

Homes can never be as spacious as the outside world.
But there can be moments when our homes are as exciting and lively !



Quarantine Quality Time

Quality Quarantining

As a professional
As a spouse
As a parent
As a son or daughter

“**Health** is a state of complete physical, mental, and social **well-being** – not merely the absence of disease, or infirmity.”

World Health Organization 1948

As a Professional



It may not be easy for many professionals. Some have been furloughed and others displaced due to economic conditions during COVID-19 and afterwards. Many are still being on the employment roster and working remotely.

No matter what the case is, professionals can make quarantine period purposeful. It is true that the conditions are hard upon individuals and families, but there is a degree of responsibility towards their companies and themselves.

It is important to note that there is and can never be a perfect model for everyone. It all depends on the context of the experience and the individual involved.

General Well-being

- Physical Immunity Enhancement
- Emotional Immunity Enhancement

Personal Development

- Reflection
- Making Decisions
- Monitoring

Professional Development

- Reflective Practices
- PD opportunities
- Networking Practices

General Well-being

- Physical Immunity Enhancement
- Emotional Immunity Enhancement

As a professional, you have the responsibility to take care of your physical being. COVID is mainly a health issue and considering its unknown viral structure, there are still no certain medical facts about its nature and complications.

However, professionals can grasp the essentials and act accordingly. Distance learning is naturally not a threat to education professionals since most of the work was done online. Same is the case with company employees. The only source of worry remains the practical exchange with the world and what it brings. For example, delivery has caused a considerable rate of spreading infection in some areas in the world.

- 1) Follow the regulations the Ministry of Health in each country respectively in order to mitigate risks of infections.
- 2) Healthy lifestyles habits to enhance immunity – healthy food, probiotics, ample mineral intake, enough sleep, exercise, and naturally, less stress. *These do not stop a person from being infected by COVID; they only keep the body strong, so in case there is an infection, the body can have strength to fight and respond well to medication.*
- 3) The commercial products advised as “boosters” for the immunity system are not always reliable. Always consult medical advice.

- Physical Immunity Enhancement
- Emotional Immunity Enhancement

As a professional, you are also responsible to maintain a state of emotional stability in order to be able to execute your tasks. The issue becomes complicated when there are factors that go beyond our control : the situation in general, fear, worry, multitasking.

The result is usually emotional stress, which as proven by research, reduces productivity. Keeping yourselves intact, away from feelings of depression, anxiety, loneliness, and any other form of negative, discouraging emotions is urgently needed.

Although it cannot be done perfectly considering the complex circumstances, we can still manage to reduce these feelings. It is so important not to give in to such emotions because they also affect physical immunity.

- 1) Do not watch news excessively. News provide information, which we need to know. But too much news stir feelings of fear and anxiety because it sets people into the anticipation mode. During this crisis, people anticipate detrimental occurrences, which trigger sadness, fear, and even hopelessness.
- 2) Avoid social media "false" information, which comes through flash news and videos. Research before accepting the information.
- 3) Avoid negative-connotated jokes. Whilst these make you laugh at the current situations, they stir feelings of despair and hopelessness.
- 4) Avoid people who keep speaking about the current situation, weaving scenarios, such as conspiracies, predictions, etc.. Whilst fear is a natural inborn feeling that is necessary for survival, it is toxic when it puts the mind into continuous "fight, flight, or freeze" states.
- 5) Embrace your fears and anxieties when you feel them. Stifling fears has a counterproductive effect.
- 6) Practice gratitude and breathing exercises constantly. The only thing that eradicates darkness is a beam of light!

Personal Development

As a professional, you also have the responsibility to take care of your personal assets. COVID has forced people of all ages, occupations, and nationalities to stay at home and work remotely. The only people working outside were the front-line workers.

Staying at home has given us the chance to notice much about ourselves and others, mainly in the way the crisis was handled. Resilience is one of the most psychological practices that can help us face the challenges at a personal level- your personality, identity, beliefs, attitudes, and behavior.

The process is simple to display as follows: Start watching your behavior patterns and feelings. Try to decipher where they are leading you. Then make decisions accordingly. The decisions should underpin alertness, which means being watchful of those certain behaviors and feelings, and growth, which means exerting effort to reduce the negative and develop the positive. After that, maintain your new states through monitoring your behaviors and feelings. Moments when we slip into the negative cannot be escaped. We live in a reality after all.

Some of personal development elements are flexibility, understanding, goal-setting, self-control, responsibility, integrity, constructive communication, empathy, and growth.



Professional Development



The outbreak of a novel virus led to closures in various sectors globally. Professionals found themselves bound to remote working and so did the teachers. In case of teachers, whilst many of the schools have started processes of integrating technology, not all of them were ready to navigate those new realms.

However, remote working, teaching and learning occurred in many countries around the world and will continue through fully online or blended modes.

Teachers specifically have no choice but to investigate these new paths and develop their digital literacy. During these quarantines, which may recur later, professionals are responsible to follow the process below:

1. Reflecting on performance within different contexts and acknowledging positive and negative practices, strengths and weaknesses.
2. Seeking PD opportunities, such as webinars, summits, online conferences, online workshops and naturally, reading
3. Building up a professional network with like-minded professionals because in this 21st century isolation within one's own bubble restricts growth and continuous improvement. Networks serve also to help with recruiting pursuits.

Professionals are also advised to seek mentors and coaches for personalized support.

As a Spouse



COVID-19 has placed many families in difficult situations, even severe for some. The lock downs have resulted not only in home isolation, but also in economic strains.

No matter what the case is, professionals can make quarantine period purposeful. It is true that the conditions are hard upon individuals and families, but there is a degree of responsibility towards their companies and themselves.

It is important to note that there is and can never be a perfect model for everyone. It all depends on the context of the experience and the individual involved.

Some people were furloughed and laid off from work. Others are worried at a sick elderly. Few are simply unable to handle pressures and isolation.

1.
 - a. Understanding of the nature of a pandemic and its consequences (this is a true threat to health and economy)
 - b. Understanding of gender traits : Generally, males are easily struck by “protectiveness” responsibility and the immediate need to act, putting themselves under stress, without seeing the relieving elements around. Females can distribute their focus on a variety of matters, so the need to act does not make them much overwhelmed. Knowing these two points is substantial in handling the crisis as spouses.
2. Listening to the spouse, whether to a wife or a husband, is so important at such conflicting times. Both the husband and the wife have their fears and anxieties and would need a considerate ear and heart. When we listen to our spouses, it is important to simply listen, with no interruptions, judgements, or personal offence.
3. Speaking to the spouse can be spontaneous and sometimes planned. During these critical times, spouses are occupied with thoughts about surviving the crisis, with concerns about numerous areas in the personal, social and professional life. Starting up a conversation, especially about critical matters, ought to be done during moments of calmness, not before bedtime or after an important phone call or virtual meeting, or before or during mealtime.
4. Empathy means to imagine oneself in the situation of the other. Checking types of words, expected feelings and reactions, responses serve to release tension and evade conflicts. Embracing vulnerabilities is quintessential during such times.
5. Quality spouse time is essential to maintain a healthy relationship. Giving time for each other, sharing interests and hobbies, taking a walk together, cooking together, arranging for a home movie night, and many other warm activities nourishes the relationship and keeps both spouses in the safety, security, and compassion zone-which is urgently needed during a crisis.



As a Parent



COVID-19 has undoubtedly caused immense changes in the education sector. Schools have closed due to social distancing regulations and children had to stay and learn from home.

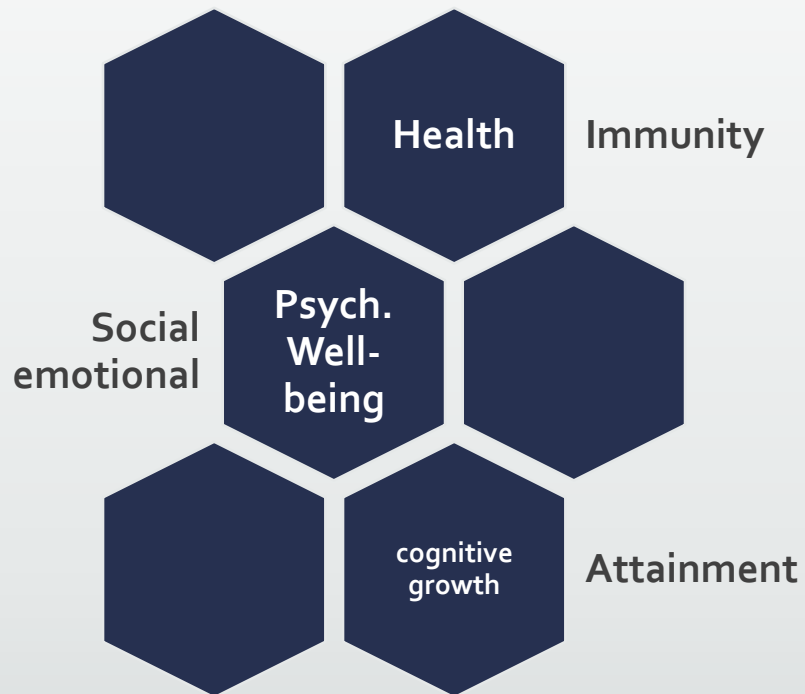
Most parents were ready to take the step of assisting their children in their home learning. Others were not ready but tried. Few did not.

No matter what the conditions are, responsibilities as parents are immense.

These involve three main areas : health, psychological well-being, and cognitive growth.

Keys concepts to parenting during these difficult times:

1. LOVE (Give all the love that you can to your child)
2. Safety (Always show that no matter what is happening outside home doors the child is safe and protected.)
3. Connection (Being connected to the small and extended family through talks and video calls makes children feel that it is not total isolation)
4. Quality time (Knowing that there is always something to do)



Health

- Not much can be said in this area. The new virus is known as a respiratory infection. However, its complicated, unknown structure until this date*, makes precautionary measures mandatory and life-saving – washing hands, sanitizing, wearing masks, and other details advised by the health organizations. World Health Organization states that children's infection by the virus is much less than adults; but children can easily transmit the disease to the elderly.
- Teaching children sneezing etiquettes and health habits prevents them growing with unhealthy behavior habits. The following videos are helpful for children :

☆ *Coughing and Sneezing Etiquette - Ask Coley - Health Tips for Kids | Child Health Education by Mocomi*
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kR_QiBBjzG4

☆ *Cover Your Mouth When You Cough! PlayKids' I Love to Learn: Kids songs, when you sneeze, be healthy*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DG4nor8-UPA>

☆ FULL EPISODE The Big Sneeze! | Sid The Science Kid | The Jim Henson Company
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n6DuZjePTXs>

- Using this period to practice with children healthy habits , such as exercising, yoga, early sleep, sports, outdoor activities (yards in urban areas, wilderness in rural areas).
- Enhancing nutrition as much as possible, considering that some families around the globe are affected by the economic crisis. This is a universal phenomenon in case of infectious diseases. Good healthy diet helps in enhancing the immunity system of the child. It is so important to point out that good health habits do not prevent illness.

*Seven different strains of COVID until this date, including Kawasaki syndrome in children

<https://www.nationwidechildrens.org/family-resources-education/700childrens/2020/05/covid-19-and-kawasaki-disease-what-parents-need-to-know>

Psych. Well- being

- The Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion writes about well-being as „There is no consensus around a single definition of well-being, but there is general agreement that at minimum, well-being includes the presence of positive emotions and moods (e.g., contentment, happiness), the absence of negative emotions (e.g., depression, anxiety), satisfaction with life, fulfillment and positive functioning. In simple terms, well-being can be described as judging life positively and feeling good.“
- Children of younger ages do not comprehend concepts such as lockdowns, but children of older ages do. However, other older children may develop feeling of fear, listening to news and parent discussions. Children, who are handled with violence at home (home abuse) are a concern to educational bodies.
- To curb moments of severe anxiety and foster feelings of happiness instead, the following can be done:
 - 😊 Family interaction is fundamental. Arrange this as Family Fun Time or Family Round Table or Bedtime Talk. Anything that gives a child the chance to express his thoughts is essential !
 - 😊 Give children a chance to be children- explore their surroundings with curiosity, excitement, faith, and trust. Let them play and discover. When children are given freedom, they are simply happy!
 - 😊 Assign time for children to sing and dance. Movement with music is another source for freedom and joy!
 - 😊 Include some messy play, such as washing small dishes and cups or bubble bath. Nothing matches playing with water and soap for a child. Bubbles and foam represent lightness, which is essential to be stressfree.
 - 😊 Knead and mix with a child. Children release energy through squeezing and feel excited as they create new shapes.
 - 😊 Incorporate sound making as role play, such as stumping feet (elephant), blowing (wind), etc..
 - 😊 Assign responsibility tasks, such as making the bed, dusting, folding clothes, etc.. This boosts self-confidence and gives children a feeling of control during times when children feel threatened due to the virus restraints.
 - 😊 Emphasize things that belong to the child. This is very important to enhance sense of wealth and safety.

Throw a
family party
with child-
made buffet
and
decorations !

Mom & Me Weekly Planner

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General Knowledge Building

- Experiential learning (learning through play) [Links below]
- Family unstructured discussions
- Boredom can be positive. Allow it from time to time so that children create their own activity. (Independent Learning)
- Watching educational content is very helpful when done moderately
- Reading, reading, and reading 

<https://www.gse.harvard.edu/news/uk/18/06/summertime-playtime>

Academic School Learning

- School subjects (as guided by the school) [summer vacation support, if advised by the school]
- Educational technology applications to support learning losses
- Writing (essential even during summer vacation) [prewriting for early kindergartners]
- Celebrating achievement through achievement display tools, such as Star Board, Chocolate Basket, etc..

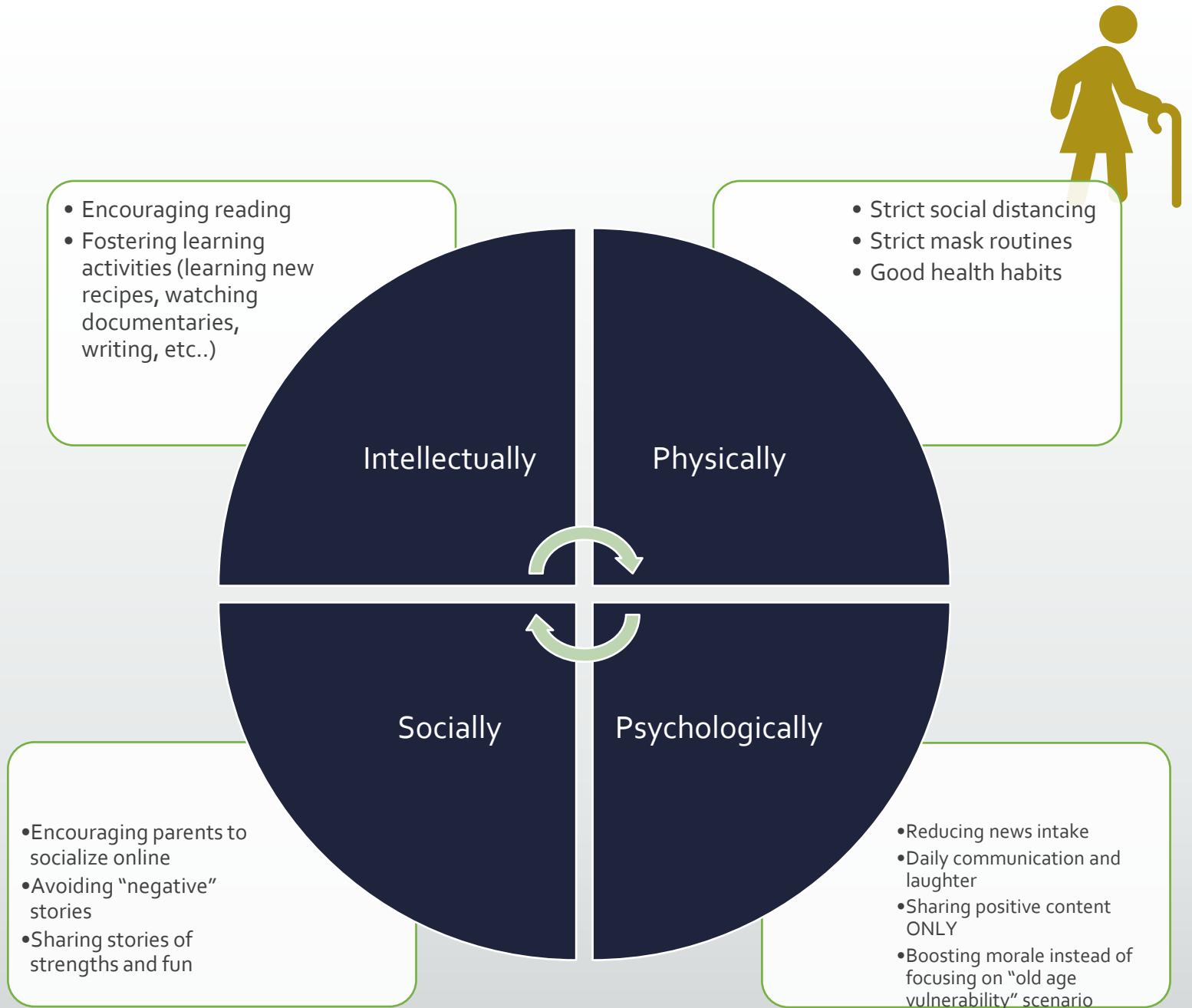
<http://www.blog.naturalbornleaders.org/blog/how-to-support-childrens-creative-development-at-home-covid-19-support/>

As a Son or Daughter

You may be spouses and/or parents, but you are surely professionals and sons/daughters.

During these tough times, the group that is most prone to COVID infections is the elderly. Your parents may not be very old but considering that they are in the late fifties and beyond, physical safety is paramount.

For the four areas (physical, psychological, social, intellectual) to be fostered, you and your young children, the grandchildren, can collaborate. The elderly need to feel good so that their immunity system remains as strong as possible.



Time-Management During Quarantines

- Allocating time as a professional, spouse, parent, or son/daughter, administering to physical, psychological, intellectual and social areas in a balanced way is very helpful.
- Avoid perfectionism in trying to do everything as per your schedule. Home can never be like a workplace, mainly because there is no movement from an address to another and there are no people other than family members. Fatigue, boredom, anxiety may be felt. If it does, embrace it. Do not fight it. Take a break. Have a cup of tea/coffee or take a nap. Then resume.
- As advised by safety regulations, such as flight regulations, “putting on the mask first then saving the other”, during crisis, it is important that an adult saves oneself first. This means we must attend to our health and well-being first so that we can attend to our families, both small and extended.
- Be flexible with children and the elderly. Let them set their own timing.
- Always remember to practice positive discipline : No judgement, no self-sabotage, no regret. Just keep moving forward. This is a critical time and all the good energy is needed.

Having a schedule is too rigid to do at home. However, you can specify the tasks that you want to engage yourself in.

Decide. Making a decision about something is the first grand step. It is commitment.

For example, you may have these tasks and activities : home chore, reading, computer work, playing with child, chatting with family overseas, attending a workshop or webinar, doing an online course.

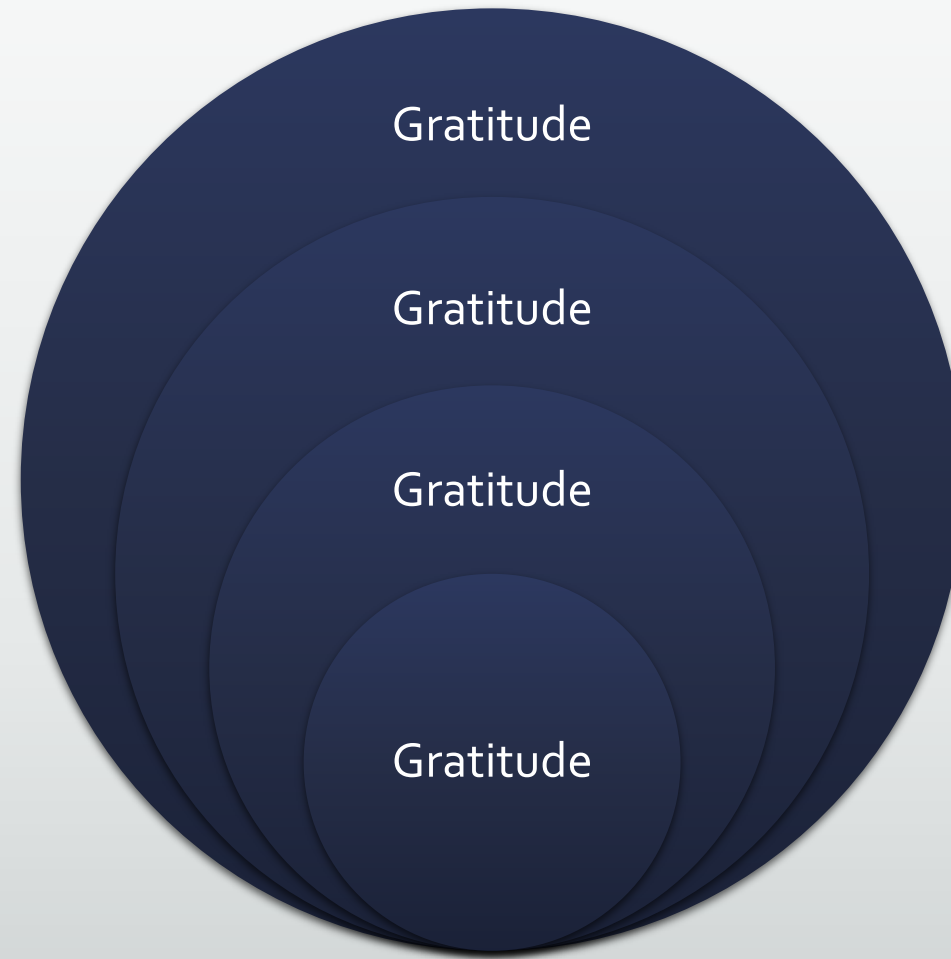
You decide what time to do the above tasks. You may decide that on the weekends you will substitute computer work with a family movie.

A daily fixed schedule is not always possible, but a weekly is. For instance, ensure that you will do 5 reading sessions per week, 3 chatting sessions with extended family, etc..

This way you will not miss on one activity.



KEY TO WELL-BEING : Practice **gratitude** !



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