

How to Emotionally Manage a Quarantine

by Soledad Roustan Gullon and Soledad Ciriza Roustan
@gabinete_psicoactive
translated by Christina Gullon Morse

1. Stay Calm and Informed

These uncertain times can lead to many symptoms including: irrational fears, shortness of breath, changes in personality, and anxiety. It is important to do your best to keep a pleasant atmosphere, keeping in mind that this is a temporary situation even though we don't know for exactly how long. We need to stay centered on the "here and now". Stay focused on the task at hand and disconnect periodically from the constant information flow about the coronavirus.

2. Make a Schedule and Stick to It.

Make a schedule for your entire day. This will give you a sense of control. Be sure to list both working and resting times. Post your schedule in a place where everyone can see it.

3. Self Care

- Personal Hygiene: Don't stay in your PJs all day. Shower time is a good moment to center your mind on the great feeling of cleanliness, enjoy the fresh smell of the soap, and empty your mind of negative thoughts.
- Eat healthy meals on a schedule. This is a great way to help give some structure to your day. Random snacking all day is unhealthy.
- Rest is essential. Make sure you plan time for deep rest. Dreams are good!
- Taking care of other's emotional needs can be helpful because it gets you out of your own head however, you have to make sure your own emotional needs are ok before you can help others.

4. Leisure

- Make a list of the things that you don't feel you have time for on a regular day or maybe things that you have been meaning to try. Determine which ones you can do at home perhaps some with modifications. Decide which ones you can do on your own or which ones you might do with someone who is at home with you.
- Reserve some time to be creative, to do exercise at home, to clean out some drawers or closets, to get rid of some clothes you don't wear any longer, to read some books, etc. all those things that you had wanted to do under normal circumstances. When things return to normal, you once again, will not have time for these things!

5. Set small challenges daily

- By setting small challenges daily, we will motivate ourselves. Once you complete one task, you will be motivated to move on to another. Start by making your bed! If everyone is completing tasks, this will encourage everyone around you to stay active as well.

Examples: read a chapter of a school book, do 10 sit ups, organize your t-shirts, listen to a podcast, etc.

6. Stay Connected

- It is imperative that you stay connected to our families, friends, work colleagues, and especially any older people in your life. Stay connected to the older generations and avoid alarming them with unnecessary information or worries. You want to promote the feeling that we are all doing the right things to get through this.
- Organize video calls with your families and friends to have a closer feeling of connection.

7. Protect yourself from “Overinformation”

It is necessary to stay informed. Use reliable sources to do this. “Overinformation” will produce unnecessary stress and fuel rumors. “Overinformation” will only add to the stress that children and seniors are already feeling.

8. Maintaining Coexistence

- As the days go by, it is probably that some inner conflict will occur in the home as well as between family members and friends. So, try to do the following:
 - Respect personal space of others especially if they need some time alone.
 - Stay flexible. This situation is making everyone more tense and irritable.
 - Stick to conversations that are really important.
 - Be careful how and when you say things.
 - Do things together.
 - Say “Thank You” - always important but maybe even more so now!

9. Ask for help if necessary.

- This is a good moment to learn how to ask for help. This is often very hard for most people. Expressing and sharing our feelings helps us to better understand one another.
- Writing your feelings down is another method to help organize your ideas and improve your communication with others.