Keeping a Routine: A Schedule Guide for Quarantine

Adjustment can be difficult, especially when we consider adjusting to sudden events that cause disruptions in our usual routine. We know that keeping a routine has benefits for us both physically and mentally. A healthy routine around eating and sleep gives us energy and having a plan for the day (whether it be goals or activities) gives us something to look forward to. During this time of stay-at-home social distancing it may feel difficult or nearly impossible to create and follow a routine without your usual activities. The following schedule may serve as a guide for you during this sudden transition with different activities listed as suggestions. You can use the schedule laid out below or edit it for your preferences.

7-9am: Wake Up

Wake up mindfully: rather than grabbing your phone or springing out of bed instantly, spend a few moments becoming aware of your surroundings. Listen to the sounds around you, notice how you are feeling and what thoughts you have as you prepare to start your day.

- Skin care  
- Shower  
- Make bed  
- Get dressed  
- Eat breakfast  
- Enjoy a cup of tea/coffee

9-10am: Something for You

Do something for yourself: start the day doing something that you like before you hop into completing daily tasks and rushing to productivity.

- Breathing exercise  
- Read for pleasure  
- Take a morning walk

10:30-12:00pm: Something for the Brain

Attend to online courses: Blocking out time to spend on academics every day is a good way to remind yourself to keep up with coursework without your usual routine of going to classes. (If your courses have specified online lecture times just add them into a time block!)

- Check course syllabi and schedules  
- Read assigned chapters/review powerpoints or lecture materials  
- Study/complete homework assignments or work on projects/papers

12:00-1:00pm: Lunch
1:00-2:00pm: Something Outside

Get out: Even though we are in a state of self-isolation, you may take some time to do solo activities outside as the weather warms up. Your mind and body will thank you for the fresh air and physical activity!

- Take an afternoon walk (bring your dog if you have one)
- Exercise (play a sport, do stretches, jog, etc)
- Mindfulness activity (use your senses to take in your outdoor surroundings)

3:00-4:00pm: Back to the Brain

Find a stopping point: This can serve as a good time to continue working on school-related tasks that you began earlier in the day. Having separate chunks of time during the day for school can help us break down bigger projects and tackle multiple subjects in more manageable bits and pieces.

- Complete assignments that are due
- Finish reading chapters/studying
- Set a goal for what you want to accomplish in the coming days

4:00-5:00: Something for the Heart (hobbies)

Do something you love: Find creativity in your hobbies, whatever they might be. Don’t have a hobby? This is a great time to figure out what you would enjoy doing without pressure to perform.

- Paint, color, knit, read for fun, listen to music, etc.

6:00 – bedtime: Something Fun

Indulge, take a break, wind down: Let the evening serve as a time for you to do whatever it is that you do for fun and to wind down for the day.

- Social media (it finally appears! Try to resist the temptation to mindlessly scroll throughout the day)
- Play a video game
- Watch Netflix/movies and shows
- Enjoy dinner with family or friends (create a zoom group and have a virtual dinner party!)
- Hang out (use whatever platform you like to have a virtual meeting with friends)
- Nightly routine (wash face, shower, change into pj’s, prep for bed)