

Self-Care for Educators Working From Home

Working from home can be stressful, especially in uncertain times like these. You are focused on teaching students from a distance, while keeping yourself and others close to you safe. For some, this time can be isolating. Here are some ways to stay connected and healthy.

Its a fact:



Experiencing stress, anxiety, depression, or other feelings of helplessness during an event like a pandemic, is normal.

A pandemic is a type of natural trauma.

According to the [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration \(SAMHSA\)](#), how people respond to the experience of this natural event depends on several factors:

- degree of devastation
- amount of time it takes to re-establish routines and services like returning to school or work, being able to go to the grocery store, etc.

The amount of support during this time can significantly impact the amount of time it takes to recover from the stress response.

During this time of the COVID-19 shutdown, educators might feel additional pressure on top of taking care of themselves and their loved ones.

Pressure to work from home, feeling responsible for teaching students from afar, and other factors, can increase the amount of stress educators have.

It is important to engage in **self-care** and keep **routines** during an event like this.

What are some **strategies** I can use while I am home during the shutdown?

Working from home and staying physically isolated from others can also add to the stress of this event.



Keep routines as consistent as possible.

Here are some ways to keep routines consistent:

- Wake up at the same time every weekday.
- Go to bed at a regular time.
- Set a timer for regular breaks and meals during the day if you are still working.
- Keep office hours to a set time during the day. Working 24/7 from home can take a toll. Set boundaries for yourself and with others by limiting your office hours and time for work.



Stay connected.

If you are practicing social distancing or your community has placed limitations on your ability to leave your home, It's important to stay socially connected with your friends, family, and teaching community.

Schedule a regular check-in with colleagues once a day or once a week. If you are struggling, you are not alone. It's good to support each other during this time even if it's through a five minute call to say hi and share what's new.

Pick up the phone and call a friend. Talking with friends and family over the phone or over an online video platform can be more beneficial than texting or social media. Venting your frustrations to a close friend can even release some of the stress you might be feeling according to this [article from Refinery29.](#)



Practice self-care.

The researchers at Greater Good in Action recommend taking a self-compassion break when feeling stressed out. You can find their self-compassion break activity [here.](#)

Find creative ways to get exercise. Now's the time to try that online yoga video on Youtube or clean out the garage for your home gym.

Many companies are offering free **resources** for mental and emotional well-being.

Spending time alone if you are the caretaker and still working from home can be challenging. It's okay to set boundaries for some time alone. Schedule a time in the early morning hours or later in the evening to do things like: take a bath, read a book, pick up an old or new hobby, meditate, sit still, binge-watch your favorite show, sit on the porch and enjoy the sunset or sunrise, or to just breathe.

The University of Michigan offers these [breathing strategy directions](#) to help manage stress.

Practice social distancing from social media and the news for at least an hour or two a day if you can. It's important to stay informed, but constantly bombarding ourselves with negative outlooks and bad news, can inadvertently increase our stress levels.



Check out these resources. Click below to find out more.

Calm has curated hand-picked content to support your mental and emotional well-being during this time.

Eckhart Yoga is offering free online classes.

Planet Fitness is offering free at-home workouts for members and non-members.

Regulating Emotions in a COVID World via Tom Hollenstein.

Virus Anxiety Resources

Managing Anxiety for COVID-19 For You and Your School Community

Dealing with Coronavirus stress, coping with isolation, podcast news - with calm ease guided meditation

Taking Care of Your Emotional Health: CDC

The CDC has additional **recommendations** for taking care of your **mental health** and **managing stress** during the COVID-19 outbreak. Click [here](#) for their guidance.

The CDC recommends calling your **healthcare provider if stress gets in the way of your daily activities for several days in a row.**