# 5 Tips on How to Cope with Increased Symptoms of Depression During Quarantine

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## How to Manage Depression During Quarantine

Due to the unprecedented times in which we are currently living, the challenge of how to manage depression during quarantine may seem more difficult than it has been in the past.

The coronavirus pandemic has caused many to self-isolate, and for most people, spending long hours cooped up inside your home has become the new normal.

### Depression During a Pandemic

In a 2017 review of 40 studies published in the journal Public Health between the years 1950 to 2016, significant associations were found between social isolation and loneliness and poor mental health. Due to this pandemic, many people are suffering from new or worsening symptoms of depression and anxiety.

As someone with experience in both, I tend to be home more often than not. The issue is that now, all forms of socialization that I once had are gone.

In the past, running errands or a quick visit to a friend's house can make all the difference when you are dealing with symptoms of depression. Even small tasks give you a chance to leave the house and take your mind off things for a while.

Losing the ability to freely leave the house when the need arises has been difficult to get used to, and this has stirred up more feelings of loneliness and isolation than I generally experience. These feelings are not uncommon amongst most people, but for those of us with depression, it can be especially difficult to know how to deal with this new reality. This is why it's so important to discuss the topic of how to manage depression during quarantine.

### Coping with Loneliness in Quarantine

If you, like many others, have found yourself quarantined for a long period of time, social distancing protocols have drastically decreased your ability to interact with others.

There are many different techniques that you can try out for yourself in order to limit your feelings of loneliness and depression while in quarantine. By taking care of your body and your mind, you will be able to cope with your depression and manage any new symptoms that you are experiencing.

Self-care is always important and is foundational in your ability to manage your depression; be sure to carve out some time for yourself every single day.

While this can be difficult to do with busy schedules, you can use the time that you have available to you during quarantine to help develop some healthy habits that will carry you forward into the future.

**1. Get Some Rest**

This might seem obvious, but sleep is vital to your overall health. It is the basis of a healthy lifestyle, yet many people don't get enough.

In order to develop a healthy sleep pattern, try going to bed and waking up at the same times every day for a month. It doesn't matter if you are home all day; make sure you stick to the same times.

Although aiming for eight hours of sleep has great health benefits, don't put too much pressure on yourself to get there. Start by focusing on regulating your sleep and waking times first.

**2. Healthy Eating**

Eating healthy foods that will give your mind and body the energy it needs to get through the day will make a huge difference in your overall well-being.

Take the additional time you may have while at home to learn a new recipe or try a food that you've never had. Experimenting in the kitchen can be a fun and rewarding experience.

Don't rely on canned or pre-packaged foods. These may be convenient, but they will not give you the same boost that healthy, fresh ingredients will.

**3. Exercise Regularly**

Exercise is not just about "getting in shape" and it doesn't have to be a chore. Regular physical activity has been shown to reduce anxiety and improve your mood.

Regular exercise does not mean intense workouts. Do something that you enjoy, so that you're more likely to continue doing it over a long period of time.

Any kind of movement is beneficial, and many activities can be done with social distancing in mind, including dancing, roller skating, skateboarding, yoga, Tai Chi, walking and swimming. Try something that interests you for the first time or stick to what you know — as long as you move!

**4. Avoid Drugs and Alcohol**

Staying away from drugs, alcohol and even tobacco can do wonders for your mental and physical well-being. Try to also limit your caffeine intake, as it can aggravate stress and anxiety.

It is important to keep in mind that COVID-19 affects the lungs, so avoiding potential irritants like smoking or vaping may also help reduce your risk.

Using drugs and alcohol as a coping mechanism is unhealthy and may ultimately make matters worse. It's best to only take the drugs that are prescribed to you by your doctor.

**5. Take Time Away from Screens**

Whether or not you are currently working, screen time is a part of daily life for most people. However, it is important to give your brain a break from the constant scrolling on your phone, tablet, laptop or television.

Turn off all electronic devices at least 30 minutes prior to your bedtime each night, and ensure that you limit your exposure during the day. Soon enough, you'll discover that you will get a more restful sleep and will be placing

much less strain on your eyes by doing so.

Do something else to keep your mind occupied while away from your screens during the day. Gardening, reading, calling a loved one, writing a letter, drawing, knitting, taking a bath, cooking and baking are all great activities that will keep your mind active, while still distancing yourself from screens.

**How to Manage Depression During Quarantine: The Bottom Line — Take Care of Yourself**

This pandemic has been a challenge for everyone, but remember to be gentle with yourself. Lean on a friend or loved one for additional support during this time, or try some new activities to keep yourself focused on something positive.

It is important to keep a schedule, even if you are currently working from home or have been laid off. This will bring about a sense of normalcy to your daily life, while also affording you the opportunity to turn these coping techniques into a regular routine!