Keeping Yourself in a Calmer Place
Joe Lipetzky, PsyD; Cornerstone Psychological Associates, PLLC

In this time of a pandemic, there are stressful things going on in our homes and in our lives. Here are tips that you can use to keep yourself in a calmer place mentally, physically, and spiritually.

1. Keep your routine as close to your regular routine as possible. This means get up at the same time and get ready for the day like you usually do. Eat some breakfast, shower, and dress for the day. This is a start of calming yourself down.
2. Look at your priorities. If you have said you did not have time for prayer or reflection in the morning, now is a good time to add that to your day. Use the bible and pick a short passage or story. It may help to start in the Gospels or the Psalms. If you would rather use an inspirational reading there are many to choose from. The idea is to bring to mind something good beyond yourself or this present moment to focus your day around.
3. Take time to balance your day. This can involve scheduling your day into blocks of time dedicated to specific things or tasks. You can have a block of time for study or learning, a time for play, a time for work, a time for eating, and a time for relaxing. Make yourself a schedule that involves some of each of these things. Eat meals at a regular time. You need things to engage in that are challenging and you need some variety of things to engage in.
4. Take time each day to connect with others. Connect with people with children your children’s ages. Let them get together if possible in small groups. If that is not possible then let them do an activity in common and then call or video chat about their experience. This could be anything from doing the same school project for a common class to playing a game together on line. Playing with pets and training the pet may be another way to involve the children in an enjoyable activity.
5. There are many resources on-line for things to learn or to engage the children in activities at different ability levels. Contact the children’s school for ideas, many teachers are posting resource lists for children to use.
6. Spend time thinking of the positive things you have in your life. Time spent in the details of what you did well or are doing well is important to help you calm down and be engaged in a positive way. Talking with others about what you appreciate about them; how they have helped you; or what you see they did well is also helpful for you and the other person, when you share it with them. Finally, you can look for what you are grateful for and share that with someone. Sharing positive thoughts is a way to help calm others down. Engaging in positive activities and noticing the details of what you have is a good tool to help you set aside worry and depression.
7. This will pass in time. If you are frustrated, scared or alone, you can give our office a call to help you through this difficult time. We are here for you and we do care. We, and many other counselors, offer telepsychology sessions during this time.