March 19, 2020

Dear Ivy Family,

Since the World Health Organization declared the COVID-19 outbreak a global pandemic, many of us, even those who have not been infected by the virus, will choose to self-quarantine in our homes for the next couple of weeks. Capsized travel plans, indefinite isolation, panic over scarce re-sources and information overload could be a recipe for unchecked anxiety and feelings of isolation. In the past week we covered wash our hands, disinfecting surfaces and practice social distancing to protect our physical health during the ongoing COVID-19 crisis – but what about our daily mental health?

What are some healthy ways for people to cope with social isolation during the ongoing outbreak?
Catching up with friends and family through messaging, phone calls and video chats can be such helpful for enhancing mood and continuing social engagement. If you are working remotely, connecting with colleagues via videoconference so you can visually “see” each other rather than only communicating via phone or email can increase feelings of connectivity. Relaxing activities, like listening to music, watching movies and meditation can be also helpful for maintaining a positive mood. Practicing deep breathing can be helpful when things start to feel overwhelming and the anxiety creeps in. Family game time is always fun and interactive, and not to mention a catch-up time.

What are some tips for staying well and sticking to a routine during self-quarantine or extended periods at home?

It can help to continue to eat healthfully and engage in physical activity, such as going for walks and trying to stay active with some indoor workouts. Keeping a positive mood is helpful, which can be supported by talking with family and friends and doing activities you enjoy.

From a medical perspective, why does continued isolation affect mood and mental health?
Research has shown that being social and having social support can buffer against the impacts of stress and low mood, meaning that remaining connected to others even if physically separated can be helpful.

In closing, letting go of illusions of control and finding peace in the fact that you are doing your part to “flatten the curve” will certainly build mental strength to combat the stressful situation the whole globe is experiencing and enjoying timeout in your life.

For more information about what you should know about the coronavirus please visit: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html

The safest way through the coronavirus and any other outbreak is staying healthy, well-informed and continuously washing your hands.

The Right Choice for Girls,

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