

THE COVID-19 GUIDEBOOK

How to Stay Safe, Sane & Healthy in a Pandemic

Edition 2

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with

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The COVID -19 Pandemic Guide

2nd Edition

How to Stay Safe, Sane and Healthy in a Pandemic

By

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with

Anthony Cheam

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This Book is Dedicated to:

All the frontline workers who deliver our food and necessities, from the farmers, drivers and grocery clerks to all the healthcare professionals that help the ill. Also, to the other heroes such as the firefighters and police officers who put their life on the line daily to protect and to serve. Equally, I want to acknowledge all the individuals who have and are making personal sacrifices by doing the right thing, by staying home and giving up so much of their normal day to day routines, because I know it's hard. We all are in this together.

A special thank you to Anthony Cheam for his writings, voice and advice in Part 4 and 5 in this guidebook.

I would like to thank William Brown RRT CRE, for setting up the bulk of chapter 1 on Food, Water, Shelter, Safety & Community and his insights. Always wise and insightful.

A sincere thank you to Rick Gardiner at Planet Print for volunteering his time to set up the layout of the book so that people could access it for free. Rick's always been a great contributor to the community and is always willing to help.

Thank you, Chris Robinson and Scott Morkin, for proof reading this guidebook on such short notice.

***This book is free for you to use and distribute to whomever you feel may benefit from the content in here.**

CONQUERCOVID19.CA

Canadian Hockey Legend, Hayley Wickenheiser is leading a National Canadian Campaign to help make sure Frontline Canadian Workers have access to proper PPE (Personal Protective Equipment)

If you would like to assist via donation or supplies

Or To get a

CONQUERCOVID-19 T-Shirt

(100% proceeds go to providing PPE for Frontline Workers)

Go to:

<https://www.conquercovid19.ca/>



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Introduction

If you're feeling nervous or ill-prepared during the pandemic, you're not alone. This is certainly a normal response for most of us since no one has lived or witnessed a worldwide pandemic. As a physician, I've been helping people, during this time to learn how to navigate their health and anxiety to a better place. I've done it via my patient interactions, conversations, a few Facebook live videos and through my educational podcast-The Introverted Doctor.

A few people have reached out to me and asked if I could create a guidebook that allows a synthesis of key information, a source to refer to and stay on track mentally, physically and socially. Many have found it helpful and useful, so I'm confident you will too. It's free - please distribute it to anyone you feel could benefit.

I wanted this guidebook to be easy and effective. With so much information floating around, I wanted this to be simple to read and practical. This is the 2nd Edition, which includes some updated information in Part 1, a new chapter "How Not to Drive Yourself Crazy" and a new tool "The Mood Tracker" in Part 6. For any future updated editions please go to TheIntrovertedDoctor.com for your free download.

I've asked my friend Anthony Cheam, a life coach, to contribute his expertise on how to elevate people's mindset and relationships. Our hope is that this will help you and others in this challenging time.

When a person is prepared, they navigate through situations well. If you are ill-prepared then you are left to deal with whatever the environment throws at you. As a physician, I focus on trying to prevent disease and improving health outcomes. Prevention is possible only through preparation. This guidebook is meant to make life easier and to help you and your family understand how you can survive and thrive during the pandemic.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

You may not immediately use everything in this guidebook. It's not necessarily meant to be read cover to cover, but I certainly don't discourage it. It also is a good resource if you need to help others in this time. This book is free and it is a guide, nothing replaces common sense unless you have a smart spouse like mine. Not everything mentioned will apply to you or your situation, these are some guidelines to help you and others.

NOTE: Consult your doctor or healthcare provider for specific medical needs. Some information may not apply to your specific health condition. Do not delegate tasks to children or individuals you think cannot handle the task or situation suggested in the book.

May you, and your family, be healthy and safe,

Lalit Chawla MD, CCFP, FCFP

Chapter 1: Food, Water, Shelter, Safety & Community

This next section is a guideline. There are several great sources of information, one of them being <https://www.getprepared.gc.ca/>. Also take a look at your local municipality and see what's available there.

Food (and Supplies)

This next section is a guideline, there are several goods sources of information, one of them being Start with adding an extra week's supply on your next shopping visit, then continue this over each subsequent shopping visit until you have built up your supply to approximately 1-3 months of food on hand. Note, if you don't have that amount of room in your home. Don't worry, do what's reasonable for you and your circumstances. Local authorities are working to make sure that supply chains are working well. There is no concern at the present time. Also don't forget to look at the amount of food you already have in your home. Many people forget that part of the equation. What's important is to do some budgeting, menu planning and focus on healthy eating. Remember, this is a guidebook only to get you thinking and acting.

If getting an appropriate amount of food is an issue, look at local supports such as food banks and programs. Everyone is working together and you are not alone.

There are many good online videos (YouTube) that can help with this process. Also, learn to eat smarter by avoiding junk food. Eating smart (healthy) foods helps build your physical strength and boost your immunity to deal with infections. (Refer to the Chapter 2 on How to Shop for Groceries Safely and to Chapter 12 on Nutrition). This is a time to buffer up. It's okay to have your favourite snack once in a while, but don't overdo it. You don't want to gain more weight in this time. Obesity has negative effects on our immunity.

Please Do Not Hoard. Buy a reasonable amount of food and necessities for the next few weeks. Please leave some for other people, especially the elderly and people who may have difficulty accessing supplies. There will be plenty to manage the need for everyone if we don't overstress the supply chain.

Planning your way through this crisis will be much better than overreacting to it. Prepare, don't panic! Panic from you breeds panic in others. Keep an abundance mindset.

Medication is another item to consider in a crisis. We are so used to filling our prescriptions as we need them, but if supplies are limited or delivery becomes a problem, you'll wish you had filled it. With that being said, please don't order more than 30 days at a time unless you've talked to your pharmacist or doctor. Your pharmacist has a responsibility to protect the medication supply so that everyone who needs medications can get it. Many medications come outside of the country and the supply chain can be interrupted. Basic medications like asthma inhalers are in short supply and if you stock-pile them, the consequences can be serious, especially for the people who cannot fill them easily. Also, children can be adversely affected.

Consider keeping some extra cash on hand. There are many reasons why a debit/credit card may not work or be accepted. With many services running at reduced capacity repairing a broken debit machine might not be possible when you need supplies the most. Having some extra cash available will help you until everything is in full swing again, but note, many stores are refusing cash and are doing exclusively touchless pay options with credit cards or debit cards.

Water

I recommend that each person needs one gallon (4 Liters) of water per day for survival. When it comes to storing a supply for the future, start with a two week supply per person on hand. Many grocery stores sell large jugs of sealed water that can be stored for quite a while. (Please keep them away from sunlight and store in a cool place.) Some companies will even deliver these jugs to your home.

If you can't find those certified containers and need something quick, I recommend 5 proper certified gallon (20 Liter) pails, that are either Plastics 1, 2 or 4 that can be purchased from most building stores. Do not put water in unsafe containers that are not food grade water storage containers. Ask them at the store if you need help. Make sure you clean them properly before filling them. After filling them, they can be covered and stored quite efficiently. This is fine for the short term. Long term solutions vary, and there are videos to help with that. If you have space, it is not a bad idea to store 50% more than suggested for other incidentals such as cleaning. Remember safety first in everything you do.

NOTE: Hydration is the key to staying healthy. Avoid sugary, salty drinks and especially alcohol. Alcohol is exceptionally dehydrating, disrupts your sleep, can elevate anxiety and worsens depression.

To be clear, I do NOT expect a wide scale need at this the moment, but if there is an interruption in the local water service, repair services may take a little longer than usual, so being prepared will make a significant difference.

Shelter

Warmth: Make sure that you have warm clothes and blankets in case of power outages. Candles are great for maintaining warmth in a room, but make sure to close off rooms that are not in use in order to conserve heat. Trying to heat unused rooms is a waste of energy. A gas fireplace is still functional in a power outage as long as the auxiliary battery pack is filled. If using candles, remember SAFETY first, do not leave candles unattended and keep away from children's and pets reach.

Lighting: Multiple flashlights are essential to have, in addition to candles. Also, keep your cell phone charged to at least 75% since it has a built-in flashlight.

Cleaning

A contaminated environment can breed biohazards that can contribute to illnesses. Keeping yourself and surfaces in your home clean should not be underestimated. During the best of times, disease is transmitted to healthy people from contaminated surfaces and each other. But generally, we can fight back infection quite well. In long-term isolation the surfaces in our home see a lot more use and absorb much more bio-burden since our homes are getting more use. Therefore, they will need to be cleaned more often as well. Keep yourself and surfaces clean and let the sunlight in whenever possible. UV light has shown to kill off sensitive bacteria and viruses.

Helpful Tip

Clean your cell phone at least 2x daily.
It's a great way to prevent the spread of germs.
Also don't forget the keyboard on your laptop or desktop.

Safety

Unfortunately, there will always be situations where you may need to be prepared to protect your home and your loved ones. During times of crisis, when regular support systems are stretched, it becomes even more important that you are prepared.

Fire Preparedness: Make sure that your fire alarms are fully functional. Develop a fire escape plan and practice it regularly. It is easy to forget when you are in danger, and your adrenaline is running. Also, make sure you have a meeting place to gather in case family members have to leave home by different routes. After everyone is out safe, go to a neighbour's home and call 911 from there. Get away from the burning house. There are many explosive items in a house. Have fire extinguishers nearby and keep them in good working order. If you contact your local fire station, they would be happy to help with questions you may have.

Medical Preparedness: Knowing first aid and CPR is a valuable skill. Accidents happen quite frequently to varying degrees. Scratches and bumps can be easy to manage, but serious cuts and even heart attacks / cardiac arrests, require more advanced attention, and it needs to be delivered quickly. In struggling times, social resources are spread thinner and it takes longer to get access them. Being as prepared as possible will help span the time until advanced care can get there.

Security Preparedness: Ensure that your home is safe from intruders. Close and lock your doors and windows when they are not in use and keep a close eye on your property. Clear away any impediments that block a sightline to your home. It is easier for neighbours and police to notice that you are in trouble if they can see your home from the street.

Also, keep your external lights on at night. LED bulbs use very little energy, so the expense is minimal, but the protective effect is significant. A well-lit home is hard to sneak up on and drives thieves to easier targets.

When you and your family are sleeping, hang some small bells or anything that makes noise on doors and windows to alert you to any unwanted entry if you don't have an alarm system that you activate at night.

Work out a plan to escape from the home if it is possible to escape before a conflict arises.

Community

Reconnect with your local community. Your neighbours, good friends and family are excellent sources for resources, protection, education and health. If you don't know your neighbours, introduce yourself and get to know them, being, of course, mindful of our current physical/social distancing protocol. People will want to help each other in these times.

If you need an intro phrase say "hello, I realize we've never met, I'm_____, and if I can help you in the future, please let me know." Offer assistance and the majority of people will reciprocate.

Lean on others and become a rock that others can lean on in return!

Chapter 2: How to Shop for Groceries Safely

* The risk of getting infected from a contaminated surface is low when you are shopping and you may not need to take such elaborate measures that I've explained below. Remember, the coronavirus gets spread via respiratory droplets and you would have to touch that contaminated surface and then touch your face.

The bottom-line message is that you really should not touch your face, wash your hands properly after unpacking your groceries before cooking and eating. You don't need to shop with gloves on, just wash your hands and don't touch your face.

I did a podcast/video that shows how to safely shop without bringing home germs. Many people loved it. I never thought a shopping video would get that kind of a response. It's a short video and you can view via YouTube or you can listen to it on your favourite podcast app. The link is below, or go to TheIntrovertedDoctor.com for easy access. The podcast is called The Introverted Doctor. However, you can read some of the key steps right below. It's fairly straight forward. If I can follow this way to bring supplies safely into the home, anyone can. I'm not the best shopper. I probably call my wife at least three times when I'm at the store, but not anymore as I don't want to touch my phone when I'm in there.

*Please don't bring your whole family in with you. It's not a day trip. Keep your children at home, and only one adult should do the shopping.

Click

www.theintroverteddoctor.com

Who should NOT GO SHOPPING

- If you have come from International Travel, stay home for 14 Days (it's a law in some jurisdictions and you could be forcibly quarantined/fined/jailed) Check your own jurisdictions requirements and measures.
- Absolutely do NOT go If you feel unwell or sick, have respiratory symptoms, fever chills, etc.
- Elderly individuals should not be shopping, if you can't have someone shop for you, then look for special hours for the elderly. Look for local resources for help. Ask a trusted friend or some charitable organization to help you.

If you have a medical condition whereby your immune system is compromised, especially if you are dealing with cancer, or are on significant medications that suppresses your immune system. It's not worth the chance. If you are not sure, ask your healthcare provider or a pharmacist.

Below is a summary of the key points in the video/podcast.

There are 3 Key Phases in the Process

- 1.The Preparation Phase
- 2.The Shopping Phase
- 3.Cleaning/Putting the Groceries Away Phase

1. The Preparation Phase

This is the most important of all the phases because it makes the other two phases easy.

Set up your car or your entrance to your home with a precleaning area. I'm going to use a car trunk for an example.

1. Have a cleaning kit (use a small cardboard box, which has a certified disinfectant spray or wipes (see link below in box), paper towels, mask, hand sanitizers and gloves are optional)
2. Make a List of Essential Items you need. Get in and out as fast as possible. The days of squeezing fresh melons are not the best thing to do right now. Don't be nervous, but don't dilly doddle.
3. Take a picture of the item you need if you are a guy and are somewhat incompetent and not sure what your wife wants you to get. That's for all the guys like me. Try to remember the photo before you go into the store.
4. Get a supply for at least 10 -14 days.
5. Think in terms of 8 areas when making your list (see below) and write it on a separate paper, do not use your phone (the fewer things you touch the better during the process):
 - Veg/Fruits,
 - Dry/Canned goods,
 - Breads/Pastas,
 - Dairy, Meats,
 - Cleaning supplies (TP, soap, laundry det. etc.),
 - Personal Hygiene,
 - Medications, Vitamins

* Frozen fruit and vegetables are nutritious too. Try to choose local and seasonal vegetables to reduce transportation requirements. Now more than ever support your local economy and growers.

** Stores are now putting arrows and flow movement so that people move in a manner to make social distancing easy. The better you know what you need, the less you'll back track.

6. Have your Credit Card/Rewards Card/ Cash well before you go into the store, have it ready in your pocket; you can use a zip lock bag or cellphone to protect it or disinfect it afterwards. Leave your phone or purse behind, they are great vehicles to pick up germs and spread them in your home.
7. You can wear gloves, but you don't need to. Just don't touch your face. Gloves are a onetime use. Just keep some hand sanitizer with you. You can use dog poop bags as gloves which come in convenient rolls. If you do use them, discard them in an appropriate manner. Some parking lots have been littered with gloves and masks.
8. It's good to wear a mask inside. Note you do not need a medically certified mask, a homemade one is fine. (See Chapter 5 on How to Make a Mask & When to Wear it).
9. On the lid of your disinfecting box, write a reminder list of what you need to take in (grocery list, bags, credit card/award card/money, (gloves),mask and grocery bags. Create a routine for shopping.

*NOTE: The exact time that the Coronavirus can live on surfaces is variable and not always certain, but a fairly good rule, is:
The Coronavirus stays on Cardboard/Fabrics/Papers/Porous Surfaces for 1 day (24 hrs.).
Other Surfaces, Glass/Countertops/Plastic/Stainless Steel for 3 days or longer.*

See Following links for list and updates of disinfectants against COVID-19

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19.html>

<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>

2. The Shopping Phase

Go in and out as fast as you can, but stay calm and keep safe physical distance. (Keep your social distance-6 feet or 2 meters). Imagine that anyone could be a carrier, but don't be too anxious, do what you need to do to be responsible. Shopping doesn't have to be scary, unless you relied on your memory and forgot the grocery list at home and now you have to call your wife.

Don't touch your face,

You can wear gloves or clean your hands after. I don't wear gloves I just wash or use a hand sanitizer afterwards. I discourage the use of gloves overall.

Go to a store that limits entry of people into the store if you can.

As you enter, wipe the cart handles.

Wearing gloves is very optional. The key is to simply wash your hands or use hand sanitizer after them after you shop. Do not touch your face with your hands. I don't wear them, I just practice good hand washing hygiene.

Wearing a mask (not a medical mask) is recommended. Please do NOT use “medical masks” such as the N95 mask, as they are necessary for medical personnel who will be treating patients with the illnesses. A regular homemade mask will work. That is what the W.H.O recommends. See Chapter 5 on masks and how to make them.

Remember take your grocery bags with you and your shopping list. Leave your phone and/or purse behind.

When Paying:

Minimize the contact with others. 6 feet or 2 meters (Don't give the cashiers a rough time, I don't think it needs to be said but people still can be rude. Thank them, they don't hear that enough).

Use your credit card and place it in a zip lock bag or cellophane wrapper and try to avoid touching the pad.

3. Cleaning/Putting the Groceries Away Phase

Keep a cleaning kit in the trunk or simply do this at the entrance of your home/garage. Imagine that all the packing is covered in a thin film of mud or dust and your hands also have been touching it.

Wipe down the grocery products with an appropriate wipe or disinfectant that works against the Coronavirus, particularly COVID-19.

Remember “If the box has been passed around, make sure you wipe it down.” Alternatively, you can slide out the content of the box into a container, without touching the content packaging. If it's been handled on the outside, that part could be contaminated, but not the inside. You should wash your hands after handling the packaging and before washing your fruits and vegetables.

When cleaning fruits or vegetables, do not use soaps or other detergents. It's not recommended. Simply rinsing them is good enough. Don't forget to clean your hands afterwards properly. (See Washing Hands Section or see the video link below).

Goto www.theintroverteddoctor.com
To Watch **Washing Your Hands Correctly - Made Easy**
Or Click Below for direct link to You Tube

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lcSSbsH-T44&feature=emb_logo

Part 2: Measures to Take Care of Yourself and Family

Chapter 3: Why Self Isolation is Important

You've probably heard we need to self-isolate to "flatten the curve". Flattening the curve means decreasing the surge of sick citizens into the hospital setting. Most hospitals can only handle a certain capacity of people who are ill, and after that capacity is reached it becomes harder to care for people. Most health care systems were never meant to deal with a greater number of people becoming sick. There is a limited amount of medical equipment available and most areas are already underserved because there are not enough doctors, nurses and other important healthcare providers. That's one main reason to flatten the curve. **See Figure 1 below.**

Flatten the Curve

Collective & Protective Measures can decrease the rise of COVID-19 infections and help hospitals manage their clinical resources.

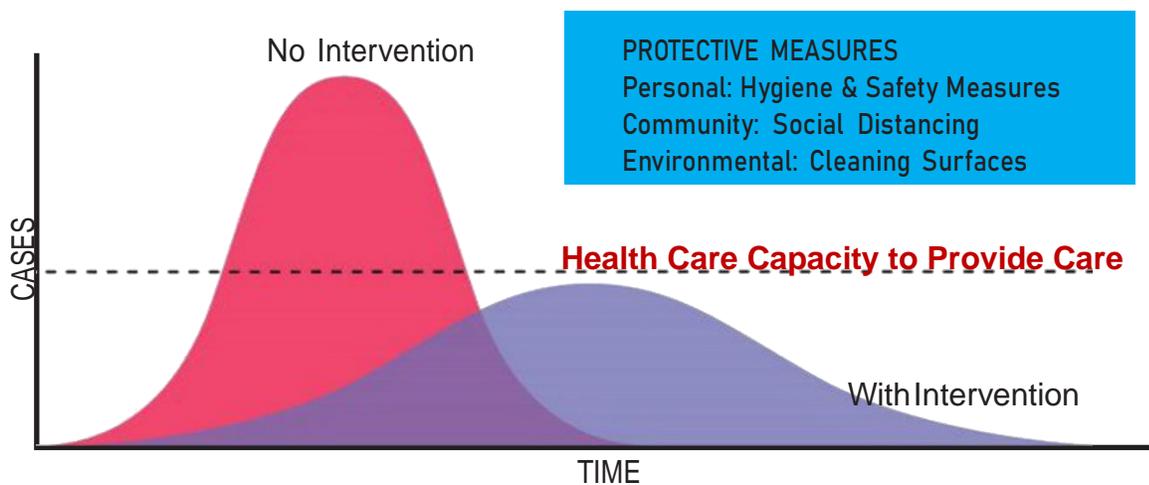


Figure. 1

The other reason for self-isolation and physical/social distancing is to not become infected with the virus. Six feet (2 meters) is the recommended distance. The virus travels primarily through person to person contact or by a person aerosolizing the virus in the air. Recent suggestions also show that these little buggers (COVID-19) can even be transmitted by simple conversation. That really is concerning to say the least. Social/physical distancing is hard, but I'd much rather stay further away from a loved one for a short term than close a coffin on them long term. Elderly are at greatest risk, but young people can also be affected, so that fact should not be taken lightly. Sometimes younger individuals think they'll be fine and they might be, but if they don't self-isolate and follow precautions, they will infect others. In addition, they too run a risk of dying from the virus. You don't want to gamble with this virus. Remember it's a relatively short-term event if we take the proper precautions to protect everyone, especially the people who are vulnerable. Be patient, rather than becoming a patient.

Chapter 4: Washing Hands - There is a right way!

You'd think this chapter would be unnecessary, but there is a correct way to wash hands. Most people do this incorrectly and proper hand washing saves lives, most likely your own or a loved one!

Before an operation, medical staff use a sterile technique to prevent the patient from getting infected. The sterile technique is one of the greatest medical advancements in medicine because it prevents bad outcomes including death.

The video below has some great additional “handy” tips to keep your hands healthy and prevent dryness.

You can see the video if you click onto the link (it's a fun video in which my 9 yr. old son teaches adults how to wash hands). Kids should see it as it may inspire them to make sure the adults in their life are doing a proper job, which in turn will make sure they do a proper job of hand washing.

Or see below figure from the WHO (World Health Organization):

Go to www.theintroverteddoctor.com
To Watch **Washing Your Hands Correctly - Made Easy**

- When to Wash Hands
- When handling food, before or after preparation
 - Before and after eating
 - Treating a sick person or changing a wound (before and after)
 - After using the washroom
 - Changing a diaper, or dealing with any feces
 - Touching or feeding an animal
 - Touching your face, blowing your nose, sneezing
 - Handling waste/garbage
 - Dealing with contact lenses before inserting or removing.
 - Removing gloves (remember gloves are a onetime use, discard appropriately)
 - After shopping

- Key Notes
- Wash hands for at least 20 seconds
 - Apply soap and create bubbles
 - Rub hands together well, get all areas, use cold or warm water
 - Rinse off and dry hands
 - Use a paper towel to shut off taps

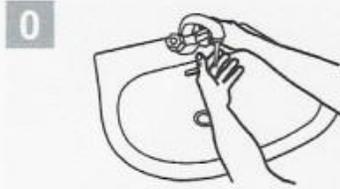
*If using alcohol-based sanitizer, you don't need to use water and make sure that it contains at least 70% alcohol. Clean your hands for at least 20 seconds. Do not rinse or wipe off the hand sanitizer before it is dry. Use the same system. Keep hand sanitizers away from children that might ingest it. If that occurs, seek medical attention right away and/or call 911.

For children (and adults) pick a song such as “Happy Birthday” and sing for at least 20 seconds. Teach kids how to do it.

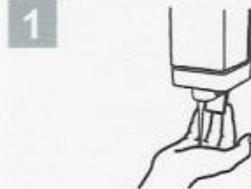
YOU CAN PRINT OFF THE NEXT PAGE AND PUT IT NEAR YOUR SINK AS A GUIDE

How to Handwash?

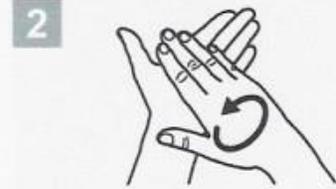
Wash hands when visibly soiled otherwise use hand sanitizer
Duration of entire procedure should last 45 -60 seconds



0 Wet hands with water;



1 Apply enough soap to cover all hand surfaces;



2 Rub hands palm to palm;



3 Right palm over left dorsum with interlaced fingers and vice versa;



4 Palm to palm with fingers interlaced;



5 Backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked;



6 Rotational rubbing of left thumb clasped in right palm and vice versa;



7 Rotational rubbing, backwards and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa;



8 Rinse hands with water;



9 Dry hands thoroughly with a single use towel;



10 Use towel to turn off faucet;



11 Your hands are now safe.

Helpful Tip

Use an appropriate hand lotion to prevent dryness. If your hands are exceptionally dry, try a thin coat of petroleum jelly on your hands at night. This restores the skin wonderfully. If you have a reaction, stop using it and consult your doctor.

Chapter 5: How to Make a Mask & Wear it

The CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) has approved a mask that you can make at home. It also recommends that during a pandemic you should wear one in public.

I also believe that you should wear a mask at home to prevent your hands from touching your face. Our hands can be the greatest source of infection and we all touch our faces far too often. A mask helps increase awareness of your hands to decrease that instinct to touch our faces. One reason we touch our faces is when we feel stress.

Note, beards and mustaches are not ideal when you're wearing a mask especially if you are in the frontline such as a healthcare professional. If you're not in healthcare, but will need to wear a mask (not a N95 mask, please save those for people who work in hospitals or clinics with sick patients.), the link below will show you the type of facial hair that can interfere with a proper mask fitting.

Beard or No Beard Link:

<https://blogs.cdc.gov/niosh-science-blog/2017/11/02/noshave/>

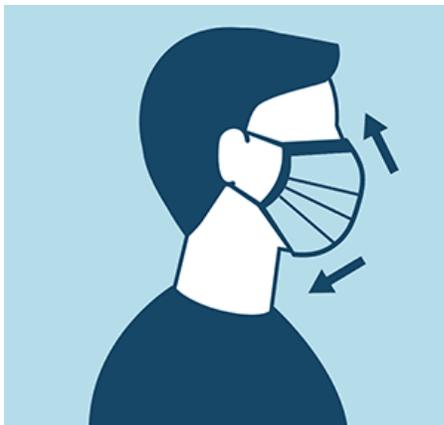
Go directly to their CDC website or look below for information on how to wear a mask and make a mask.

CDC Link:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>

Use of Cloth Face Coverings to Help Slow the Spread of -19

How to Wear a Cloth Face Covering



Cloth face coverings should:

- fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face
- be secured with ties or ear loops
- include multiple layers of fabric
- allow for breathing without restriction
- be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape

CDC on Homemade Cloth Face Coverings

[CDC recommends](#) wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies), **especially** in areas of significant community-based transmission.

CDC also advises the use of simple cloth face coverings to slow the spread of the virus and help people who may have the virus and do not know it from transmitting it to others. Cloth face coverings fashioned from household items or made at home from common materials at low cost can be used as an additional, voluntary public health measure.

Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

The cloth face coverings recommended are not surgical masks or N-95 respirators. Those are critical supplies that must continue to be reserved for healthcare workers and other medical first responders, as recommended by current CDC guidance.



Should cloth face coverings be washed or otherwise cleaned regularly? How regularly?

Yes. They should be routinely washed depending on the frequency of use.

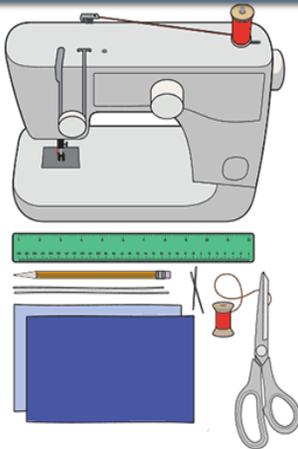
How does one safely sterilize/clean a cloth face covering?

A washing machine should suffice in properly washing a face covering.

How does one safely remove a used cloth face covering?

Individuals should be careful not to touch their eyes, nose, and mouth when removing their face covering and wash hands immediately after removing. Touch **ONLY** the Elastics or ties.

Sewn Cloth Face Covering

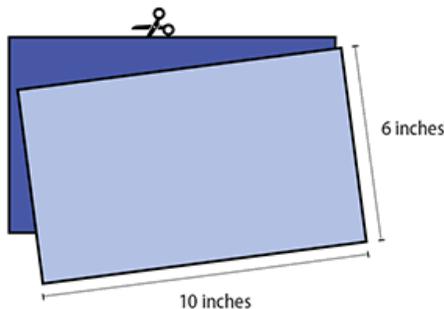


Materials

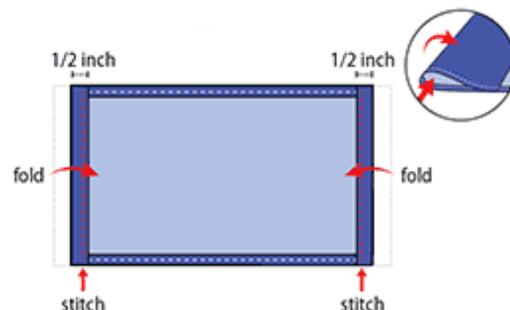
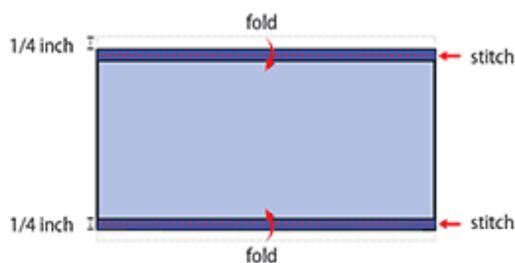
- Two 10"x6" rectangles of cotton fabric
- Two 6" pieces of elastic (or rubber bands, string, cloth strips or hair ties)
- Needle and thread (or bobby pin)
- Scissors
- Sewing machine

Tutorial

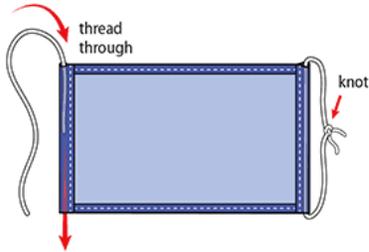
1. Cut out two 10-by-6-inch rectangles of cotton fabric. Use tightly woven cotton, such as quilting fabric or cotton sheets. T-shirt fabric will work in a pinch. Stack the two rectangles; you will sew the mask as if it was a single piece of fabric.



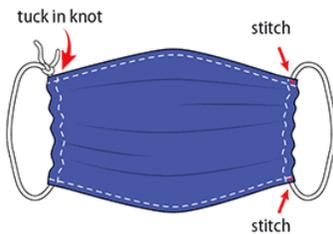
2. Fold over the long sides $\frac{1}{4}$ inch and hem. Then fold the double layer of fabric over $\frac{1}{2}$ inch along the short sides and stitch down.



3. Run a 6-inch length of **1/8-inch** wide elastic through the wider hem on each side of the mask. These will be the ear loops. Use a large needle or a bobby pin to thread it through. Tie the ends tight. Don't have elastic? Use hair ties or elastic head bands. If you only have string, you can make the ties longer and tie the mask behind your head.



4. Gently pull on the elastic so that the knots are tucked inside the hem. Gather the sides of the mask on the elastic and adjust so the mask fits your face. Then securely stitch the elastic in place to keep it from slipping.

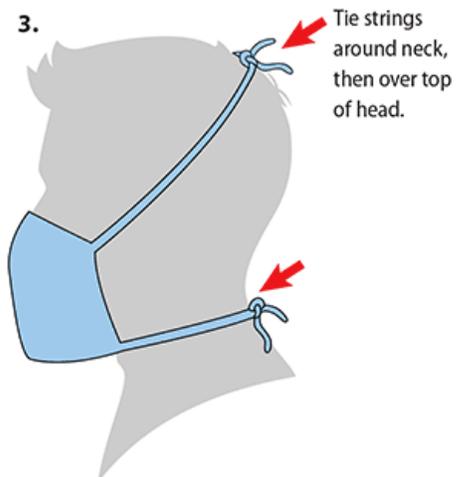
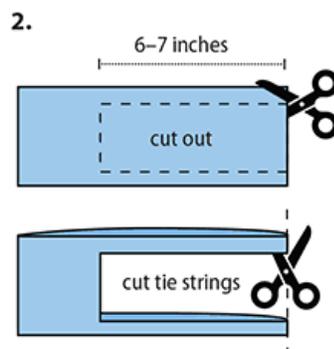
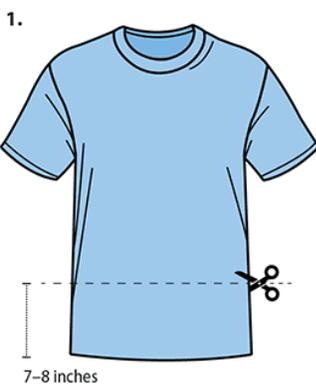


Quick Cut T-shirt Face Covering (no sew method)

Materials

- T-shirt
- Scissors

Tutorial



Bandanna Face Covering (no sew method)

Materials

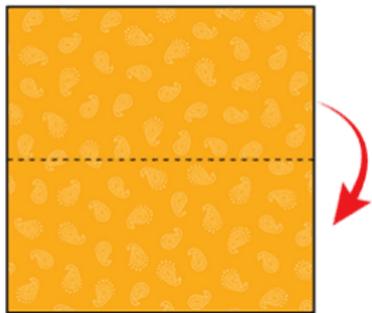
- Bandana (or square cotton cloth approximately 20"x20")
- Coffee filter
- Rubber bands (or hair ties)
- Scissors (if you are cutting your own cloth)

Tutorial

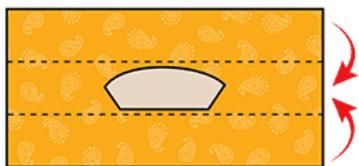
1.



2.



3.



Fold filter in center
of folded bandanna.

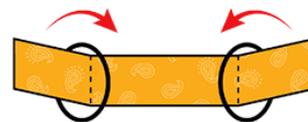
Fold top down. Fold bottom up.

4.



Place rubber bands or hair ties
about 6 inches apart.

5.



Fold side to the middle and tuck.

6.



7.



Chapter 6: Know Your Community Resources

Besides 911 what other numbers do you need to know?

Is there another person who knows the key resources and can help you complete this section? Contact them and put it on your fridge or near your phone.

*Do your elderly parents or neighbours have a safe and reliable way to contact someone in case they fall or in an emergency?

Your Home Address: _____

Your Phone Number: _____

Emergency Contact Name & Number: _____

Health Care Provider's Name & Number: _____

Hospital: _____

Poison Control: _____

Mental Health Services / Counselling: _____

Special Hotline Numbers of COVID Information: _____

OTHER INFORMATION: Power of Attorney or Health Care Directives (Where are they?)

***Advanced Directives/Healthcare Directive - have the discussion, especially with older adults, what your wishes are regarding whether you would like to be intubated, ventilated, have CPR etc. This is not always an easy discussion, but a very important one to have. If you're uncomfortable or need guidance, talk to a health care provider.**

Disinfectants that works against the Coronavirus, particularly COVID-19
See the following links for lists and updates:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19.html>

<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectats-use-against-sars-cov-2>

Reliable Sources for Information Regarding COVID-19

1. WHO (World Health Organization)

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

2. CDC (Centres for Disease Control and Prevention)

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/>

3. Government of Canada

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html>

Part 3: Dealing with Fear & Anxiety

During a pandemic, it's quite normal to feel a whole range of emotions, but by far the most common emotions are fear and anxiety. In fact, even the calmest, informed and bravest people I know are afraid right now. So, don't feel guilty, ashamed or embarrassed if you are nervous or anxious - you are not alone.

Fear and anxiety are protective mechanisms that keep us safe from a grizzly bear, a burning building or an unstable bridge. Fear is your friend, so learn to use it and think with it. Food for thought, imagine how individuals who tend to be nervous or have mental health conditions might be doing right now? Many are struggling not only with fear but with new issues such as isolation, lack of social support and routine. They certainly could use support or acts of kindness right now.

Nothing helps ease one's own anxiety when they contribute to helping another individual. If you can do the slightest small gesture for another it will make a valuable difference in their mental and emotional health as well as your own.

Chapter 7: Fear of Loss, Uncertainty... but the Upside

In a pandemic, the majority of us are having fears about losing something, whether it's our health, work, relationships, finances, our routines, watching sporting events, visiting people etc. Preventing loss is a tremendous motivator for many of the actions we take, primarily because a loss, or potential loss, can be painful.

Whenever we are experiencing potential loss or have an actual loss, we have to ask ourselves:

1. Did we truly lose something important?
2. Has it been a permanent loss or a temporary suspension of life as we know it?
3. Can we recover from it and is it worth salvaging?
4. Did we gain something else instead?

Take a moment and ask yourself, what do you fear right now? Is there something you've gained in the interim or may gain if you let yourself look hard enough? Write it down. There is tremendous awareness and control you gain when you write down your thoughts. Individuals that write their thoughts experience incredible insights with this process. If you've never tried it, it's worth the short time you invest.

During this pandemic, people have said that they now have time to work on their health, spend more time with their children, and improve their relationship with their partner. People are always looking for a pause button in life, and now we have it. What are you going to do about it? What action will you take daily to help reframe your fear? Is there someone who can help you in the process? Is there a new skill you can develop? Is there a new job you can train for when this is over? Can you improve your home? Is there a better way to save money?

I've seen, as a physician and having had my parents pass away, that when people are in the end stages of their life, they don't say "I wish I worked more and made more money." They say "I wish I had made time for my health and the people that mattered to me. I wish I had learned or pursued a skill or dream that meant something to me."

Right now is a valuable time to take a look at how you are managing your food, sleep routines, and proper relaxation routines that strengthen you. More of that information is covered in the later section of this guide. What are you doing that builds you, your family and community up?

One of the other fears that people have right now is getting sick from the coronavirus. So, look at how you can improve your physical health. Have you been taking time to do the things that you know could improve your physical and mental health? If you have, that's great, then the next question is, can you elevate that to another level?

Now is a time to focus on your family and take an inventory of how you will be able to improve yourself, connect with others and create greater strength. What moment to moment actions will you take daily that can ease your anxiety and the anxiety of others? Are you going to give your kids electronic devices and personally get absorbed in that too, or are you going to play and be engaged, daily, to do things like reading, drawing, playing an instrument, playing games, reading a book? How will you elevate your situation?

Taking Perspective:

Keep perspective of what's happening. Could life be worse?
One meme that has been circulating on social media is:

*Many of our grandparents were off to war;
We just have to stay inside and wash our hands.
You can do this!*

Let's take perspective; we've all, more than likely, lost something in the past. Haven't you lost money, a relationship, a friend, a job opportunity, but you survived it and maybe were better off for it? Have you ever looked back and said "that was the best thing that's ever happened to me."?

Sometimes a relationship that went sour may have taught you something. Or a job loss that made you reevaluate what you needed to learn to become employable. Or a health set back that made you appreciate life more. Ask questions that challenge your perspective and old ways of thinking. Maybe they don't serve you anymore. Asking questions can help you find new solutions.

What do we Need versus what we Want?

More than ever, this additional time allows us to relook at things and reframe our thinking. How will you step up for your family, your community, yourself? Most people have seen who the real heroes are in our society now. People have also discovered how they individually are contributing, especially if it means doing difficult things such as staying at home, self-isolating and giving up old routines. How are you stepping up in your way and what will you gain if you do? What will you lose if you don't?

In summary, take this time to look at the opportunities in your life and ask yourself, if you did lose something, is it truly a loss? If you would lose it, do you think that you are alone and no one will help you? Can you accept it? I believe most people can accept things if they let themselves believe that they can. People are resourceful and resilient. There are systems in place where people will help if we choose to look for them and ask for help.

What can you do moment to moment to plan for it versus worry about it?
It's a matter of making a choice.

Chapter 8: Tools to Decrease Fear, Anxiety & Grief

One core human need is to have a level of reliable certainty and safety. In a pandemic, that need is disrupted, and we can feel a degree of uncertainty that we did not welcome or anticipate. One way to understand how you are feeling is to analyze how you are expressing your emotions. David Kessler, who has co-written with Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, *On Grief and Grieving: Finding the Meaning of Grief through the Five Stages of Loss* and the author of *Finding Meaning: The Sixth Stage of Grief*, gives useful advice that we can apply in a pandemic situation. For example, if we look at the six stages, you may be saying or thinking things like the following:

The stages are:

1. Denial: "This situation is not affecting me."
2. Anger: "I don't want this new way of life or restriction!"
3. Bargaining: "If I self-isolate, give up my temporary comforts, then we can return to normal soon."
4. Sadness: "I can't see the end of this situation, and so many horrible things are happening and it's getting worse."
5. Acceptance: "Ok, we don't know what the future holds, what can I do to sort this out."
6. Meaning: Is there something we gain in this process? Time for health, family, eating better, exercising, learning something new?

Stages 5 and 6 allow us to take action and move us out of feeling victimized. You are now looking at what you can control vs. what you can't control, but the choice lies ultimately with you.

Note that the stages are not linear but fluid, and that people move back and forth between different stages. For instance, my colleagues and I are sometimes saying, "it's unbelievable that we are actually experiencing a pandemic, is this really happening?" Then we move to another stage and vocalize "ok, what can we do to prepare for the pandemic so we can keep everyone well?" and then we might move back to a different stage. The key is to figure ways to move into acceptance and meaning that gives you a sense of purpose and direction on a consistent and daily basis. When you add meaning, you can significantly change an unwelcome situation to something that will benefit you.

Please be mindful that anxious emotions are not to be ignored but rather understood. An essential tool is to learn to focus on the present. Self-awareness exercises are useful for this. Breathing, walking, journaling, talking with a calm friend are some examples, and it's covered in the later section of the guidebook.

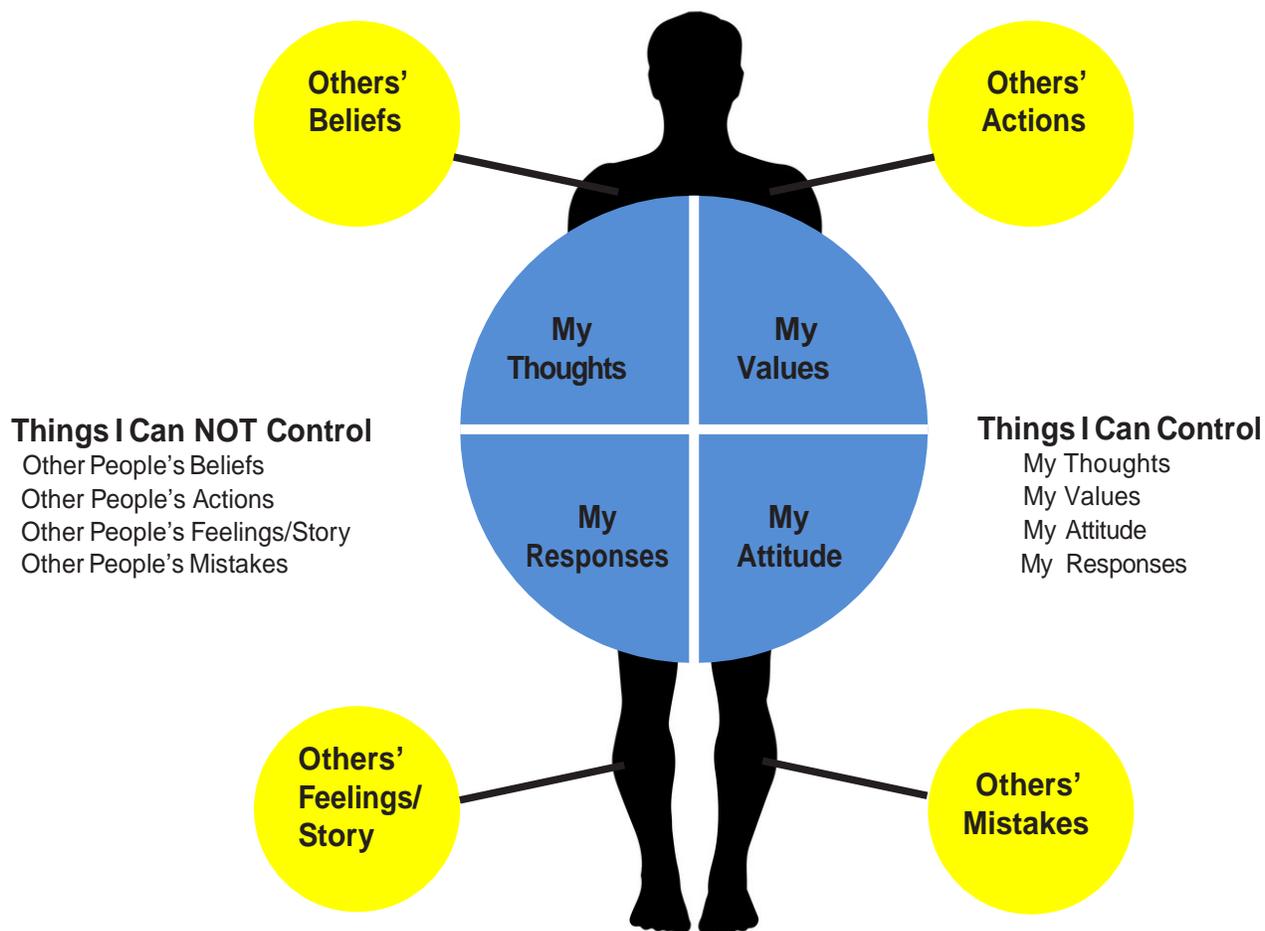
When you focus on what you have, you create motion. That, in turn, realigns your emotions (focus creates motion and realigns your emotions).

It's also important to reflect on things you can control and to look at past examples in your life when you've been successful. Often, you've focused on what you could control vs. what you couldn't. Think about how you dealt with times when you waited for the result of a test, or had a job loss, or a relationship that was going sour, or a job prospect that hadn't come through yet. When you were at ease, you were more than likely changing your focus and taking positive actions.

The 3 Questions we ask daily (in or out of a pandemic situation).
*What am I going to **Focus** on?*
*What **Meaning** am I going to give it?*
*What am I going to **Do** about it?*

Learning to Conserve Your Energy

You can't always change the teenagers that are not socially isolating, you can't control the opinions of others on what is happening, but you can control the energy you give to it. An important question you should ask yourself is "how much energy are you going to put into any particular conversation, the amount of social media consumption or news?" We all start the day with a certain amount of energy "packets". Do not deplete your energy supply on things you have no control over. Work to conserve and recreate new energy.



Part 4:

How to Strengthen Your Immune System

There are countless ways you can strengthen your immune system. Your immune system fights microorganisms, such as viruses, consistently. If you have a robust immune system, you will do well. If you don't, you won't do as well. Some things may not be in your control, such as your genetic makeup or certain medications that you need, but there are many non-pharmaceutical ways to build up your immunity. That is the objective of this section.

In this section, I am going to target three specific areas or "bodies" that everyone possesses to improve their immune system.:

1. The mental & emotional body.
2. The physical body.
3. The spiritual body.

I'd like to challenge you to visit these areas in your life. By working on and exercising all three areas, you will amplify your health and vitality. All three bodies work together, so even if you only focus on one, it will impact the other two. However, by working on all three bodies, also called *cross-training*, your immune system will be exponentially greater.

The last chapter in this section will give you the nutritional components that you'll need to build your immunity up. Your body is an engine that requires the right material to make it run well. If you put garbage food in, that weakens your immune system and increases your risk of becoming sick; however, if you feed it the correct nutrients, it will build your immunity up and decrease your chances of becoming ill. Avoid fad diets and procedures that are not tested and proven. Stay with proven nutritious foods.

Chapter 9: The Mental & Emotional Body

During a pandemic, our emotions are challenged in a unique way and at times we have moments where we feel powerless. Often that can be a result of past patterns and experiences, so I'd like to ask you some self-reflecting questions. When we ask questions, we find answers that can empower us.

When you failed in the past, why did you fail? You may have come up with many excuses about why you failed, but it most likely wasn't because you weren't physically capable. You may have given reasons such as not having enough money, time, technology or the right people to work with. What do these all have in common? They are all resources. The most common illusion people have about their failure isn't a lack of resources but the lack of personal resourcefulness that they are accessing for their success.

Suppose I were to give you the best workout and nutrition program backed by the latest scientific breakthroughs, and I said, "go use these workout and nutrition programs towards your goals." Would you do it? Perhaps you would follow through for a while, but like previous times, you more than likely would fall back to old thought patterns, behaviours and quit. Does this sound familiar? We've all been there. I have too. Why is this? It isn't a lack of resources that failed you. It was your lack of activating your psychological resourcefulness - the ability to be energetic and creative in times of struggle and pain. That's why I'm addressing the mental and emotional body first. Once you enhance this skill, you can channel that ability through your physical body and change your outcomes. Everything begins with a vision, and everything continues because of a vision. When we are better mentally focused, we can see how we may be responding during times of stress such as self-isolation and disruption of our normal routines.

Where Your Focus Goes, Your Biochemistry Flows

If you and I were to go bungee jumping off a bridge, how would that make you feel? Fearful or excited? How you view this activity will determine your emotional and mental state, and that, in turn, will determine what chemicals are released in the body. If you are fearful, then cortisol and adrenaline will be released in your body, depleting your immune system. If you are feeling excitement and joy, then serotonin and dopamine are released into the body, strengthening your immune system. These chemicals directly impact your physical health. But it's all in how you interpret the event or situation.

This is a large portion of what has already covered in Part 3, particularly on how we are the moulders of meaning in our life. To say it boldly, you and I are the authors and directors of our life and the meanings we give it.

Positive emotions such as love and gratitude help change our mental state for the better. Being loved and being grateful for what you have boosts your immune system. It's been proven that grateful people feel healthy and resilient. It's hard to feel upset and run down when you are authentically appreciative. That's why putting your attention and focus on what is abundant in your life and emotionalizing the experience has positive physiological consequences. For example, if you feel sad, you emotionalize the experience and find yourself weaker and tired. When you are happy and excited, you are energetic and feel strong.

What do I mean by emotionalizing the experience? It means to feel a particular emotion in your body as you are saying it. For example, if you speak aloud and visualize your gratitude for someone or something, you will feel a heightening of the emotion of gratefulness in your physical body. That is, you'll feel a physiological heightening of truly feeling grateful instead of simply going through the motions of "trying to be grateful".

I call this 'the Gratitude Explosion' because you are exploding with gratitude while physically experiencing the divinity and abundance of your life. Here are the keys to this process:

1. Frequency is essential, not time: It doesn't matter how long you do this for but do it daily. Set aside a specific time during the day for some "*me-time*." Begin with a few minutes and ask what you are grateful for. If you write it down, it further enhances the effects you'll feel.
2. Emotionalize it: Just saying that you are grateful without sincere emotion is almost a waste of time. It's like saying "I love you" without any emotional expression; tone matters. The manner through which you say it and the presence you give to your gratitude alters your physical state.
3. Go Deep and Detailed: Make sure to not only go through the surface details of what you're grateful for but why you're thankful for those things. Be as specific as possible. It gives you more focus and awareness as to why you are truly grateful. It's helpful to close your eyes to help visualize the person or thing you are grateful for.
4. Share Your Experience with Others: Sharing your experience with the ones you care about will help them feel what you feel. Telling them how grateful you are for them amplifies the effect. You can reminisce about the good times and create new memories you have been thankful for too. If verbalizing it to others is difficult for you, write it down, or do something for them. Let them know why you are doing this.

A final recommendation is taking a physical inventory of the blessings in your life. There is a gratitude journal in part six to help you get started. Just begin the process, and you will feel the experience of greater joy, energy and vitality. Successful/happy people are consistently aware of the things they are grateful for. Focusing on the things we are grateful for will help reframe your experiences during a pandemic.

Being isolated at home can challenge our way of thinking, especially for those of us who are addicted to our routine lives. Our wellness thrives on positive newness that is challenging, and contributory. In other words, the reward centers of your brain are most active when three things happen:

1. Something new and exciting gets introduced
2. Something is challenging and worth your attention
3. When you're making a contribution

Think about ways in which you can activate the above three areas in your mind. Reflect on the following questions:

- What is something new and exciting that you've been putting off for a while that you can do now?
- What is something challenging and worth your attention that will expand your mind, body and spirit?
- What are some creative ways you can contribute more to your family, friends, community or on social media?
- Make a list of 10 things you can do while you are at-home that adheres to at least one of the above criteria.

*Choose only one of those items and write down two action steps you can take today so that you are moving in the direction of that goal or objective.

For example, if your goal is to learn a new language and a new musical instrument, perhaps the two actions steps are:

Step 1: Go on YouTube and search up one video that teaches how to speak, or learn that language.

Step 2: Spend 5 minutes learning five new words or one chord on that musical instrument.

By taking these two steps, you will be amazed at how alive you will feel. The first time I deployed this strategy, I remember thinking, "Why did I wait so long to do this?" Schedule your *me-time* daily and follow through. Like the gratitude exercise, frequency is the key rather than the length of time. Don't forget to schedule it.

A final suggestion to help you to follow through is to deploy the buddy system. Do this with one of your family members while you're at home or with friends online. Practice with them on a conference call. This will make it easier to be accountable, and it will enhance the experience. Also pick an individual who won't let you off the hook. Another great avenue is to ask your children to be involved in a project together, whereby you are allowing them to take the lead and helping you. You certainly do not want to break a commitment to them.

This is a basic introduction to how you can immediately exercise your mind and emotional body. Cultivating courage and love are the two most valuable assets and emotions you possess. Using them consistently is elemental in boosting your immune system. As I like to say to people, the best offence is a good defence and the best defence is a good offence. Go on the offensive during your time of solitude. Waiting and indulging in fear and worry might seem like the best defence, but it can increase the chances of disease overtaking and overwhelming your life. It's within you to take the next small step.

Chapter 10: The Physical Body

The benefit during a pandemic is that we have more time to focus on our physical health. Physical health drives our mental health and both are intimately connected. Breathing, Exercise and Nutrition are the three components that will amplify your physical health. Although there are plenty of strategies in each area, I want to share with you simple and high-yield ones, so you experience immediate results. Consider these as the easy wins - the best return on your efforts. In this chapter, I'll cover power breathing, exercise, weight training, power walking and flexibility. I'll cover nutrition in more detail in Chapter 12.

Breathing (specifically Power Breathing) *

The importance of oxygen is often overlooked and misunderstood. Without oxygen, an individual can survive for only four minutes. Many people don't know how to improve their breathing so that they can oxygenate their bodies to their full, healthy potential. Breathwork is a part of meditation and mindfulness practices, which helps with awareness and creates focus. Power breathing is a physiological enhancement technique that can activate the fullness of your respiratory system, nervous system and lymphatic system.

Taking deep breaths through the diaphragm or power breathing techniques* is your ally in massively improving your physical body.

One of the techniques I use is called the 1:4:2 ratio of breathing. It is simple yet profoundly effective in cleansing the entire lymphatic system. It is a ratio of breathing that involves inhaling through the nose for a particular count, then holding the breath for four times as long as the initial inhale, followed by an exhale through the mouth that is 2 times as long as the inhale.

***If you have a heart condition, respiratory condition or any medical condition that you are not sure if this exercise is right for you, consult your medical provider. You should at no time feel short of breath or chest pain when doing this activity, otherwise simply easy breathing is also helpful.**

For example, if you inhale for a count of 5, hold for a count of 20, then exhale for a count of 10. The ratio is always 1:4:2.

The key to this exercise is to breathe in fully into the diaphragm, filling it up without feeling uncomfortable. Hold the breath four times as long so that the lymphatic system is fully engaged, and exhale two times as long as the initial inhalation so that you exhale any impurities that your body may be holding onto. Repeat these 5 -10 times doing it first thing in the morning and throughout your day. It will energize you.

EXERCISE (Energy in Motion)

The word exercise can have a negative association attached to it; let's call it energy in motion because that's what exercise is - energy in motion.

Other than promoting oxygen uptake, increasing fat metabolism and boosting your immune system, charging up your physical body through energy-in-motion (exercise) allows you to interpret information through your mind more effectively. The physical body is the gateway through which you process information. In other words, the more unfit and unhealthy your body is, the less creative and emotionally charged you would be. Many people don't succeed or follow through in their life goals simply because they don't have a healthy vessel to express their ideas, imagination and creativity through. Exhaustion, tiredness, depression and lack of drive are responsible for many people's failures. When you feel good, more positive actions follow; when you feel bad, more than likely negative actions (or inaction) will follow. Remember this: there is no mind and body connection. The mind and body are inseparably one.

Exercise = Energy-In-Motion! = Emotion

There are three particular energy-in-motion techniques that I promote during times of solitude:

- i) Weight Training
- ii) Power Walking
- iii) Flexibility

I will give simple strategies to get you started on your way and provide YouTube videos to demonstrate them. They will be under each section.

i) Weight Training

Weight training has been proven to slow down the aging process. It's never too late to start. People in their sixties and seventies who have never weight trained can significantly benefit from it if they do it correctly and safely according to their fitness level.

Weight training improves bone health, basal metabolic rate, burning fat content, lowers blood pressure, and several other biological markers. Here's the good news - if you don't have a complete home gym, all you need is your own body, some dumbbells or soup cans or water bottles, and your willingness to follow through.

Below is a YouTube link to 10 Basic Energy-In-Motion Techniques (exercises) that you can perform that will engage every muscle group in the body. This will ensure you start your journey to youthful vibrance effectively at-home. Always remember to start slow, and if you have any medical conditions that might hinder you, ask your doctor. Ideally, if you've never tried this, it's helpful to have some hands-on instruction. Be careful not to injure yourself. I've included basic exercises on YouTube as it's easier to explain them there; please see the link below. If you already have some experience, then you know what to do, but if you don't have a home gym, you might want to check out these videos. Remember, weight training equals vitality and creates a youthful vibrance.

[Click Link Below for Weight Training Routine](#)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RMZqL_VBYho&feature=emb_logo

ii) Power Walking*

There is a cardiovascular technique called H.I.I.T (High-Intensity Interval Training), which is the most effective, but difficult, way to burn fat calories in the shortest amount of time. However, for the everyday beginner, and while you're at home, power walking is a great alternative. The primary difference between normal walking and power walking is simply in your intention and attention. Your intention for power walking is to walk as if you are in total command and authority of your body. You should accentuate your posture and breathing while you engage in the walk (more compared to your usual walk). You are paying attention to the power of each step and increasing the speed of your walk and fully using your arms while walking. Your head is high, and your focus is on gratitude and abundance. This power walk technique is akin to marching in the military but with greater intention and attention towards health, vitality and gratitude.

I do power walking every day, mimicking the details of a power walker and putting my full attention and intention in everything I am grateful for.

After a 5-10 minute power walk, you will feel a sense of life and vitality that will energize you. Do this daily, and you'll be well on your way to improving your health.

***If you have a heart condition, respiratory condition or any medical condition and you are not sure if an exercise is right for you, consult your medical provider. You should at no time feel short of breath or chest pain when doing any activity.**

iii) Flexibility

During a pandemic we are being asked to be flexible in so many ways. Our body can get tied into unhealthy routines and can become more inflexible as we stay indoors. The more flexible your body is, the more manageable your mind is. What in nature can survive and thrive in a torrential storm? The answer is a palm tree. It is flexible when the winds come, yet deeply rooted in the earth. So, if we extend that metaphor into our own lives, we can weather the storms that come our way.

If you've ever done yoga or any stretching routine, you'll know how it directly calms your mind and centers your focus. The very first time I did yoga, I couldn't believe the transformative effects it had on my mind when I returned home. I was more present, calmer and connected with people and more patient too.

I am not a yoga instructor, but I am well versed in the mechanics of the body and how it is directly connected to the mind and our emotions. What you do with the body will affect the mind; what you do with the mind will affect the body.

Below is a link to a 10-minute instructional and intentional stretching routine I use after I complete my workouts. Do what is comfortable for you. Again, ask your healthcare provider if it is appropriate for you. Don't injure yourself. If in doubt, be gentle.

Give yourself this gift of relaxation and centeredness. Remember, a flexible body is a flexible mind.

Click Link Below for Flexibility Routine

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=m2YiwWtol8I&feature=emb_logo

Chapter 11: The Spiritual Body

During times of crisis, many of us reflect on the greater meanings in our lives and we may turn to spiritual ideas and beliefs. I'd like to talk about the spiritual body here in this section.

The simple definition I have for our spiritual body is the unseen, unknown energy that enlivens and animates our physical bodies. It is the enigmatic source of all the elements that make up our thoughts, feelings, imaginations and spontaneity. It holds our deepest values, our questions and even our pursuits for ultimate meaning. The spiritual body is that immaterial part of us that connects us to the divine. Call it love, the universe, God, oneness, or however you would like to express it. We are all connected to this force that makes everything work. For instance, we may have scientific knowledge of the human heart and how it works, but *what* makes it work? The more we can tune into this divine energy, the more aware and more profound our lives will be, and this will make it easier to find meaning in challenging times.

In my understanding, meditation, mindfulness and prayer are three of the most powerful ways to enhance and exercise your spiritual body. For the sake of simplicity, I will be discussing mindfulness and meditation. More than ever, high performers in every field have a mindfulness and meditation practice because it creates a greater sense of peace and calm with what they do and how they interact in the world.

It's a little counterintuitive to say, "exercise" the spiritual body because, in reality, you're not doing any exercising at all. Rather, you relax, and offer the least resistance possible, surrendering so that love can do its exercise on you. The essence of meditation and mindfulness is surrender and total acceptance of what is, as it is. Releasing stress is only the beginning benefit of meditation and centering methods. There are more gems of wisdom to be uncovered through these ancient practices. Meditation is not something you "work at" and "perfect"; it's a practice of stillness.

What Is Meditation and Mindfulness?

Mediation/mindfulness is the practice of being aware of the present moment and anything that inhabits this moment. Here's a quick and easy mindfulness/meditation practice.

Think about your physical body for a moment. Just be mindful of it. Describe the texture of your skin. How much do you weigh? What is the colour of your skin, eyes, hair etc.? As you describe yourself, notice how there is another internal, intangible presence- your spiritual subjective body-that is aware of feeling and interpreting your physical, objective body (doing the seeing). One is the invisible subject, and the other is the solid object. Meditation allows you to identify and detach yourself from all objects, including the thoughts that you have in your imagination until you reach a point where there is nothing but the stillness of your intangible spiritual body. In other words, the part of yourself that is doing the seeing and observing cannot be made an object, just like an eye cannot see itself or a tongue can taste itself.

I remember the first time I engaged in this mindfulness meditation practice, it floored me. I was utterly shocked at how liberated and free I became. All it took was being mindful of the moment and putting my attention on my body and breath. The more I practiced, the deeper I practiced, the more calm and serene I became.

The significant aspect of mindfulness practice and meditation, despite what you may have heard, doesn't require you to wear fancy robes or sit in a lotus position on a mountain top. All it requires is attention and concentration. In fact, anything you do can be made into a mindful meditative practice. Think about when you are gardening, building something with wood, dancing or doing something that requires high concentration and focus. What happens when you do this? You are fully immersed in the moment, and eventually, the subject (you), and the object of your attention (the activity), dissolves. You and *it* become one.

This is what psychologists term as a flow state, where athletes or performers feel connected in the moment. Some describe it as a runner's high, others a sense of "oneness," dancers describe it as the dance and dancer being united. Everyone has experienced this at some level. The more you are aware of this, the longer and deeper the state of bliss, calmness and serenity persists.

I sometimes practise mindfulness when I am at a stoplight. I simply put my attention on the moment. Take a deep breath in, smile and exhale. Just a few moments spent per day in these mindful moments can take you from a state of *pissed* to *blissed*.

To demonstrate a simple meditation, I have recorded a YouTube video for you to watch. I will take you through a guided meditation so that you may experience these sensations quickly. Frequency is important, not time. Even 3-5 minutes per day have huge benefits. Then, you can take it up to 6-8 minutes and so on. If you find that's difficult, take it back to 3-5 minutes. The more you do this, the more you will experience the integral, immune-boosting effects of meditation. Click on the link below.

[Click Link Below for Mindfulness & Meditation 101](#)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=EE8GnSDcYKY&feature=emb_logo

If you could *be* more loving, compassionate, and present, shouldn't you?

Of course, the answer is yes; how would that impact your health, well-being, and relationships? One thing I value most in life is giving love and being a more significant source of that love. My number one intention and objective each day is to tune into that limitless love, expanding and filling myself with that love, and sharing it massively. The more I fill my spiritual body up, the more I can give it away. This is what it means to me to have a spiritual body.

Knowing that you can become a greater instrument of love, compassion and kindness, is something that is not always easy to grasp and may make you uncomfortable. But I challenge you to make it a priority and to think about how exuding more love and care would improve each action you take.

Conclusion:

By exercising all three bodies on a consistent basis, you will be well on your way to boosting your immune system and upgrading your life no matter the circumstance.

Chapter 12: Nutrition-Foods & the 3 S's

Nutrition is the third component of the physical body. It's a separate chapter because it's a large area and something that we all must do daily to keep ourselves alive. I will give a few of my strategies when it comes to boosting your immune system through optimal nutrition.

Water is essential for so many processes that help nourish the body. Water is also one of the secret nutrients that is also responsible for fat metabolism. If you don't have enough water in your system, your fat metabolism slows down.

A good rule of thumb to use when drinking water is taking your body weight (in pounds), dividing it by 2, and drinking that amount in ounces. So, if you are 200 lbs. that would equal 100oz a day (approximately 3 L). *

***BUT PLEASE have final approval from your doctor as this may NOT apply to you given your health history, for example, if you have a heart condition.**

This is a good place to start. Here are a few other points regarding water consumption:

1. If possible, drink filtered water: If you don't have a filter, then *you* are the filter. This isn't critical. Most cities have safety standards for drinking water, check with your municipality regarding the quality of your water.
2. Drink water upon waking up: When I wake, I do some breathing exercises followed by drinking 750ml of water. The breathing coupled with the water, will instantly increase your energy, jumpstart your immune system, metabolism, and activate your brain.
3. Coffee, tea, soft drinks, alcohol *do not* count as water: Most coffee and teas are diuretics and rid your body of water. If you do drink coffee and tea, that's fine, they just aren't a good substitute for water consumption. You should drink an additional glass of water if you drink anything of the above-mentioned drinks.
4. Sugary juices are also not a good source of water.
5. You can add a bit of lemon to add a little spark to the water.

The 3 S's of Super Vitality! - Smoothies, Salads and Squeezed.

i) Smoothies:

This is a staple in my nutritional regimen. I drink up to three smoothies per day, depending upon how busy I am. Note, I believe in eating fruits and vegetables, but smoothies are excellent too. If you are diabetic, you have to be careful not to overconsume sugars. Consult your dietician or healthcare provider.

My very first meal is a smoothie. There are many smoothie recipes online, I've included a couple of mine down below. Make sure to choose as many colours of the rainbow (a variety of brightly coloured fruit and vegetables) when concocting your super-smoothie. The more colours, the better. Each color variance has specific nutritional qualities. If you are new to the world of smoothies, try one and see how you like it and how it fits into your lifestyle.

Here are some of the ingredients I personally use in my smoothies:

- Frozen or fresh berries
- Spinach
- Kale
- Hemp and Chia seeds
- Protein powder
- Turmeric
- Banana
- Goji Berries
- Cacao Nibs

Here are two sample recipes I personally use daily:

Smoothie #1

- 1 cup of frozen blueberries
- 2 cups of spinach
- 1 banana
- 2 Tbsp of hemp or chia seeds
- 1 Tbsp of cacao nibs
- 1 Tbsp of goji berries
- 1 cup of unsweetened almond milk
- Vegan protein powder (or any protein powder of your choice)

*Add ingredients to a blender

**Add water to lessen the thickness of the smoothie as needed

***Blend and enjoy

Smoothie #2

- 1 cup of frozen raspberries
- 1/2 cup of vegan yogurt (any unsweetened yogurt will do)
- ¼ avocado
- 1 banana
- 2 cups of kale
- 2 tbsps of hemp or chia seeds
- Vegan protein powder (or any protein powder of your choice)
- 2 cups of water

*Add ingredients to a blender

**Blend and enjoy

Get creative in making up your smoothies. They taste great. They are easy and fast to make. Aim to replace one of your meals with a healthy smoothie. Your body will thank you for it.

ii) Squeezed:

Buy a juicer. Other than smoothies, I use my juicer for vegetables like carrots, kale, spinach, celery, cucumber and fruits like lemon, apples, oranges etc. I have one freshly squeezed juice every day. Juicers are easy to use, and the ingredients are readily available at grocery stores. I suggest consuming one freshly squeezed juice per day.

iii) Salads:

Like smoothies, you can make your own creative salads using all the colours of the rainbow. Add healthy raw nuts like almonds, cashews, walnuts etc. for extra healthy fats and fibres; be mindful of not overindulging with this as they do add additional calories and it is easy to gain weight. I highly recommend eating one supercharged salad per day.

If it's a stretch for you to practice all 3 S's, then begin with one S. I suggest smoothies as a great place to start. If you don't have a blender or juicer, then at the very least, consume a supercharged salad once per day. Do all three, and your body's immune system will be stronger in no time.

Part 5: How to Avoid Conflict in the Home

Chapter 13: How Not to Drive Each Other Crazy

Because you will be spending more time at home with your family, it is critical to set up a strategic plan, so you don't disown each other after the pandemic is over. Even the healthiest families get challenged when routines are disrupted. Rooms start to feel smaller and little actions become irritating, especially as restrictions increase, and the duration continues. Ultimately the problems and solutions come down how we can navigate relationships.

Relationships are complicated because individuals are complicated. We have different life stories, and that influences our interactions with others. I'd like to give you 4 'easy-to-follow' steps to create an environment of care, compassion, playfulness and excitement to help you before, during and after a pandemic.

1. Know Thyself: Self-Compassion vs. Self-Esteem

One of the first laws of leadership is leading yourself. To lead yourself, you need to know yourself. Knowing yourself is a lifetime practice of self-examination and reflection. Self-compassion is vital versus self-esteem.

Most of us grew up being told that having positive self-esteem is critical to our well-being. Self-compassion is rarely mentioned as a trait of greater importance. Self-compassion has been typically hard to qualify or quantify. Self-esteem, on the other hand, is often dependent on how things are going. When things are going well, your self-esteem is high. When things are not, your self-esteem is low. Sometimes we forget about self-compassion as an essential force we are responsible for and in charge of.

If you yearn to be more loving and compassionate at home with others, you must first practise self-compassion on yourself. One cannot give what one does not have. It isn't possible to give someone ten dollars if you only have one dollar in your pocket. This is one of the harder things for us to do because we can be our own worst critic. But, consider another point of view - although we can be our own worst critic, we can also *choose* to be our best cheerleader and courage builder. We don't have to give in to our inner cynic and critic. We can choose a different mindset and move up. This is self-compassion and self-courage.

Self-compassion is treating ourselves gently and lovingly when we make mistakes or fail while acknowledging our humanness, without judgment or condemnation. Self-compassion takes courage as it requires a certain level of vulnerability.

Practice self-compassion by considering the following:

1. Notice the inner judgements and criticisms about yourself throughout your day.
2. Notice your reactions to those judgements and criticisms.
3. Engage in conversation with that part of you that did the judging and criticizing. Intimately get to know this part of yourself. Ask him/her questions. Allow them to speak to you and ask you questions.
4. Engage in conversation with the part of you that reacted to those judgments and criticisms. Intimately get to know this part of yourself. Ask him/her questions. Allow them to speak to you and ask you questions.
5. Now, imagine if you were a 5-year-old child who was told they were never good enough and worthless, where does your mind and heart go now?
6. Make a conscious choice to shift from judgement to love and understanding. Speak gently to these two parts of your being. Allow whatever emotions to surface. Display compassion towards them as you do this.

This practice expands the compassion centers of your heart and brain. The more you practice this on yourself, the more you will be able to practice it on others. From here, you can move within your relationships with enhanced awareness and possess the ability to be courteous and communicate from a deeper level. Again, this takes courage.

2.Communication

What is the key to communication? Speaking or listening? Any successful salesperson will tell you that the key to making a sale is listening to the needs and wants of their customers and then working to meet those needs and wants.

Listen and silent have the same letters in it.

Once you can listen to the needs and wants of those you care about, they will be more open to listening to your needs and wants. To arrive at this, we must first practice step one, self-compassion. Self-compassion is also a practice in listening to the deeper needs and wants within ourselves. That is a big part of the first step. We can then communicate our needs and wants with increased gentleness and not make ourselves or others wrong when engaging in dialogue. Forgiveness is also an essential part of the journey.

Allow yourself time to listen to the whispers of your heart and soul, so you can be more attuned to the whispers that come from others. When you study the subtle patterns around the mountains and valleys of your own life, you will undoubtedly be more compassionate with other people's shortcomings because you have confronted those aspects inside yourself; empathy starts to enter the picture.

There is a principle of love that states, every behaviour is motivated by love or a need for it. If you study the meaning of this, you will notice that no matter how bad a person behaves, beneath it all, they are being motivated by love or a need for it.

Keys to Communication:

1. Be present - You can be present in the body, but not in mind. Practice mindfulness daily so you can be mindful of the people you are in contact with.
2. Listen with the intent to understand, not with the intent to respond. Most people listen with the intent to respond rather than the intent to understand. This takes practice. The next time someone is communicating with you, do your very best to understand their point of view. In other words, walk a mile in their shoes. Ask yourself, "am I listening to respond or to understand?" Becoming an empathetic listener is a skill that can easily be cultivated with practice.
3. Reinforcement - Reinforce your loved ones' great qualities and show your commitment to the relationship.
4. Commit to being a source of having 5X (five times) more positive communication than negative communication. Whatever conflicts arise, immediately identify it, rather than wait for it to blow up. Ask yourself, "are you able to improve the conversation (elevating it) or are you taking away from it?" Pluck the weeds out early, so the weeds don't take over your garden. Once you identify it, make a commitment to communicating 5x more positive messages than negative ones.

3. Understanding and Appreciation

Those who feel loved, feel understood. Those who feel understood, feel loved.

- Alfred Adler

Understanding and appreciating another person's world and rulebook about life is a critical step in lighting up the love in your home. One of my favourite questions I ask myself, (I encourage you to ask it as well) when I'm in a difficult interaction, "What could be going on in this person's life for them to behave this way?" This takes the focus off you and onto curiosity, courtesy and compassion.

Here are some ideas to ponder:

- People don't do things to you, but rather for themselves, based on the current emotional state they are in.
- More suffering comes from people taking offence than people giving offence.
- Is this person being motivated by love or a need for it?
- Rather than ask, "Why are you in such a bad mood?" ask, "I see you may be having a challenge there, what can I do to nurture and show you love or support?"
- Can I respond differently than I have in the past to see if a different outcome might occur?

If you were to study and embody the above ideas and insights, I promise a monumental shift in your joy and fulfillment. Your ability to influence and lead others with love and understanding will be limitless.

Remember, everyone walking this earth is experiencing a problem or challenge that you or I know nothing about. You can't be responsible for their response, but you can be responsible for yours. Error on the side of kindness.

Appreciation and praise are what we all yearn for at varying levels and in various ways. You may be familiar with the 5 Love Languages *- Words of Affirmation, Gift-Giving, Physical Touch, Acts of Service, Quality Time. We all desire appreciation and praise in different ways. Appreciate and praise all of your loved one's qualities and characteristics. Sidestep your need to be right and superior and dive into appreciation and praise of one another. Accept that people make errors.

*The podcast on The Five Love Languages and that also will be helpful in learning about different communication styles. You can click on the Introverted Doctor link below and listen to episode 12 or read his article on the same website domain.

Click Link: <https://www.theintroverteddoctor.com/>

4. Playfulness

What's life like without playfulness and fun?

The biggest lesson I have learned when confronting challenging times is learning to be creative, resourceful, and most of all, child-like.

I have learned this lesson when interacting with my children. They exude and are enraptured in love and playfulness. They can go from angry and sporadic to playful and laughing hysterically in a matter of moments. It's difficult for children to be in a bad mood for long time. One moment my kids are sworn enemies, and the next, best of friends.

Adults tend to fester and hold onto resentments for far too long. Many people even take it with them to their graves. Engage in playful activities on a consistent basis. Become childlike. Play and laugh

Chapter 14: How Not to Drive Yourself Crazy

After talking with many people, it appears the one struggle we all have in common is that we are going a little stir crazy at home. Okay, more than a little stir crazy. Even if you are still working, it's not the same. Some of us are trying to homeschool, stay healthy, work from home, stay positive, follow the information on the pandemic and try not to gain weight. Every day seems the same, but in a way we've never experienced before. The lack of variety in our routine is stifling. We can't socialize with friends, we can't play sports, we can't connect in the way we are used to. Many people want to know what they can do to feel better in this situation.

Many of the things in this guidebook should help, but, in addition, there are some golden rules and 'must do's' to stay on track. I'll share with you some traps that may be creeping up and affecting your wellness. They are in no particular order.

Break in Routine: Well, who hasn't had their routine disrupted in a major way? I personally have been staying up later and reading, writing and, yes, watching a movie or two when I know I should be sleeping. The one thing that kept most of us sane is that we had a structured routine, to go to work, take our kids to school, exercise or socialize for example. But now our cues to stay on track are gone. Here are some helpful suggestions to overcome this issue:

1. Create a schedule that you must follow. If you don't schedule your life, you won't do it. Write things down. There is tremendous control to having your day/week/month written down. The reason most of us stay on routine is because we are conditioned to complete daily tasks.

2. Sleep on time. I'll admit, I've been a bit relaxed on that both for myself and for my kids, but that is not good for creating self-empowerment. When we lack sleep we feel out of control. It's okay to have some days where you have a fun night, but that can't be every day. Otherwise bad habits set in and then when you have to get back to routine, you'll despise the change. Kids need routine. So do we as adults. Yeah, I'm being a bit of a party pooper but this is a guidebook for you to stay sane.

Guilt: Okay so if for some reason you don't follow your schedule, eat too much, drink too much, don't beat yourself up. Don't be your own worst enemy. I really believe that everyone is feeling some guilt because they are not following through with creating or living their best life - even the people who teach it and model it. So go easy on yourself. Just do better the next day.

Get A Friend: Connect with a friend or two and get on the same program. Talk daily and connect. Social isolation is a poor term. It implies we can't talk to others or we have to talk to our family members only. We have the technology that allows us to Facetime, text and talk with each other. Make a pact with others to talk even for a few minutes daily. Do a 7-14 day challenge where you keep each other accountable to avoid certain bad habits such as staying up late, drinking too much or binging on Netflix. Contribute to someone else's well being daily.

Alcohol: Well this is a secret that no one wants to admit. My concern is that once the economy opens up again, people will be trying to detox themselves and get back to normal. People are drinking more now than they ever did because they are bored and it seems fun. Know your limit. Canadian Centre of Substance Abuse recommends a limit of no more than 10 drinks a week for women (with no more than 2 drinks a day for women) and 15 drinks a week for men (with no more than 3 drinks a day most days). See this pdf for more details :

<https://www.camh.ca/-/media/files/canadas-low-risk-guidelines-pdf.pdf>

In my opinion I feel you need to define your maximum that you will drink. In my experience - and I may be biased as a physician and my interactions with people at parties - most people exceed the above recommendations. I speculate that people are also doing this now during self-isolation. So, if you think you do that, limit yourself accordingly. NOTE: If you (or someone you care about has) feel you have exceeded this amount DO NOT QUIT on your own. Call your healthcare provider or a detox center to help you. It's dangerous to your health to quit on your own without medical supervision.

Why am I being a stick-in-the-mud (killjoy, sourpuss, fuddy-duddy)? Because alcohol is a depressant and interferes with your quality of sleep. It's not going to help your mood and overall well being. You may also say or do things you may regret. End of sermon.

Exercise: You must move your body daily. Stretch it, walk it, move it. When your body moves you feel better. You clean the toxins from your body. Schedule this daily. Enough said.

Know Your Crutch: Everyone has a crutch that moves them further down the road to feeling out of control. For me, I know I can't start a Netflix series. I don't have the willpower to stop watching it so I limit it to movies. They have a definite beginning and end. I also read, fiction and non-fiction. What's your crutch? Alcohol, soda pop, eating, gossiping? Try something new. As cliché as it may sound, use this time to do something positive. I think people will feel guilty if they don't use this time wisely. One of the regrets people have when they die is not about the things they did, but about the things they didn't do.

Family Meeting & Home Schooling: Talk as a family how you are going to manage things. If you have kids at home then homeschooling is an issue for you. As much as I truly adore my children, I did not plan for them to have a 5 month vacation at home. They need to learn something. Negotiate with them so they keep a routine too. Kids need a routine and role models too. If they see you not doing constructive things, why should they? Really why should they? Unless you have angelic children, you'll have to settle for a certain number of hours and successful studying. Try to link them up with other classmates to work together. Every school and child is different so use your judgement to create a more successful home. Having family meetings on a scheduled basis helps create a greater sense of shared purpose. Children are smarter than we give them credit for. Have them involved in the pandemic process. Note, they may also learn some other skills that may not be school-related.

I'm teaching my 9-year-old how to play chess and he has to learn how to type on a computer keyboard. There are some great online tools for that. I'm also going to teach the kids how to paint walls, take out the garbage, clean toilets and do dishes. Real life skills that can help kids throughout their entire life. ;)

Limit Digital Technology and News: Right now we have so much news about one topic and that is tiresome in many ways. How many of you are tired of listening to it all the time but can't seem to turn away from it because it's fascinating, concerning, informative AND anxiety inducing all at the same time? And that's okay, it's a normal human response to be engaged in this way.

But we can't be overstimulated because we need to catch our breath. Have you ever been tickled as a kid or kept laughing so much that you couldn't breathe and you needed to stop in order to catch your breath. So how much Facebook or other social media or news media are you consuming? Can you and should you be taking a break from it? Schedule daily breaks and think of the times you'll be media free. I personally recommend not consuming anything first thing in the morning and at night at least one hour prior to ending your day. When will you take a break from watching all this news and being on technology? Too much stimulation takes us away from being present and living in greater peace. That's all I want to say about that.

Conclusion:

If you are not doing any of the above, start with one or two methods daily. Don't dwell on guilt and get support from others- team work is essential. It's hard to do anything worthwhile without the help of others. We should work together. One last note, I really believe in writing things down and using tools such as daily planners, journaling and reflecting. Please see the part 6 (Essential Tools, Tips and Checklists). It's probably the section that can be easily overlooked yet the most important of all. The most successful/healthiest people use these tools. It's hard to manage routines and accomplish things otherwise. Know your ABCDEFGH's:

- A- Alcohol Management
- B-Breaking Routine
- C-Crutches/Weakness
- D-Digital Distraction
- E-Exercise
- F-Friends
- G-Guilt
- H-Homelife/Home-schooling.

There is additional information that many people have enjoyed on my podcast: The Introverted Doctor podcast. You can listen to it on your favourite podcast app or view it via YouTube. Some of the most relevant & popular episodes are:

- E3-The 4 Core Areas to Creating Meaningful Lasting Change
- E16- Accepting Change, Moving Forward: The 1% Principle
- E20- How to Overcome Boredom

Part 6: Essential Tools, Tips & Checklists

Chapter 15: Activities to Rejuvenate & Recuperate

Too often we think we need big ways to improve our state of mind. That's a myth. We can activate our energy and state of calmness using simple methods. We all have them in our tool kit, but sometimes we forget to use them. Here's a small list to help you get started. These activities come in handy especially when things get tough or you feel emotionally overloaded. It's much better if you use them on a regular basis. Choose five or more from each list that you can schedule on a daily basis. If you're in the frontline, this exercise is essential to prevent becoming run down. Scheduling is a key to creating a consistent energy and state of calmness. Without scheduled actions, most people simply forget because many routines and habits are created from scheduling.

Energy Activators

- Aerobic exercise
- Walking
- Weightlifting
- Cleaning a floor or desk
- Cooking
- Creative projects such as drawing, painting
- Playing an instrument
- Gardening
- Writing, journaling
- Home organization
- Talking with a friend
- Doing woodwork
- Yoga
- Playing with your children
- Activities with a friend
- Acts of kindness

Calming Activators

- Drinking a warm drink (avoid alcohol)
- Taking a bath/shower
- Meditation/mindfulness activity
- Relaxation breathing
- Listening to music
- Dimly lit room
- Being in nature/sunshine
- Writing, journaling
- Being with a pet
- Having a massage
- Soaking your feet
- Cooking
- Eating tasty food slowly
- Singing a song
- Having nice scents in the room
- Reading a book
- Reading something funny
- Watching a movie

Chapter 16: The Essential Do's and Don'ts Checklist

Knowing what to do and not to do is also essential. Here's a list of do's and don'ts. Feel free to add your own. Most of us know already the correct actions, this is a friendly reminder and some suggestions.

Do

- ✓ Limit technology and news intake
- ✓ Exercise or walk daily
- ✓ Breathing exercises daily
- ✓ Mourning routine
- ✓ Evening routine
- ✓ 1 minute gratitude journal
- ✓ Remember to take your vitamins
- ✓ Schedule friend time
- ✓ Schedule venting time (limit it to less than 20 min)
- ✓ Create screen free time hours and days
- ✓ Connect with the people that are meaningful to you - daily
- ✓ Schedule down time
- ✓ Sleep regularly
- ✓ Establish a routine
- ✓ Set up a mood tracker
- ✓ Set up a daily journal

Don't

- ✗ Don't engage in negative dialogue
- ✗ Don't focus on what is out of your immediate control
- ✗ Don't live in the future
- ✗ Don't forget to laugh daily
- ✗ Don't drink alcohol or certainly routinely
- ✗ Don't dwell or be absorbed in social media and news stories

Chapter 17: Tips on Sleeping Well

One of the most essential activities to staying healthy is to sleep well. As a physician I've seen the consequences of poor sleep on patients' overall health. Sleeping well is one of the essential things you can do to improve your immunity and fight infections and disease. Unfortunately, the drive to do more with less sleep is seen as honourable in many industrialized countries. The reality is, sleep deprivation is detrimental to your health. Below are some important rules to get you started.

1. The bedroom should be used only for sleep and sex. This way your body becomes associated with only those activities.
2. No screen time at least one hour before bed.
3. Do not watch television or any electronic activities while in the bedroom.
4. No caffeine, alcohol or nicotine at least 6-8 hours before bed.
5. Create a sleep routine even on the weekends. The body needs a structure.
6. Do some light or entertaining reading before bedtime.
7. Meditate or do deep relaxation sleeping before bedtime.
8. Keep a completely dark and quiet room (even remove alarm clock lights).
9. Avoid keeping track of time at night. It prevents your mind from racing.
10. Do not nap through the day. If you need to, minimize it to only 15 min.
11. No strenuous exercise at least 3 hours before bed.
12. If you can't sleep, read, eat something light, do some light stretching or deep breathing. Focus your mind's eye on any particular object and focus on your breath. This can help settle a busy mind and help initiate sleep.

Supplements: (Warning: consult your healthcare provider for final approval)

- Melatonin can be very helpful to help you sleep.
- Magnesium Citrate or Glycinate has many health benefits and can be used to aid in sleeping; be cautious if you take too high of a dose it will cause loose stools/diarrhea and that's never welcomed.

Chapter 18: The Gratitude Journal

Throughout the book we've talked about the importance of gratitude. What Are You Grateful for? Think of it in the following categories.

You (Your body, your skills, your successes):

Family & Friends (The lessons you've learned, the support you have, the connections you get):

Opportunities (In what ways can you serve? In what ways do you "show up"? What skills do you have to offer? How can you contribute?):

Something Physical You Can See or Touch (a cup, a desk, a chair, a flower, a tree):

*** What action item will you take to contribute to yourself or others today? When you contribute or give conscious acts of kindness to yourself or others, you create energy and spark in your life and others. You change the energy in the room.**

Chapter 19: Your Daily Wellness Planner

Utilize the key points you've learned and create a self-tailored wellness plan.
Scheduling improves focus and outcomes.

Healthy Routines and Strategies I Use to Stay Healthy or New Ones I'll Implement

When I'm feeling stressed or not coping well, I feel, I think, I act...

Ways I can strengthen my immunity
(Remember people, routines and activities that enhance you)

Mentally/Emotionally:

Physically:

Spiritually:

Nutritionally:

Things I must do and things I must avoid
(Refer to Do's and Don'ts and Activities to Rejuvenate & Recuperate)

*Remember to consider adding a Gratitude Journal, Morning and Evening Routines, Mindfulness Practice as part of your wellness guide.

Chapter 20: Mood Tracker

We all have different moods through the day. Some individuals are more cheerful in the morning and others more at night. Try this tool to see how you think and behave in the Morning, Afternoon and Evening. This quick mindfulness check-in will help you know when and where you are your worst and best self. If you can't measure it, you can't manage it. This exercise is used by many high achievers because it increases personal awareness. If you have never tried this, do this for at least a month and see how it helps.

Morning (On a Scale of 1-10) My Mood is.... Because.... The Action I can Take is.....

Afternoon (On a Scale of 1-10) My Mood is.... Because.... The Action I can Take is.....

Evening (On a Scale of 1-10) My Mood is.... Because.... The Action I can Take is.....

* During times of stress, such as this pandemic, our rhythms are disturbed and our mood becomes affected. If you are having more depressed states and even thoughts of self-harm, it's time to seek help. People have unexpected changes in their mood especially right now. You are not alone.

Conclusion

A pandemic is something no human being alive today has ever experienced. There certainly have been pandemics in the past, and there are lessons we can take from them. However, the world is much different from what existed previously. We have many ways to communicate and solve problems that did not exist in the past. Things could be worse while we work to make them better. I am optimistic and realistic at the same time. When we make proper choices and activate our innate abilities, we move forward with hope and results. Together we will get through this, and remember, this too shall pass.

May you and your family be healthy and safe.

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