



Caring Hearts: Where Children and Teens Learn to Grieve and Heal

Caring Hearts provides a unique opportunity for youth to increase levels of hope, enhance self-esteem and to learn that they are not alone. During this pandemic, when all family members are experiencing social isolation, it is normal to have a difficult time creating new routines such as regular times for sleeping, eating or concentrating, and controlling emotions can also be a challenge. Are you experiencing any of these common issues? What do you think you can do to make things better for yourself and for others in your family? What has been helpful to you in the past when you have faced a crisis? When is the most relaxing time of the day for you? When is the most stressful or anxious time of the day for you? How are you connecting to friends? What have you been doing to help you get through these difficult times? There is no right or wrong answers. We are all learning new ways to cope together.

Until you can return to school, creating a new 'regular' routine can be a good thing to do. During these uncertain times, the importance of self-care remains the same but the steps we take to ensure good self-care for ourselves, our students and their families may be quite different. Here are some ideas in each of the domains: Physical: Recognizing the need for physical activity, diet, sleep, and nutrition. Intellectual: Recognizing the importance of creative abilities and finding ways to expand knowledge and skills. Environmental: Maintaining good health by occupying pleasant, stimulating environments that support well-being. Emotional: Developing skills and strategies to cope with stress. Social: Finding ways to stay connected to others. Some people find spiritual ways to connect with themselves, others and their environment.

Approaching life challenges with optimism and hope will take extra effort and some self-discipline but it will pay off in relieving your stress and improving your health and wellness. As an educator, I would like to provide you with a toolbox of activities and online links to help you look after you. You are strong (maybe stronger than you know) and there are always people at Caring Hearts who care for you.

Mindfulness and Gratitude

Using gratitude and positive self-talk to conquer any goal you would like to accomplish.

Do you feel like you are always talking yourself out of success? Gratitude and negativity cannot occupy your mind at the same time so when you are grateful, you will eliminate the negativity. Positive self-talk is easier to implement than you might think. Being grateful takes practice. Learning to quiet negativity with positive thoughts is a great move toward setting and attaining future goals with ease. I have shared with you some inspirational videos about gratitude in the links below.

Gratitude:

Please click on this link below to watch a gratitude video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6TYvJh5Cwvw>

Long Story Shortz - My Gratitude Jar - Written and Narrated by Kristin Wiens

Activity: Have you thought about creating a gratitude jar?

Gratitude:

Please click on this link to watch a gratitude video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TNVn7ROXMoE>

Teaching Gratitude to Preschoolers and Kids

Gratitude:

Please click on this link to watch a gratitude video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nj2ofrX7jAk>

Gratitude HD - Moving Art™

Activity:

Have you thought about writing in a gratitude Journal or drawing pictures of the things you are grateful for? Maybe in a special book at home? Or in your Google Classroom Account?

Here is a link for a gratitude journal:

<https://heartandgratitude.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Gratitude-Journal-for-Kids-v1.pdf>

Gratitude Writing Activities:

Write it out:

When you are feeling anxious have you thought about writing it out on a piece of paper and then physically discarding the paper? This may help you discard the difficult thoughts and memories you are having.

Journal about worries:

Research says writing about a stressful event for fifteen minutes daily can lessen the anxiety a person feels about that event. Try writing in a journal or draw pictures of the stressful event.

Gratitude Journal:

Have you thought about writing in a gratitude Journal or drawing pictures or making a list of the things you are grateful for? Maybe in a special book at home? Or in your Google Classroom Account?

Here is a link for a gratitude journal:

<https://heartandgratitude.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Gratitude-Journal-for-Kids-v1.pdf>

Mindfulness

Alphabreaths - The ABCs of Mindful Breathing

Alphabreaths teaches children breathing techniques that promote mindfulness, relaxation, and compassion.

Please click on this link to watch Alphabreaths:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dnvn6t51TyQ>

Mindfulness

Breathe With Me - Guided Breathing Meditation for Kids

Breathe with Me guides children ages 4–8 through six guided breathing meditation exercises to promote body awareness, calm anger, feel stronger in new situations, energize in the morning, and relax at bedtime.

Please click on this link below to watch Breathe with Me:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2PYHmihv3wY>

Please click on this link below to feel calm:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jKSkAtFUjo0>

Mindfulness

Mindfulness: BREATHING EXERCISE

Please click on the link below to focus on your breathing:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bk_qU7I-fcU