



ACTIVITY IDEAS

“ARE WE **THERE**, YET???”

The question we once asked as children, endured as parents when taking our own families on road trips, the question we asked during our six month flood closure, we find ourselves asking again... WHEN WILL WE GET TO THE CENTRE? (Or to any form of normal in our day to day lives?)

Clearly, none of us have that “20/20” vision... (pun FULLY intended).

In the meantime, we have compiled a list of some things you may have already introduced in your day to day routines, or perhaps you’ll get inspired on some ways to help keep yourself occupied. These are grouped according to things you can do on your own with limited resources, or with a computer with internet access, but everything is adaptable. Read through them all... it might give you an idea of how you can “work your magic” with what you have within your four walls.

First off, we are encouraged to maintain routine while we are in isolation. Get up at your regular hour; slot some consistent times to stretch & exercise; do your chores; stick your nose out your patio door or window and get some fresh air... and clean. 😊

After that, do things like reach out to others (phone or talk from your balcony, email), learn something new, work on a hobby, try a new recipe, read a book, work on a craft, allow yourself to try something new! Pick an organizing project, review old photos, sort through clothes, consider more efficient ways to store things. Write down your thoughts. Sketch the growth of a tree that is coming into bloom; track it week by week. The important thing is to KEEP BUSY so that you feel productive. Limit how much news you take in; it can become overwhelming. And take the time to care for yourself.

It is time to be CREATIVE – and think OUTSIDE the box of our mental and physical limitations. Necessity is the mother of invention! (stay safe – but in your imagination, no safety nets... or walkers... required!)

ON YOUR OWN:

- WRITE:
 - Do you keep a journal? Perhaps this is the time to start
 - Have a wall calendar? Make note of the weather each day
 - Go through your address book and write cards and letters
 - you can mail them down the road
 - What are your favourite childhood memories?
 - What did you want to be “when you grew up”? If you didn’t become that, what might have been different?
 - If you could write **your** 10, 20, 30 year old **self** a letter, what would it say?
 - Ever tried writing a poem?
 - They say everyone has a novel in them... if you did, what would the basic plot or storyline be? Would it be biographical, romantic novel, historical fiction, or a “how-to” book?

- READ:
 - How many books have you got sitting on your shelf? Which have you always thought you should read? Now is as good a time as any.
 - Look at old magazines, Reader’s Digests, cookbooks...
 - Review your box of old cards and letters... relive the memories attached to when you received them
 - If you journal, read your own previously written thoughts

- EXERCISE:
 - Maintain a regular stretch, deep breathing time of movement
 - If you’re used to attending a specifically timed class, keep that appointment. Others may do the same and you can know that you are “together” in some way
 - Your instructors are missing you – so do them proud and adapt a routine that you can do within the space you have. You can show off those toned muscles when you see them next.
 - If you need a Theraband resistance band, inquire how one might be made available to you: call below (and *perhaps* one can be dropped off), pick one up while getting your take-away lunch from the centre, or get creative and use an old pair of pantyhose!
 - Find a TV exercise program you can safely adapt to your level of ability

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- CREATE: “You can’t use up CREATIVITY; the more YOU USE, the more YOU HAVE.” – Maya Angelou (author)
 - Are you a gardener? Or think you could have become one?
 - Design a vegetable patch. Keep in mind:
 - What you like to eat!
 - Consider the full grown height (and spread) of the plants
 - Will the plant require cross-pollination?
 - What would you like to cook with these?
 - Make a salad, preserves, stir-fry?
 - Now imagine your stall at the Haney Farmer’s Market as you proudly display the fruit of your labour
 - Prefer an English Garden?
 - Wildflower or neat and tidy?
 - Consider your favourite colours and the design
 - Are these drought resistant, or will much watering be required
 - Draw it out. Become a landscape architect.
 - Use whatever resources you might have at home (old magazines, pictures in books, old calendars, newspapers) to help you come up with images; make a collage of your favourite trees and flowers
 - Remember your alphabet?
 - Start looking out your window and around your home... can you SEE the individual letters appear out of other objects? You’ll need to look at things abstractly.
 - Just like a road trip where you track every out of state/ province licence plate, note each letter as you discover them



Can you see letters A, B, and C?

- Try listening to other radio stations; maybe you’ll find something you like

- CBC Stereo 2 (105.7FM) has increased their music segments: classical and some Canadiana later in the day
- Music or talk radio (science, cooking, book reviews) help pass the time and keeps one company
- Try a new recipe
 - Go through old cookbooks, watch a cooking show, try to recall a childhood favourite recipe and recreate it
 - Look at your current inventory of ingredients and see if you can come up with something just slightly different
 - Try a different spice; put in a wrap; or if it's the same 'ol, try presenting it differently to make it look like something new
 - Plate on a special dish, or arrange the food artistically
- Is there a hobby you would like to take up? A crafting skill you would like to learn? An instrument you might want to play? Start birdwatching!
 - Make a plan of action on how to start that journey
- Work on your family tree
 - Draw it out as best you can
 - Do you remember what people look like? Or what characteristics you recall?
 - If you have photos, temporarily remove them from their albums to create a visual display of your family tree
- SOCIALIZE:
 - Regularly stay in touch with your family and friends
 - Create a buddy system. Have someone you call each day at a certain time, or you them.
 - Do you have the phone numbers of some of your activity friends? Try calling them during your regular activity time to see how they are.
 - If able, play a game over the phone. Try to each set up a game on your side of the phone and see if you can play one another... Scrabble? Or if Crib, one round, you shuffle and deal and inform your friend of their hand and they direct you what to play. Next round, switch the order and they shuffle and tell you your hand. No cheating!

- Are you able to make a 3 way phone call? Check with your telephone provider. They may be able to offer you this at minimal expense so that you can connect with three family or friends on the line at one time.
- Do you normally have coffee with friends after fitness, in the afternoons, Sunday mornings?
 - Call them during that regular time slot
 - Do you have a balcony or can you chat with your neighbour out of your window? Have a regular check-in time.
- With your community:
 - Have you noticed coloured heart shapes going up in your neighbours' windows? From my window, I see a living room window of different shaped/coloured hearts... and more appear each day. Many have started this – you can, too!
 - This idea started in Italy, and has since here taken hold. At 7pm hospital shift change, those who live near a hospital stand on their balconies, or at open windows, and CLAP and CHEER to thank the tireless efforts of our health care workers. It has spread to neighbourhoods and cities across Metro Vancouver, with horns honking, or neighbours singing a song from doorway to doorway, to acknowledge WE ARE HERE! HELLO! Consider getting onto this bandwagon. 😊
- DO: Accomplish one “to do” each day to own a “win”
 - Have a list of chores you need to get caught up on
 - Sorting through clothes
 - Cleaning a closet
 - Polishing furniture
 - Repotting your plants
 - Go through your freezer of “unknowns”
 - Clear and clean out your cupboards
 - Break it down into small, manageable tasks
 - Check with your tv provider for additional complimentary services (i.e. Shaw has temporarily given free access to additional channels such as the Smithsonian, BBC Earth, MakeFul, Home & Garden, news and children’s programming)

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- REFLECT:
 - It is easy to become overwhelmed with all of these changes. Take time to pause, check with yourself, acknowledge your emotions, breathe (as able, in through the nose, out through the mouth, slowing down long enough to listen to your body), give thanks for what you can, and continue on with your day.
 - Be grateful. Daily make a list (mental or otherwise) for that which you can be thankful. There is ALWAYS something!
 - Are there any relationships that could use some mending? Consider what your part in that could be. Make the first move.
 - Be patient. Be kind. Be hopeful. Think of others. Spread the love!

WITH A COMPUTER: *(but read through for additional ideas even if you don't have one)*

- Online museum and travel tours:
 - <https://artsandculture.google.com/>
 - Tour art galleries; take a virtual tour of the space station; see murals of the world
 - Watch short video clips on “Who invented...?” (the espresso, the refrigerator, the churro... to mention a few)
 - View pictures of jewelry from around the world; learn about other cultures
 - Learn COUNTLESS things; hours and hours of stuff here
 - www.lonelyplanet.com
 - Links to scenic tours, Broadway shows, etc.
 - Challenge yourself to your own “Amazing Race”
 - How many countries/continents could you visit in a 21 day visit?
 - Which are your top 10 destinations you want to see?
 - How much would this trip cost if you went first class or back-packed? (don't forget your seniors discount!)
 - If you won \$25,000 to spend on a vacation, where would you go? \$100,000? Whom would you take with you? (have them help you plan the trip!)
 - www.nationalgeographic.com *(this site requires you to register to navigate it by giving your email address)*
 - Plan the virtual trip of a lifetime!

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- www.chrishadfield.ca
 - Take a trip through space with Canada's guitar singing astronaut; many video clips and informative chats
- www.amsterdamgreenhouses.com will be offering online webinars
 - Flat rate delivery charge
 - Online ordering and parking lot pick-up available
 - Consider planting a vegetable garden; use those seeds that have laying around... you may be able to share with your neighbours as things come into harvest
- Endless online resources available from our libraries:
 - Borrow library material digitally
 - Start or join a reading club
 - Links to first month free on-line courses (using your library card and pin) to learn languages, Excel, video conferencing (a way to visually connect with others), Photoshop, Windows 10
 - Subscribe to receive FVRL curated newsletters on a variety of subjects
 - Listen to book reviews by FVRL librarians
- Search online read aloud books; most are for children – but how fun!
 - <https://librivox.org/> (free adult material)
 - Free audio books; VOLUNTEER to record audio books (some home equipment required)
 - www.audiobooks.com; Audible (an Amazon company)
 - Most companies offer first 30 days for free
- Smartphone? Learn to access podcasts to hear information, stories, news, science, comedians (and more!) from around the world
- Go to www.YouTube.com and listen to stories such as Benedict Cumberland reading Sherlock Holmes, Matthew McConaughey lulling you to sleep with dreamy stories, TED Talks, listen to music, watch cooking, crafting, gardening, hair cutting tutorials and more! (note: with hair cutting – small scissors, small cuts 😊)
- Even though Earth Day celebrations have been cancelled, submit a poem or photo for RM Recycling Earth Day contest (submissions accepted until April 3) <https://rmrecycling.org/earth-day-poetry-photo-contests>
- If you are new to transit, there are some newly released videos for those with mobility challenges: <https://www.translink.ca/Rider-Guide/Accessible-Transit/Access-Transit/Access-Transit-Programs.aspx> (there may be something new for you to learn, for when freedom of movement is again encouraged)

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- Google ideas of how to alleviate isolation boredom:
 - o <https://www.cnn.com/2020/03/21/us/quarantine-games-coronavirus-isolation-trnd/index.html>
 - o <https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/coronavirus-lockdown-uk-how-to-survive-boredom-isolation-a9409996.html>
 - o And of course pass along any good ideas and funny suggestions!

Be sure to share any ideas with your friends, or let us know so we can spread the wealth! Write it down, drop it off, call it in, email. maria@rmssseniors.org

At the end of the day, all we can do is our best. Remember, you are capable of so much more than you think. As long as we stick together, encourage one another, think of others, it will make this journey better.

From your friends at RMSS – take care! And God-willing, may we see you soon.

