



HEALTH

Be Your Own Bestie: How to Care for Your Mind, Body, and Spirit During the Pandemic

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You know that feeling when you talk to a very close friend who needs you? How you listen with your whole being and do all you can to help, even if that means cracking a joke or shedding a tear? That kind of attention is also what we need to give our own selves right now, even if it's just for a few moments every day. Be your own bestie.

But despite the name, “self-care” also means more than just tuning into your own needs. It's about honoring the ways [your life is interwoven](#) with the lives of your friends, family, community, and beyond — and strengthening the bonds that tie you together however you can.

Here are a few ideas, including many from fellow Ccoflossers, for how to care for your body, mind, spirit, and community during this extended era of social distancing. They'll help you to stay sane, cultivate

Rather than view this like another to-do list, please consider it a friendly menu of self-care with opportunities to share, family-style.

LOOK WITHIN

1. Slow Down

Many articles promote ways to be super productive during your time at home, complete with color-coded schedules. If that's your mojo, go for it. But if something deep inside is saying "enough," then just stop.

"It's tough enough to be productive in the best of times let alone when we're in a global crisis," said Chris Bailey, a productivity consultant and the author of "[Hyperfocus: How to Manage Your Attention in a World of Distraction](#)," in the [New York Times](#).

But if you're not being conventionally "productive," what should you do? According to writer Jenny Odell in her book "[How to Do Nothing: Resisting the Attention Economy](#)," try birdwatching, if your living space allows it, or "[take a walk and learn about the history of your neighborhood ...](#) Notice the continual labor of upkeep, the productive work of 'maintenance and care' that sustains life in the place where you live."

2. Be Grateful for Small Joys

In "[30 Lessons for Living: Tried and True Advice from the Wisest Americans](#)," Cornell University gerontologist [Karl Pillemer](#) sums up one piece of advice — savoring small daily pleasures — from the many elders he interviewed [this way](#):

"A morning cup of coffee, a warm bed on a winter night, a brightly colored bird feeding on the lawn, an unexpected letter from a friend, even a favorite song on the radio. Paying special attention to these 'microlevel' events forms a fabric of happiness that lifts them up daily. They believe the same can be true for younger people as well."

Cocoflosser [Winifred Choi](#) seems to practice this herself: "I just take a step out into my backyard! It's surprising how nice it is for a brief breath of fresh air. A silver lining of this quarantine is the increased mindfulness of what you already have around you."

Want to practice gratitude in a more directed way? Try a gratitude journal.

3. Just Breathe

“I have been doing more meditation and breathwork!” says Cocoflosser [Jessica Berry](#). Concentrating on your breathing can [reduce fear and anxiety](#), calm your nervous system, and boost your immune system. Here’s a [primer on controlled breathing](#).

For even more relaxation, try guided meditation. [Headspace](#) offers hundreds of options that will leave you with a Buddha-like smile. Several other [recommended meditation apps](#) offer free trials or cost nothing. UCLA’s Mindful Awareness Research Center also offers a [free podcast](#) each week. Try it for just a few minutes and let a wave of calm wash over you.

4. Feel Free to Laugh

“Laughter is a symbol of hope, and it becomes one of our greatest needs of life, right up there with toilet paper,” L.A. comedian [Erica Rhodes](#) told the [Associated Press](#). “It’s a physical need people have. You can’t underestimate how it heals people and gives them hope.”

So even during a pandemic, it’s OK to [crack a well-timed joke](#), especially if it brings you closer to others. Or try reading a [funny book](#) or watching a [funny movie](#) or [show](#). For quick giggly hits, check out [Comedy Central’s YouTube channel](#) and the [Laugh Lounge app](#), which streams live stand-up comedy.

Bonus: Laughter may [reduce anxiety, lower blood pressure, and calm your stress response](#). Used skillfully, it’s also an effective way to challenge misguided beliefs. That’s no joke!



5. Treat Yourself to a Spa Day

Setting aside time to care for your body with DIY spa-like treatments can make you feel deliciously decadent, beautifully self-pampered, and just a bit giddy — all part of your RDA of self-care. Try a [homemade face mask](#) with ingredients from your pantry, a blissful bath with [aromatherapeutic salts](#), and a [moisturizing hand salve](#) to soothe those well-washed hands. Packaged in a jar and wrapped with a ribbon, these also make sweet gifts!

Self-care favs from fellow Cocoflossers

[@chelledo](#): relaxing in a bubble bath with Dr. Teal's eucalyptus Epsom salts, a face mask, and Netflix on my mini-iPad for an hour. 🛁

[@valentinaa_jara](#): I love this DIY mask: honey and cinnamon — it really helps with my acne. ❤️

[@cindysaurus7](#): I like to read to help me relax and use a CBD bath bomb.

[@tessygy](#): My mahogany teak wood candle, a HOT bubble bath with an Olaplex hair mask and DIY honey face mask—all topped off with a homemade chai tea and a good book. ❤️🥰

[@ciarasandefur](#): I love making lip balm. I use coconut oil, citrus essential oil, and beeswax. Heat it up and put in containers. So smooth and soft. My favorite ever.

[@bkpinkngreen](#): Coffee grinds with honey as an exfoliating face mask. 🍷👑🍷👑🍷👑

Visit us on Instagram for more home-spa suggestions!



6. Get Your Zzzzs

More than ever, we need a [satisfying snooze](#) to help us manage our stressful days and [keep our immune system in top shape](#). And more than ever, it can be hard to power down when your head hits the pillow.

Instead, prime your mind to relax as far in advance of bedtime as you can. Put your electronics on a curfew — 90 minutes ahead of “lights out” is best — and resist checking the news one last time or streaming a nail-biter show.

Other [simple tips to help you zonk out](#): get your heart rate up each day, dim your lights early, take a hot shower before bed, try blackout curtains and a white-noise machine, keep your bedroom uncluttered, cool, and clean.

EXPLORE



7. Soak Up Cuteness Overload at the Zoo

Wonderfully oblivious [waddling penguins](#), [snoozing pandas](#), and [cuddly koalas](#) — these are just a few of the animals you can watch via live-streaming webcams from zoos and aquariums around the world. Here's a [list](#) to get you started.

Watch out: spying on [super-cute critters](#) is addictive! But that's not necessarily a bad thing. A [2012 study](#) in Japan showed “viewing cute things improves subsequent performance in tasks that require behavioral carefulness, possibly by narrowing the breadth of attentional focus.” So, yes, checking in on those [adorable sea otters](#) at the Monterey Bay Aquarium is part of a successful WFH (work from home) strategy!

8. Mosey Around a Museum

Wow! In one day you can view masterpieces by van Gogh at the [Musée D'Orsay in Paris](#), gawk at T. rex fossils the [Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History in Washington, D.C.](#), check out Egyptian antiquities at the [Louvre in Paris](#), immerse yourself in an interactive tour of the [National Museum of African American History and Culture in D.C.](#), view a visual timeline of the world at the [British Museum in London](#), and admire [street art in New York](#). And that's just a tiny sample of the cultural riches now available online, many of them accessible thanks to [Google Arts & Culture](#). Check out this [extensive list on CNN](#).

Don't miss the mind-blowing experience of [Zoom Views](#), which lets you zoom in to the brushstroke level of famous artworks such as “[The Kiss](#)” by Gustav Klimt and “[The Birth of Venus](#)” by Sandro Botticelli. Up close, the paintings seem to come alive, so that you can almost feel the artists breathing beside you.

9. Light Up with Nightlife

You might be in your jammies by 8 these days, but that doesn't mean you can't go to a concert! Musical groups and artists ranging from John Legend to Ben Gibbard (Death Cab for Cutie) to Pink to Shawn Mendes to Elton John are offering [free concerts, sometimes daily](#). If country music puts swing in your step, check out all these [live concerts coming out of Nashville](#). NPR also keeps a [running list of virtual concerts of all kinds](#).

The performing arts are also finding ways to shine in the virtual spotlight. Whether you've always wanted to see a performance by the [Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater](#) or swoon at an aria from the [Metropolitan Opera](#) or relax with a jam from [SFJazz](#), there are so many cheap or [free ways to take in top theater, dance, and classical music performances](#).

Feeling like you really need a night out? How about [virtually going clubbing in Berlin](#)? 🍸🍸

10. Travel the World (Virtually)

We know. Nothing can quite replace the full sensory experience of visiting another country, but by diving into [rich online resources](#), streaming travel-filled shows, and reading transportive books, you can come pretty close.

We've collected 10 literary escapes and 16+ streaming adventures to turn your armchair into a window seat.

Next, use [Google Street View](#) to take the quickest flights ever to world-famous landmarks, including Machu Picchu, Stonehenge, the Taj Mahal, the Palace of Versailles, and the Pyramids of Giza, to name a few.

Explore the natural wonders of our country's national parks by taking ranger-guided virtual tours of their ["hidden worlds"](#). You can kayak through icebergs in Alaska's Kenai Peninsula National Park, venture down a lava tube in Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park, and see thousands of bats hanging out in Carlsbad Caverns National Park. You'll feel extraordinarily brave in your living room!

Find feel-good footage for animals and nature worldwide with BBC's [Wonderstruck TV](#). You can sort by emotionally themed categories such as "Need a Laugh," "Feeling Anxious," "Cure Boredom," and "Togetherness."

reminder of our shared humanity, no matter how distant we are.

FIND YOUR RHYTHM

11. Move your body

Never before have [streamable yoga, dance, and workout classes of all kinds](#) been so essential — or so available. Working out can help you [stay positive](#) — and that’s a benefit to everyone. So even if you only have a slip of time, you can get in a quick cardio blast with [15-Minute HIIT with Maggie Binkley](#) or wind down with [7-minute Bedtime Yoga](#) with Adriene.

Here are a few more top picks of energy-boosting workouts from the Cocofloss community:

Barre: Ballet-inspired workouts that Cocoflossers say is “so good for the booty.” Many free options to stream.

Barry’s: Daily free, HIIT live workouts.

Burn Boot Camp: 45-minute workouts combine strengthening and HIIT. 14-day free trial.

Buti Yoga: Described as “a dynamic asana practice fused with primal movement, tribal dance, and deep core engagement.” 14-day free trial.

Glo: 4,000+ online classes in yoga, pilates, and meditation led by rock stars of the yoga world. 14-day free trial.

Hipline: “Ridiculously fun booty-shaking awesomeness,” according to April Kilcrease, editorial director at Cocofloss. Pay by the class or with a monthly membership.

Laura Varney: Strength training, cardiovascular training, METCON (metabolic conditioning), yoga, and meditation for full-body wellness.

Lululemon: Free yoga classes from the company that makes extra-flattering yoga pants.

Melissa Wood Health Method: Low-impact sculpting exercises. 7-day free trial.

Mr. and Mrs. Muscle: Hundreds of high-intensity interval training (HIIT) and fat-burning workouts for free.

P90X home fitness program: Rigorous 90-day workout program that uses resistance and body-weight training. Access through the [Beachbody On Demand](#) website. 14-day free trial.

Peloton: 30-day free trial of biking, running, and many other high-energy workouts.

Remi Ishizuka: Lots of free workout videos are saved on her IGTV.

Rhythm & Motion: Dance studio in San Francisco offering high-energy, dance-based workouts. Free videos of classes on YouTube.

12. Get crafty

According to the CNN article “[This Is Your Brain on Crafting](#),” “Crafting can help those who suffer from anxiety, depression, or chronic pain, experts say. It may also ease stress, increase happiness, and protect the brain from damage caused by aging.” Plus, it’s a kind of self-care you can share by gifting your creations. Sign us up!

For starters, how about creating a cute friendship bracelet with Cocofloss?! Here’s a two-minute [tutorial from co-founder Chrystle Cu](#).

Or perhaps you’d like to find your flow with an intricately patterned, [stress-relieving coloring book](#) for adults (keep your eye out for an upcoming coloring book from Cocofloss!).

Want to mellow out your munchkins? Try making [aromatherapy playdough](#) with a few drops of lavender oil. Nap-time anyone?

Needle arts, such as knitting, crocheting, and cross-stitching, have been [used for generations to help people weather storms of all kinds](#), from the Irish famine in the 1840s to World War II to the coronavirus pandemic. Many public libraries’ online systems offer free access to [CreativeBug](#), where you can find thousands of crafting classes taught by top designers and artists.

You can also check out this list of the best [online arts and crafts classes](#) or search for free [tutorials on YouTube](#). We’d love it if you posted a shot of your creations on our [Facebook page](#)!

13. Be creative in your kitchen

Two beautiful words: [intuitive eating](#). According to “[Everyday Health](#),” “Intuitive eating doesn’t restrict any specific foods or have you count calories. It’s a practice in which you listen to your body and pay attention to

With this easy-going philosophy in mind, this might be the time to explore some new recipes in your kitchen, especially since eating out at a restaurant may not be an option. Get in the mood by perusing the pandemic pantry-friendly recipes on the [Instagram feed of Ina Garten](#) (a.k.a. “the Barefoot Contessa”).

Then check out some delicious, easy-to-make eats on “[Bon Appétit](#),” “[The New York Times](#),” or “[Good Housekeeping](#).” If you’re careful, it’s also [safe to share the food you make](#) with loved ones and neighbors.

BTW, did you know a strand of Cocofloss is the perfect tool for [slicing up a log of cinnamon roll dough](#)? Its safe, toxin-free ingredients also make Cocofloss ideal for [cutting cheesecake, detaching sticky cookies from the baking sheet, and making layer cake](#). Who knew Cocofloss could also be a baker’s best friend? And bring it along to your next summer picnic because it [slices right through watermelon](#), helping you to derind in no time — and clean up your smile after all the sweet treats!

14. Clean house

For some, the coronavirus quarantine has provided the perfect excuse to go all [Marie Kondo](#) on their home, disposing of anything that doesn’t “spark joy,” and [sanitizing](#) the rest. But if that feels overwhelming, it might help to start in one of the smallest rooms in your house: the bathroom.

We’ve gathered together some tips on what to toss and what to keep in order to [spring clean your self-care routine](#). For instance, did you know bath sponges last just seven weeks, but Cocofloss keeps forever?

15. Be a virtual volunteer

Helping out your fellow humans, whether they live next door or half a world away, can help you feel empowered, uplifted, and less distant from others while still social distancing. Plus, it’s just plain good for our planet.

[Idealist.org](#) and [dosomething.org](#) list a range of virtual volunteering opportunities, from making phone calls to check in on the elderly to helping the blind with everyday tasks to assisting the Smithsonian with transcriptions.

You can also [support the Black Lives Matter movement](#) in many ways, from protesting to donating to volunteering.

16. Learn a new language

When you learn another language, you may actually become [smarter, improve your memory, and make more rational decisions](#). Check out [Duolingo](#), a totally free website and app that teaches newbies to speak everything from Arabic to Vietnamese. Or try the free American Sign Language lessons on [Sign Language 101](#). Find reviews of other [top language apps on CNET](#).

In how many languages can you learn to say, “We’re all in this together”?



Indulge in a tropical getaway for your gums and teeth with [Passion Fruit Cocofloss](#), now paired perfectly with [Chocolate](#) in our [Gelato Shop](#). Scoop up a treat for your teeth today!



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