

# **If you catch COVID19 who will care for your family?**



***Aggressive self-care is key to manage your own stress so you can care for your family***

COVID\_19 is all people are talking about. Chronic conversation about the disease can trigger major stress and fear, which can shatter the second greatest tool you have to fight this disease – your body’s own immune system. *(The single greatest way is to avoid exposure to the disease by social withdrawal as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control or by visiting [www.coronavirus.gov](http://www.coronavirus.gov) )*

If you are full of panic about getting sick, who will take care of your family? If you live alone, who will take care of you?

These are hard questions, but reality as America braces for an unprecedented level of traumatic stress the next 30 days. Taking care of your health is essential. Start by managing your own feelings. Stop talking only about the possibility of coronavirus and stop living in constant fear. It is a dangerous disease which is made worse with worry.



The more you stress- the weaker your body becomes and the greater risk you are to contract COVID\_19.

There is a concept called “Self-Care” which is controversial among nice people who live to care for others. Not controversial because it is against medical science, no, because it is counter cultural. Some people grew up learning to take care of everyone and everything else and if there was anything left over to care for themselves last.



While this sounds noble, consider what every flight attendant says before takeoff, *“in the unlikely event of cabin depressurization, oxygen masks will fall from the ceiling. Put the mask on yourself first.”* You’ve likely heard that safety briefing many times, but this time it’s not in an airplane – no - it’s in your home. You must take care of yourself first because self-care is not selfish.

### **Here’s how the process works.**

- Self-care
- Family-Care
- Friend-Care
- Co-worker Care
- Community Care

When you learn to take care of yourself, you have health and energy to take care of your family, friends, coworkers and then outward to your community. The core strength flows outward from yourself because you are meeting your own needs first since self-care is not selfish, rather, it is self-protective. While this may seem uncomfortable, it's actually a simple process. You may already be practicing some areas of self-care and not realizing it. Start by focusing on personal worth – because you are worth caring for. This isn't Oprah self-esteem talk, no it's learning to value your own sense of worth by choosing positivity over fear.



You are valuable and your health matters. Once you decide to take care of yourself first add all the categories of wellness – physical, emotional, behavioral, relational and spiritual. These elements keep our human body protected by a powerful immune system which can grow stronger or weaker during times of stress. You can choose to aggressively stay healthy through self-care and when you do your immunity will aggressively grow and protect you. Begin with the basics of physical

health for strength including sleep, nutrition, hydration, exercise, hygiene and deep breathing.

Breathing in while counting blessings is a good way to eliminate stress and fear. Build physical wellness then adding positive coping skills in the other areas that boost immunity - emotional, relational, behavioral and spiritual. The more you laugh, exercise, hydrate, eat nutritional foods, meditate, read, learn diaphragmatic breathing, pray, be out in sunshine – the stronger your immunity grows. Breathe. Trust. Believe. That’s how to increase faith over coronavirus fears, and it’s the beginning of personal self-care.



Once you feel empowered and strong you can go ‘viral’ by sharing with your family and friends how to achieve mental wellness and psychological strength. Your self-care will encourage them and strengthen them as well. Breathe in faith – exhale fear. Breathe in blessings – exhale panic.

Breathe in wellness for you and those you love with these proven measures to boost immunity, then as an act of kindness to others trapped in fear.

The way to shatter panic over a pandemic is by building inner peace and that starts with you. It starts with your own self-care and it starts now.

***Build your self-care with these practical steps***

**Physical:**

- Sleep, (7-9 hours)
- Sleep rituals- Same time to wake up and go to bed
- Predictable daily schedule
- Healthy Diet with Regular mealtimes
- Hydration throughout day
- Nutritional supplements
- Low impact exercise
- Yoga/Pilates/Stretching
- Deep breathing
- Relaxation routines/massage or energizing naps
- Regular physical checkups, including blood work
- Medication, (*as prescribed by your physician*)

**Emotional:**

- Esteem building exercises, especially with photos or images
- Laughter/Fun/Playtime
- Face anger, anxiety and apathy directly
- Journal out negative emotions
- Let go of painful memories
- Say “NO” to bad habits

- Talk through issues to get through issues
- Identify and process hurtful emotions
- Write letters to vent out disappointment or regret, *(then tear them up- this is to free you – not start a fight on FB!)*

### **Relational:**

- Face relationship issues
- Voice your needs to others
- Confront conflict directly
- Connect with friends/family
- Share your burdens with others
- Join a support group
- Utilize counseling supports
- Join a hobby group which involves others
- Say “NO” to manipulative behavior
- Hugs/affection,  
*(from pets or people)*
- Learn the love language of those close to you and let them know your needs as well



### **Behavioral:**

- Daily planning time
- Utilize organizational planners
- Short term goals
- Daily hobbies for enjoyment
- Creative activities for relaxation
- Develop victory list of accomplishments
- Create a bucket list of lifetime goals

- Reading for personal development
- “Pay it forward” to do good for others
- Learn something new everyday
- Take on new challenges
- Leave work stress at work
- Take a training course to gain new knowledge and skills

### **Spiritual:**

- Reading for inspiration
- Meditation
- Listen to inspirational music
- Forgive those who have wronged you and forgive yourself
- Watch spiritual development classes to deepen your soul
- Watch inspirational services online
- Make prayer a regular part of your day
- Memorize scriptures to inspire and develop your mind
- Remember, “*Things come to pass – not stay*”
- Re-create spiritual peace in quiet places
- Build spiritual strength through meaningful experiences
- Attend prayer vigils to experience greater community connection
- Observe a day of rest
- Get in touch with nature
- Visit a bike trail, park, lake, beach or hike a mountain trail



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