content to help build (or boost) a sustainable meditation practice. Free 7-day trial is included before being charged yearly membership dues.