



Ascension

Ascension WI EAP

Coping with Social Isolation

Human beings are social by nature. When circumstances require us to be separate it can take a toll on wellbeing--especially mental health. Consider the suggestions below to maintain your health and sanity during times of isolation.

Take advantage of social media, chat rooms and virtual platforms.

There are a lot of ways to stay connected via the internet--Google Hangouts, Zoom, Skype, Facebook, etc. Intake Counselor, Mary Mattes at Ascension WI EAP says, "Since working from home I was worried I'd feel isolated, but have actually found I feel more connected with my team." Take social distancing as an opportunity to advance your technological skills and initiate interactions with people in new and creative ways.

Maintain a regular schedule.

Disorder brings chaos, while keeping a regular schedule keeps us regular--and helps to curb anxiety. People feel hopeful when they have things to look forward to, so even if you can't go to a restaurant or a movie, schedule time for activities that you enjoy. Don't forget to pencil in time to unwind and relax, and make time to get outside for some fresh air! Studies show that time in nature helps ease anxiety, and fresh, clean air is good for our brain.

Listen to music.

Music can be a mood regulator, meaning that it

can alter our emotions and mood based on what we listen to. Sad music makes us feel sad, while upbeat, lively music can make us feel happy and energetic. Consider how you feel right now, then put on music to either magnify that mood state, or alter it. For example, if you are feeling lonely or depressed, put on songs about joy and hope. If you are feeling anxious or agitated, put on relaxing music with calming visuals, like on Youtube. Create different playlists to help you cope with different feelings and moods.

Tap into your spirituality.

Some people are anxious and afraid of what might happen, while others are welcoming the new found simplicity and peace found in fewer distractions. How are you adjusting to life without school, sports, entertainment, travel, and the day-to-day hustle and bustle? Will you allow yourself to be still? Take advantage of this time to find serenity and discover joy in the simple things. Take time to reflect on your true purpose and the distractions that may have been holding you back. Re-evaluate your values and priorities, and decide that when things go back to normal, you will be different.