

Whole Health & COVID: Pausing to Find Meaning and Strength

PART ONE

Now, more than ever, it is vital to stay healthy, hopeful, and empowered. Focus on what you really need, *right now*.

As you are able, pause and slow down. Do less and be more. Honor your connection to others and our world.

These options may help. Choose where on the Circle of Health you want to focus, then go to the web address below for more.

Me

You know yourself better than anyone. You are unique. Keep asking what really matters, right now, during these challenging times. Doing a Personal Health Inventory (click [this link](#)) can help. How can you bring in more happiness and kindness for yourself, despite it all?

Spirit and Soul

People with a strong sense of meaning and purpose have longer lives and less illness. Where do you turn for strength? In a way that works for you, take time to focus in on your spirituality, through praying, connecting with your religious community, serving others, being in nature, and so on.

Recharge

Rest. Get good sleep – we know it helps people resist catching viruses and have a healthier immune system. Avoid habits that disrupt sleep (alcohol, news, overeating). Think about what boosts your energy in a healthy way and do it!

Mindful Awareness

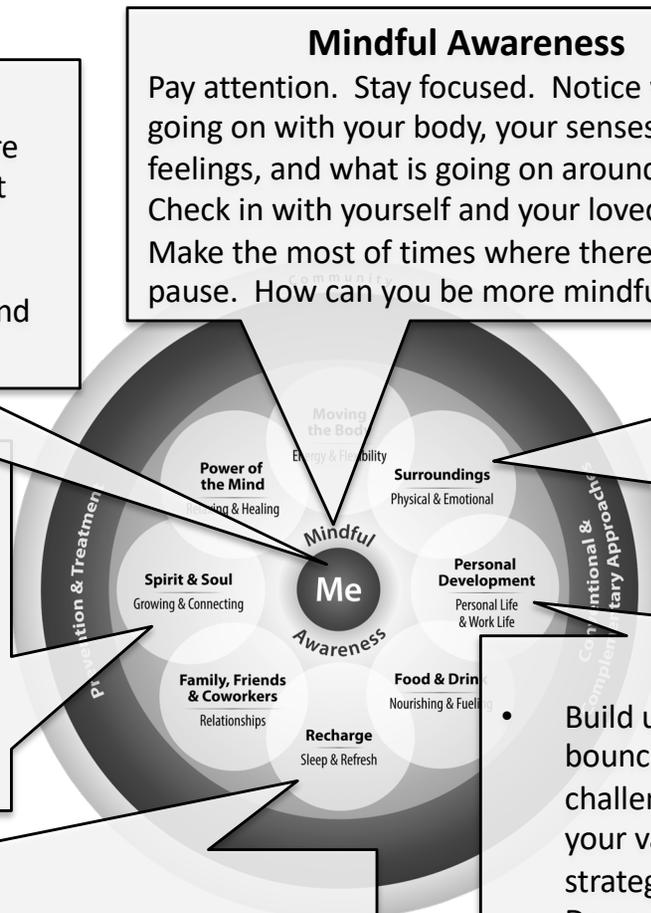
Pay attention. Stay focused. Notice what is going on with your body, your senses, your feelings, and what is going on around you. Check in with yourself and your loved ones. Make the most of times where there is a pause. How can you be more mindful?

Surroundings

- Some of our **best tools** against COVID tie in here: 1) Wash hands a lot. 2) Cough into your elbow. 3) Don't touch your face. 4) Socially distance. 5) Stay home if you have symptoms.
- Stay informed but know when to pause with the news too.
- Nature heals. Connect to the natural world – a park, plants in your home, a tree or patch of grass.

Personal Development

- Build up your resilience – how well you adapt to, and bounce back from, life's challenges. Preparing ahead for challenges, having mentors, social support, living by your values, humor, optimism, and healthy coping strategies all help.
- Do something you love at least once a day – music, reading, a good meal, a show you like. Savor life and create good habits!
- If it helps, make a daily schedule for your self, to bring more order into your life.



For more information on all these topics, go to <https://www.va.gov/WHOLEHEALTH/veteran-handouts/index.asp>.

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Community

How we connect matters more than ever before. What community resources can help you out? On the flip side, how can you support other members of your community? Ask for what you need and offer what you can. Volunteer. Donate. Support businesses. Check on your neighbors.

Moving the Body

Being active helps you avoid infections and is good for lung health. Come up with an activity plan you can follow, even if you are staying isolated. Include stretching, flexibility, and balance. Look for online resources and apps that can help.

Power of the Mind

Stress is running high. What are healthy ways for you to deal with it? Being able to relax, as best you can, can protect your health. The more skillfully you can work with stress, the better you can protect your health. There are a lot of tools out there to help - find one that works for you.

Professional Care

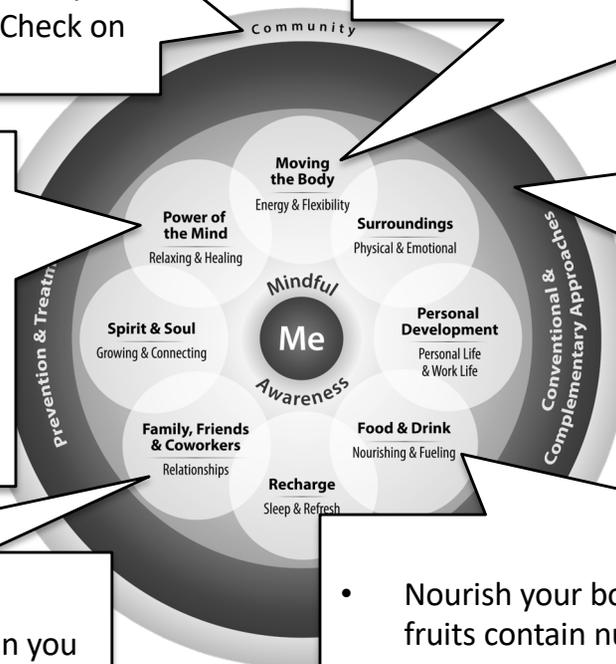
Who is on your care team? How do you access health care when our healthcare system is under stress – telehealth? There are no proven treatments for COVID, but we keep learning. Ask your care team for advice before you try something.

Family, Friends, & Coworkers

Separating *physically* from others doesn't mean you have to separate *emotionally*. Try out new ways to connect with loved ones when you are isolated or quarantined. Connect with someone you love at least once a day. Make it count!

Food & Drink

- Nourish your body with healthy foods as able. Many veggies and fruits contain nutrients that help our bodies handle infections better. Experts are suggesting power foods like celery, tomatoes, nuts, berries, parsley, apples, and onions.
- There are food shopping guides and menus you can search for online if you are going to be at home for a long period.
- If you are short on food, look for local pantries and programs.



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