

SELF-CARE IN PANDEMIC TIMES: JAN AND MEL WILLIAMS



These are anxious times...You, God, cannot help us...We must help You to help ourselves...We must safeguard that little piece of You, God, in ourselves and in others.

(Etty Hillesum)



WHY ARE THESE TIMES SO HARD?



High stress times like this pandemic increase the likelihood of anxiety and depression.



WHY ARE THESE TIMES SO HARD?

The future is uncertain because of the pandemic, so our anxiety may stay higher. "This is a marathon, not a sprint."
(Mathieu, 2020)

Everything in life is more complicated—there are so many decisions to be made. We may experience decision fatigue and "COVID brain."

WHY ARE THESE TIMES SO HARD?

Our "surge capacity" is depleted (Haelle, 2020).

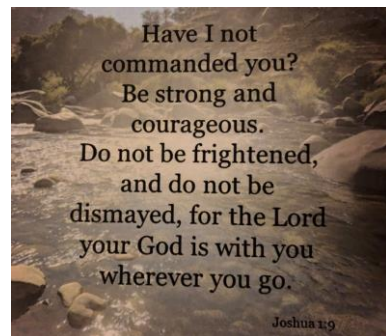
We are experiencing ambiguous loss (Haelle, 2020), in addition to the grief of actually losing people we love.



PANDEMIC ESSENTIALS

Sleep	Get enough sleep
5/30	5 Fruits/vegetables and 30 minutes of exercise
Monitor	Caffeine intake Mood-altering substances
Limit	Media exposure/trauma inputs
Stay grounded	Have a spiritual "practice"
Maintain	Connections with loved ones and colleagues for support

(Mathieu, 2020)



HOW DO WE KEEP OUR BALANCE?



It's more difficult to maintain work/life balance when working remotely. Take "mini-breaks" throughout the day away from screens (outside if possible). Turn off cell phones after work, limit work hours, take vacations, take lunch breaks.



A transition ritual between work and "off-work" is important, perhaps even more if you are working or schooling from home.

HOW DO WE KEEP OUR BALANCE?

When we are anxious, we sometimes ruminate (worry obsessively, with the same thoughts running through our mind over and over). How do we stop ruminating?

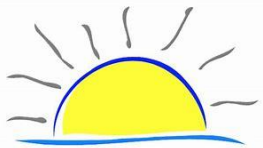


HOW DO WE KEEP OUR BALANCE?

- Try to balance this difficult challenge with humor and fun. Be creative about maintaining rituals.
- Find ways to stay connected, even when it seems like a lot of effort.
- How are YOU maintaining balance these days?



BALANCE



I arise in the morning torn between a desire to improve the world and a desire to enjoy the world. This makes it hard to plan the day. (E.B.White)



WHAT KEEPS US BALANCED AS PERSONS OF FAITH?



THAT'S WHY IT'S CALLED A "PRACTICE"

Jesus moves back and forth between the desert and the city. In the city (his mission action), he feels himself losing perspective and center; so Jesus goes out to the desert to discover the "real" again. And when Jesus is in the desert, his union with God drives him back to the pain of the city (Richard Rohr).

Jesus had a regular spiritual "practice."

WHAT KEEPS US BALANCED AS PERSONS OF FAITH?

What is your faith “practice”?

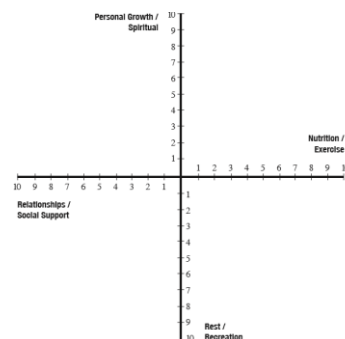
Sitting in silence, in God’s presence
 Devotional reading
 Meditation on Scripture
 Centering prayer
 Intercessory prayer
 Prayer in nature
 Fasting
 Singing hymns, songs of faith



YOUR PERSONAL WELLNESS WHEEL

- It is harder to find time and energy for self-care during a pandemic, but it is even MORE necessary.
- Every person will have different activities that help them cope. What is renewing for one person may be depleting for another.
- Can we share our goals with another person?

WELLNESS WHEEL



Personal Growth / Spiritual

Nutrition / Exercise

Rest / Recreation

Relationships / Social Support

Now list one barrier to carrying out your self-care plan: _____

How will you overcome this barrier? _____

WHEN TO SEEK PROFESSIONAL HELP

- If pandemic anxiety or depression interferes with:
 - The ability to effectively do your work
 - Your relationships at home
 - Your ability to enjoy time with others (isolation sets in)
 - Your ability to see hope ahead (depression sets in)

- Recognize that it is ok to ask for help! It is a sign of strength.

