

Dear SEM Students,

COVID-19 is forcing all of us to make adjustments, be flexible, and let's be honest - basically rearrange our entire lives for the time being. It's helpful to remember that we are doing these self-quarantining measures for the safety of our loved ones and our community, but that doesn't mean that it's not challenging.

Not knowing what is happening in our community week to week, not being able to move about and socialize in the way we normally do, and spending greater amounts of time than we usually do at home can all lead to increased feelings of fear, worry, and anxiety. One way to help with all this is to follow the school's [shared schedule](#). In addition, consider the following tips for taking care of yourself mentally and emotionally in the upcoming weeks.

- Getting up, getting dressed, and meditating is a great way to get your day started.
- Stay connected to your friends. Social media and video calls on any of the platforms out there are great ways to have virtual hangouts and stay connected socially. Think about classmates or friends you might not have talked to or seen in a while and do a check-in with them. It's a little easier to break the ice and reach out since no one can go anywhere these days!
- Find time for a walk. It can be a walk for exercise or just a walk to connect to nature. Walking mindfully and noticing things like sights and sounds around you can be calming and centering.
- Make time for a solitary hobby. Playing an instrument or reading for fun might be things you normally do already. Be creative and think of other hobbies or interests you might like to try. Some ideas include helping with outdoor gardening, starting a garden indoors, and/or taking care of houseplants; be more involved with taking care of your pets - walking and/or washing the dog for example; make a list of movies and/or podcasts you want to check out; rearrange your bedroom and paint a door or a wall with extra paint; call or write your grandparents or other special relatives or go to [ancestry.com](#) and work on your family tree.
- Spend quality time with your family. Do a game night, set up a community puzzle on the dining room table, or take a walk together. Practicing driving can be a good family activity - you can never practice parallel parking too many times! Or learn how to change a tire or how to drive stick-shift if your family has a car with a standard transmission. You could get more practice cooking or baking. Maybe a parent can help, or even getting remote help from a grandparent for this one could be fun!

- Talk about your worries or concerns with a trusted friend or adult. Keeping them to yourself can lead to becoming more upset and worried. Sharing your feelings can help quite a bit. During the next two weeks of spring break, Ms. Knab will continue to offer Zoom meetings during her normally scheduled hours (Tues, Wed, Thurs from 9 AM-1 PM). Click [here](#) to schedule an appointment.

[Here is a helpful article](#) for more advice on how to deal with the uncertainty created by COVID-19.

Some of you may already be doing some or a lot of these things already - congrats! You're ahead of the game. For those of you looking for more ideas, hopefully, you'll find something useful here to try. We're all in this together!

Stay safe,

SEM's Health & Wellness Team  
Ms. Cunningham, Ms. Knab, Nurse Kim, Mrs. Stothart