

QUARANTINE AND MENTAL HEALTH

God has given us four ways to love Him, others and ourselves. Luke 10:27 states: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’ and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”

In the midst of quarantine, it is essential that you focus on these four areas (heart, soul, physical body, and mind) in order to stay mentally healthy. Our heart includes our emotions and personality. Honor your emotions. Whether you feel angry, annoyed, confused, anxious, sad, or lonely, acknowledge those feelings rather than stuffing them. Once you acknowledge what you feel, you can then decide what you need to do with those emotions. Maybe you need to practice some deep belly breathing to decrease the anger and anxiety or engage in a way to release your emotions such as art, throwing a ball at the wall or journaling.

Take care of your soul. Keep connecting with God through reading His Word, praying, worship music, watching chapel online. Connect with others during quarantine. It is the beauty of technology that you can still text, talk, FaceTime or Zoom with others even if you cannot be with them physically. Just because you cannot see people face to face, does not mean you have to choose isolation. Stay connected to God and others.

Our minds can be our friend or our enemy, especially in times of increased stress and isolation. Negative thoughts may occur so take time to acknowledge them. Then it is important to take them captive (2 Corinthians 10:5) so that you can then renew your mind (Romans 12:2). This might look like, “Quarantine is stupid. I can’t believe they are making me do this. Taylor is ridiculous. Okay, I hate being in quarantine and I may think it is not necessary, but Taylor is trying to protect the community so that we can stay on the campus and not have to go home this semester. I don’t like it, but I can live with quarantine if it helps the campus stay open.” Gratitude can help the mind move from negative narratives to positive narratives. It is easy to focus on what you are losing in quarantine, but if you can find things to be grateful for, it helps to reframe the mind. Allow your mind time to shut down from your online presence. Zoom classes, FaceTime and video games might help you connect to others during quarantine, but make sure to also have time away from online options so your brain can rest.

Even though you may be in quarantine and unable to go to the KSAC, the DC, or walk around campus, it is important that you still take care of your physical body. Eating regularly, drinking at 48-64 oz of water, moving your body for at least 10 minutes each day, and sleeping consistently all help to promote better mental health. Our brains cannot think properly if they are not fed, hydrated, rested and active. An over-abundance food, water, sleep and exercise (and online presence) is also not healthy.

Your heart, soul, mind and strength are all interconnected and need your attention every day. Think of it like a four-legged stool. Take one or two legs out and the stool is less balanced and not safe to sit on. It is important every day to sit on a balanced stool and it is especially important to do so in times of stress.

The Counseling Center has many resources you can access during quarantine. We have links on the tile on the student portal that demonstrate breathing, mindfulness and grounding techniques. We provide individual and group teletherapy appointments. Please consider accessing mental health resources to help you process your thoughts and emotions during quarantine. To reach the Counseling Center call 765-998-5222 or email counselingcenter@taylor.edu.