



CATALINA SANTOYO

# SOCIAL DISTANCING JOURNAL

In one way or another, this crisis has affected us all and it is now more important than ever to help each other. So, I started to think of a way to contribute with my grain of sand to this situation. It occurred to me to group some of the tools and strategies that I have that can be applied to transform this experience into something positive.

This is a guide that has two objectives:

1. Organize ideas to use quarantine time to advance on some projects.
2. Identify and develop tools to manage the emotional part of isolation and social distancing.


Guide sections:

1. Preparation: Goals, mantras, energy, emotions, gratitude and lifestyle.
2. Weekly plan

How to use this document?

This document has two parts, the first one is to be completed only once at the beginning of the quarantine and it will serve as a guide on a daily basis. The second part consists of a weekly plan to organize your day and keep a record of your process. The last section of the weekly plan is for you to add some daily activity that is essential in your life.

The best way to use the guide is to make it as personal as possible and adjust each part according to your specific needs.

 If you have children, you can address these topics and exercises with them. By discussing this with your kids, you can help them better process all these changes and uncertainty. Customize the exercises according to their age, for example change the lists for drawings.

Finally, take this opportunity to focus on the present moment and live one day at a time. It is normal that with anxiety and uncertainty we focus on the future, your challenge is to try to bring yourself back to the present moment.

I hope it serves you well and I wish you many successes with your goals!

## PART ONE: PREPARATION

### GOALS

A positive part of this isolation is that it allows you to get to those projects that you haven't done due to lack of time. Take some time to identify the goals you would like to accomplish during this month.

Goals can be household chores (cleaning, organizing, building something, etc.), academic or work projects (learning a new skill, researching a subject, taking an online course, etc.), personal projects (Learning knitting, reading, trying different recipes, learning or practicing a language, etc.) or health projects (getting an exercise routine, learning to eat more balanced, acquiring a meditation routine, etc.).

*Identify 5 main goals that you would like to achieve during this time*

	GOAL	WHAT DO YOU NEED TO ACHIEVE IT?
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

*Identify new activities that allow you to...*

FEEL USEFUL:	CONNECT WITH OTHERS:
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.

## MANTRAS

Mantras are sounds, words, or phrases that allows us to connect with our emotions and are an important tool for self-soothing. The idea of these mantras is that, by repeating them in a moment of anguish or anxiety, they can bring you a little center and tranquility.

Mantras must be simple and easy to remember. For example, in these moments of uncertainty I've been using the following: "I control what I can" or "I let go of what I cannot control". So, when I am anxious, I try to repeat those mantras two or three times.

*Find three mantras that you could use in times of stress, anxiety, or distress:*

1.
2.
3.

## ENERGY

In order to fulfill our goals and purposes, it is important to identify sources to recharge our energy. Some examples of things that can help are:

Physical energy: Drink a coffee or tea, take a bath in the morning, take care of the sleep hours (not sleeping too much nor too little), exercise, etc.

Emotional energy: getting fresh air, doing something for yourself, connecting with another people, etc.

*Try to identify 5 things or activities that give you energy (physical or emotional) and that you have access to:*

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

# EMOTIONS

It is normal that in these times we go through a series of emotions and we might feel overwhelmed by them. The truth is that we cannot choose not to feel certain emotions, so it is important to learn to understand and explore them without judging them.

Here I leave a series of questions that we can ask yourself to better understand your feelings. To do this exercise it is better to sit comfortably, with both feet on the floor and close your eyes to focus your attention on what you feel.

1. Where in the body are you feeling it?
2. How do you feel it? Is it static or does it have a movement? Does it have a color? And a temperature?
3. What is the intensity of the emotion?
4. What is the origin of this emotion?
5. How can I react?



If the emotion is very strong and does not allow you to explore it, I recommend this breathing exercise 4-5-7, repeat it a few times.

- Inhale **slowly** counting to 4
- Hold your breath **slowly** counting to 5
- Exhale **slowly** counting to 7

## *Tools to reduce stress*

Everyone has different strategies and techniques that help them calm down and reduce stress or anxiety. The challenge is to find the tools that serve you in those situations. It is good to have them written down and on hand for when you need them.

The important thing is that this list should be as personalized as possible, the things that serve some may not serve others. However, I leave you a list of options as a source of inspiration:

DRAW / COLOR	DANCING	WATCH VIDEOS
WALK	LISTEN TO MUSIC	STRETCHING EXERCISES
CALL SOMEONE	BREATH	LOOK AT THE WINDOW

Find 12 activities to comfort yourself:

1		5		9	
2		6		10	
3		7		11	
4		8		12	

Identify your fears

In this time, what are your main fears?

Despite being in a stressful situation, try to identify more rational responses to your fear.

**Example:** Fear: I fear for my parent's health  
Answer: I am taking all the necessary precautions to take care of my parents; I must trust that these are enough.

	FEAR	ANSWER
1.		
2.		
3.		

Lastly, use the tools previously explored to help you get through fear, for example the mantras and the breathing exercise.

## GRATITUDE

An important action to add to the day to day (and not only during quarantine!), is the practice of gratitude. Learn to recognize and appreciate the positive things around us. It is important to identify at least three things every day for which we are grateful. We can be grateful for super simple and superficial things (for example, my kitchen gadgets) as well as for deeper things (connecting with my family despite the distance).

## LIFESTYLE

Finally, I invite you to pay attention to different daily lifestyle habits that allow you to work better on your mental health: maintain physical activity, balanced (not restrictive) food, drink water and do some form of meditation or introspection.

PART TWO : WEEKLY PLAN

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
TODAY'S GOAL							
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY							
GRATITUDE							
WATER							
EMOTIONS OF THE DAY							