



GONZAGA MIDDLE SCHOOL

Changing Lives – Fulfilling Potential

April 29, 2020

Taking Care of Yourself at Home

Dear GMS Students, Graduates and Community,

This is a really stressful time in the world right now. A lot of us are probably feeling really anxious, scared, angry, upset, overwhelmed, stressed, and so many other emotions that we can't even put a label on. We do not have all the answers we want to have right now, and that creates a lot of stress. A lot of what is going on is out of our control, which can make it really hard to deal with what we are going through.

What we CAN control, however, is how we take care of ourselves and of each other during this time. In a time when things are feeling really scary, we need to focus on what we can do to make sure that we are happy, healthy, and safe. If we take care of ourselves and keep ourselves healthy (both physically and mentally), we can help ourselves feel less stressed, overwhelmed, anxious, etc. That does not mean that all of the problems will go away, but what it DOES mean is that we can teach ourselves how to cope and deal with these problems so that they do not overwhelm us. We CAN control how we think and feel, and that is what will help us get through this hard time.

Please know that you are NOT alone in this. We are all in this together (along with people right across the city, province and country). We are all here to support one another in the GMS family. The Student and Graduate Support Team, teachers, other staff and administrators are all here to help you get through this hard time.

Please take a look at the next two pages for some things that you can do at home to keep yourself at your best.

Thinking of all of you,

Mr. Lussier

Ms Faulkner

Ms Andrew

Mrs. Mitchell



1. Set a routine

- Routines are so important in helping things feel normal, keeping us motivated, and keeping us productive. It is very important that you make a schedule or routine that you can follow every day. In your routine, there are several things you should do at the same time every day: waking up, going to bed, doing your schoolwork, taking breaks, eating meals, showering, enjoying fun time, family time, and time to relax. Routines keep us on track!

2. Take breaks

- I know we all might be feeling really overwhelmed and busy between school, family, friends, and other things you have to do on a daily basis. That is why it is SO important to take breaks throughout the day! Your brain needs time to relax so that it can be at its best and focus on schoolwork. When you set time to do schoolwork (it should be part of your daily routine), make sure you take a couple of 15-30 minute breaks throughout that time in between your schoolwork.

3. Do something you enjoy every day

- With things being so crazy in the world right now, it is very easy to forget to do things that we enjoy. Doing something that you love to do every day, even if it only for 15 minutes, can help keep yourself happy. You should be doing schoolwork every day but you should NOT be doing schoolwork and chores all day - you need to build in some time for yourself!

4. Stay in touch with friends

- We are all in this together. Talking with friends can help us feel less alone and make us feel connected even when we do not see our friends every day like we used to. A quick message, text, phone call, or email to a friend can lift our moods instantly! Keep it positive and practice safe messaging!

5. Stay in touch with your teachers

- Your teachers are there to help you, whether it is at the school or online. Make sure you stay in touch with them, especially if you have any questions about what you are learning, assignments, or need some extra help. Your teachers will be one of your best resources!

6. Get outside!

- Make sure you enjoy the great outdoors! I know we are all home right now, but even if it is just running around your backyard or sitting outside and reading a book, going outside is so important for your physical AND your mental health. When you do go outside, make sure that you stay at least six feet away from people and wash your hands up when you get back in!

What do I do for self-care?

2020-03-18

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|  Get plenty of sleep |  Tidy |
|  Enjoy sunshine |  Read |
|  Cook |  Read about people whose lives are more complicated |
|  Write or draw (think out loud) |  Garden |
|  Talk to myself |  Get a hug |
|  Cuddle cats |  Talk to select people |
|  Walk or bike (esp in a park) | |

7. Have some quiet time

- Finding quiet time in our days can be really hard, but we need some quiet time to relax ourselves from the busy days we have. That quiet time could be right before bed to help you go to sleep easier.

8. Enjoy the little things

- “What are three things you are grateful for today?” This can be a powerful thing to think about. In a time when there seems to be a lot of bad things going on in the world, taking a moment each day to think or write about what you are grateful for, what made you smile, what made you laugh, and/or what made you feel happy can make a HUGE difference in your life!

9. Sleep

- Do NOT stay up until midnight (or later) playing video games, watching videos, or talking to friends! Your mind and body both need sleep to work properly. You need at least eight hours of sleep every night!

10. Don't read/listen/watch too much of the media

- We know it might be really hard to avoid the media stories about COVID-19 right now. It is good to know what is going on, but you do not want to spend hours every day watching videos on it and reading about it. Sometimes, knowing too much only creates more anxiety and stress. Try to limit the amount of time you are listening to and reading about COVID-19.

11. Be kind to yourself

- This situation took us all by surprise and meant we all had to make a lot of changes really quickly. If you are not doing your best at school or you feel like you are falling a bit behind - THAT'S OKAY! Things are not going to be perfect. Remember to be kind to yourself and forgive yourself if you are not doing as best as you usually do. Always do the best you can and keep working hard, but do not be too hard on yourself. If you haven't been doing a lot of work, be kind to yourself by GETTING TO WORK now!

12. Focus on the present and what you can control

- “There are so many things happening right now, but what is something that is in my control and that I can fix?” It is very easy to feel overwhelmed in these times. Try your best to not sweat the big things - those are out of your control and are problems for adults. Focus on what is happening right here, right now and what you CAN fix or change. This can help lessen anxiety.

13. Reach out when you think you need some help

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